

STRIVING TO ATONE."



The
SUNDAY
MAGAZINE.

EDITED BY

W. G. BLAIKIE, D.D., LL.D.

And Illustrated by

F. W. LAWSON, J. M. RALSTON, J. BARNARD, A. HOPKINS,
F. A. FRASER, W. RALSTON, J. D. LINTON, AND OTHERS.



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The Sunday Magazine

1872-3

CROOKED PLACES:

A Story of Struggles and Hopes.

By EDWARD GARRETT, AUTHOR OF "OCCUPATIONS OF A RETIRED LIFE," ETC.

INTRODUCTION.



gates of the heart are set open, that its "Miserere" or its "Te Deum" may pour forth, have you never noticed that though the scoring may vary widely, the tune is always

II. N.S.

EVERY life keeps one or two secrets of experience which it might be well for its fellows to know. In those mysterious times of solemn visitation or thanksgiving, when the

the same? We poor human beings are so strangely prone to forget our common resemblance, that we only recognise it in a sort of joyful wonder. Yet just dare to whisper to another how you felt in your day of weakness or of loss,—not your mere conventional feeling, nor yet the great capital letter of your anguish, but the little secret pain that nestled nameless in your bosom,—and that other will, in ninety cases out of a hundred, stretch forth the warm right hand of brotherhood; whilst nine at least, out of the remaining ten, will store your confidence in secret, and go on their way rejoicing.

But we are such perverse creatures that, slightly altering our words of confession, "we speak what we should leave unsaid, and are silent where we should speak." So many of us are doomed to go through life without being able to utter the pangs and the fears that lie in our very heart of hearts, our only hope being, like that of the woman with the issue, to follow in the crowd behind Jesus, and haply be healed unawares. Thus, how many a preached or written word, which seemed as nothing to him who uttered it, has been as a drop of dew under which some poor scorched heart once more lifted its

head to God's blue sky, or as a friendly hand-clasp to some weary soul, alone in the crowd of life?

There is a sadness about this strange silent secrecy of our lives; yet to name a pain is often to fix it; and in many of the straits of life, one walks the braver for not measuring exactly how narrow they are, nor how deep is the gulf below. The visible hand of human help would often lie heavy on us, where the unseen hand of God upholds. And no pointed counsel, nor personal consolation, could ever come to us with such force as the unsuperscribed message of warning or comfort which our own heart appropriates to itself.

And let nobody say that his own life has been too blank and humble to have any such uncoined gold to spare for others' stamping. Have we not seen what treasures some people can work from what others cast aside as rubbish? How many of the truest pictures of life have been limned by men or women who lived quietly among common people, and left no outward history that might not be told in two or three simple dates? Could we have found such wisdom in such homely places? Perhaps not; nevertheless it was there, for those to whom God gave eyes to see.

It is not our strength, but our weakness, that demands wide social circles, varied and stirring experiences. It takes a more complicated educational machinery to teach a blind child than a "sighted" one. We often cannot read the histories that are going on before our eyes in our own dull street. Our spiritual sight is too weak for such small caligraphy, though we can see the same stories afar off, brought out by the lurid flames of some long past martyrdom, or written large in gold and red, with crowns for initial letters, and margins illuminated with battle fields and victorious cavalcades.

It has often struck me that it would not be a bad idea to study the history of every individual member of a family. I think writers are rather unfair in this respect. They pick out the picturesque "bit," the beauty, the genius, or the prodigal, and treat the good grandmother in her arm-chair, the steady father in his counting-house, the patient mother, or the trusted servant, as if they were only useful back-grounding. Writers are not altogether to be blamed for this partiality. Most forms of art demand a central figure, and I am no admirer of that grotesque Pre-Raphaelitism which makes every leaf on a tree as prominent as the lovers who are

whispering beneath it. But it seems to me that these people who are never seen but in their supernumerary parts, must each have a history of his own, which may be worth even more than the picturesque "bit;" not perhaps for its intrinsic value, but for its closer interest to that larger section of the world, who (thank God!) are neither beauties, wits, nor prodigals.

Now, I have lived a very bounded and ordinary life, and do not understand æsthetics, and I write, half to keep myself company in a world where few old friends remain to "talk over" the matters which interest me most, and half in hopes that sometimes I may drop a word that shall bind up some hidden wound, or cheer some heart to its battle. It seems to me that such as I may find only too wide a field of labour in faithfully etching one after another of a certain group of family faces. Some of them I have known with that true knowledge which is born of love, and of every one I have such ample sources of information, documentary or oral, or both, as might well fill professed biographers with despairing envy. I have slighted no scrap of information as too trivial to bear on my studies. My mass of collected material includes all sorts of things, from delicate miniatures on ivory to worn-out fragments of fine needlework, from dainty old love-letters to scrappy washing bills.

It touches me strangely as I turn over these simple, used, useless things. They seem so like withered leaves—swept off the hewed-down trees of life, as they were carried away to the building of the City not made with hands. Piteful, it seems at first thought, how little of its very own a full, strong, busy life leaves behind it. Most of what it leaves has other uses beyond it. The chosen furniture, the selected pictures, the favourite books, live on in other service. Even the loves it cherished, bear fruit for other hands. Only here and there, in perfumed, seldom-opened drawers, lie a few crumpled papers, a few faded ribbons; and here and there, in the shady corner of the household circle, is a face which people say "has never been the same since." And yet this is not grievous, but joyous. Life, and not Death, is the end and aim of creation. Life here and Life beyond. God's way of marking graves is not to lay barren granite boulders on them, but to make the grass and flowers to grow there more freshly and abundantly. God's way of keeping the dead in remembrance is not to stay looking into the open grave, but to go the way that they have gone before us, where we

shall see them (Mark xvi. 7). And so I tenderly turn over my heap of relics, and, in the sure and certain hope of the coming spring of Immortality, am cheerfully content to know that all such poor withered leaves must first be swept away.

I mean to show you these dear lost friends of mine more especially in their "crooked places," because every life has such, and indeed, without them, life would be a long, straight, easily-forgotten road. It does run so sometimes. There are whole years which we don't remember much. If such a smooth highway opens to us after we have been sifted and shaken round a sharp corner, then let us thank God, as those should thank Him, whom He has made the blessed of the earth. Nevertheless, it is the crooked corner we have passed that gives the level all its beauty. It is well for us when we come upon it soon,

for we find more flowers, and hear more singing of birds, and enjoy a wider prospect ever after. Christ is often nearest to us when we are in our "crooked place." As artists give to their dearest a copy of their masterpiece, as most men make sacred love-gifts of pictures or symbols of what lies nearest their secret life, so our Lord gives us our "crooked place" as the similitude of the cross under which He lived, and on which, at last, He died, that our sinful natures might there be crucified with Him. And presently, as the tender mosses of time and memory clothe its sharpness, our hearts will love to return to it, like birds to their accustomed tree, and we will build our Ebenezer there, and sing with the quaint old poet, that the breast—

"That is possessed
Of earth without a cross, has earth
Without a rest."

PART I.—A JUST WOMAN.

CHAPTER I.—MRS. HARVEY'S HOME.

OUR story begins about sixty years ago; and it commences in a quiet, dark room, with a young woman sitting at its window. Her fresh widow's cap showed out wide and hard in the twilight.

There was a glimmer of fire in the grate, and the heavy plated candlesticks stood ready on the table. Mrs. Harvey had long been accustomed to light her candles herself.

The place was profoundly quiet, though it was in the heart of London. Sixty years ago people found out such places and lived in them. The front door of this house opened into a street, not unfashionable, and decidedly genteel. The window where the widow sat looked out—over a tree-shaded promenade—upon the broad cool river. There was plenty of life in the Willow Walk on fine summer evenings. Mrs. Harvey had enjoyed many opportunities of watching it. For herself, she had not gone there for many years, except in the very early morning with her children.

It was too late for the gay company now, and the great willow-trees were left to sigh and whisper to each other. And all the boats were gone off the river, except here and there a lighterman's hoy, or a red-sailed, hay-laden barge.

The widow had sat there alone all the while the light faded. She had not been a widow a month yet, poor thing, and neighbours were still whispering as to how she was "left," and how she seemed to bear it.

She had wept, but not vehemently, rather those slow tears that come with a bitter, aching pain—the tears of those who have long learned to mourn inwardly, while going about with a smile on their faces, and a cheerful word on their lips.

She had been an only child in her own home, and a very dainty pet. There was an old portrait of her over the mantel of that twilight chamber,—the presentment of a pretty sprightly child with fair hair curling over an elaborately embroidered muslin dress, which it must have taken months to make, for there was no clipping machine work in those days.

They had left her no fortune, those dear kind parents, both dead now. Her father had been but a civil servant, with an income not sufficient to allow much saving. The shrewd mother had not quailed before her darling's possible future. "We've given her a good education," she used to say, "and if that don't keep a woman on her feet no fortune will. Only one woman of my own set ever died in a workhouse, and her father had left her ten thousand pounds only twenty years before. If a woman can't make money, she'll not be able to keep it, for it's a carrion that draws vultures."

But the father had not been quite so courageous, and he had been very profoundly satisfied when young Mr. Harvey, a merchant in a fair way to make a sound and substantial competence, had laid his fortune at pretty Bessie's feet.

Now, there had always been a form of godliness in the girl's early home. The

family had gone to public worship, and honoured the vicar, and eschewed all who mingled in masquerades, or other of those looser junketings then so fashionable. In after years, Elizabeth, who had lived nearest to her father and mother, was not afraid to believe that there had been much better things in their hearts, albeit somewhat faded and checked, like misunderstood flowers, shut up in damp and darkness. But she remembered well enough that though she had thought more of the bridegroom's open face and frank manner than of his fortune, and that her parents had congratulated themselves upon his character rather than his prospects, still neither she nor her parents had ever once reflected whether these fair fruits were the genuine outcome of a soul deep-rooted in the love of God. They were victims of a heartless state of pseudo-religious thought, in whose creed respectability and goodness were synonyms.

So the girl Elizabeth was married to Peter Harvey, and went home to his snug, semi-luxurious house, and took a young matron's pride in cookery-books and housekeeping accounts, and gave her first dinner party with satisfaction to herself and all parties concerned.

In those dreary days of the false wit and wild license of the Regency, the ideal woman of more respectable life was she who filled most jam-pots, who could not have slept on unfilled pillows, and who kept her kitchen red with burnished copper. The spirit of household love, and mercy, and peace, was neither the beginning nor the end of this fashion of "notableness." The husband might miss his companion while she performed feats of pickling and preserving, and the boys might run to ruin while their mother was mending their socks, so that none could detect a darn. All her ambition ran in the groove of the Pharisee's thanksgiving, that she should not be as others were. A hideous image of vain-glory and self-righteousness was set up in the temple of domestic virtue. Alas, that when the iconoclasts came, as they always will come, they not only overthrew the idol, but demolished the shrine!

Young Mrs. Harvey, with her inbred exactitude and energy, her lofty standards of kitchen, pantry, and linen closets, her moderate yet ample means, seemed certainly doomed to develop into one of the most flourishing of these stolid, intolerant mothers, whose life in reality was as much a life of sense and selfishness as that of those poor women, the goddesses of a widely different

clique, who were then fluttering like half-burnt butterflies in the glare of Carlton House.

Her father, in his sleepy satisfaction, would not have hoped anything better for his Bessie. Her mother, who was shrewder in her spiritual insights, would yet have said, with a half-sigh, that there was nothing better to be hoped for.

But the heavenly Father, who was so little remembered at that decorous bountiful, wedding feast, had other purposes towards the youthful life that lay, unconscious, in his hand.

She had not learned to see Him in the sunny little waves of her existence. Like the rustic who mistakes the porter for the prince, and thinks that the vestibule of the palace is the royal chamber, her heart was quite at rest among its outside treasures. The God who was watching over her, and loving her with a love beyond her husband's or her parents', was an unknown God.

Just once, her heart swelled towards Him, when they laid her first-born son on her breast, and left her alone to read the divine secrets of motherhood. But she could not understand her own thankful yearning. The earth, earthly, closed round her so soon. They said hers was the most beautiful child in the parish. The doctor pronounced it the finest boy he had helped into the world for twenty years. The most elaborate preparation had been made for its coming, yet every day her jealous pride was busy supplying some discovered gap. She did not love other babies more for its sake, though she observed them curiously to see that none surpassed it.

Then the Lord put forth his hand and took back his own gift. Not in judgment, but because He loved both the mother and the child. It had just grown old enough to twine little clinging hands round her fingers, and to make a sweet crowing whenever she took it in her arms. But she could not hold it back from God.

She took her loss very quietly. There was this good in the life wherein she had been trained,—that if it did not foster the purest and tenderest sentiment, at least it discouraged the shrieking semblance thereof.

"I never lost one," her mother said to her, following her about the house, with the half-reverent wistfulness of a parent who sees her child pass above her on the heights of experience. "I never lost one. I don't think I should have borne it so well as you do, Bessie."

But in her heart, Bessie knew she was not bearing it well. She was silent because there

was no use in crying out. She was dumb with despair. She had never thought about death. She had known it, only as an ugly fact, to be turned from as quickly as possible. Be gentle to her, reader. Don't judge that her mind must have been utterly dry and dead, but remember that she lived in an era when they carved skull and cross-bones over churchyard gates.

But a woman's mind must follow her heart. While her darlings are under her own roof, the mother does not heed that all the vast continents are to her but names and mist. But let her boy go out to the stranger's land, and how she will hunger and thirst for information! Bessie's thoughts went after her baby into the shadowy region they had always shunned before.

Poor thing! poor thing! It was to her only the land of charnel houses. She would sit and shiver before her fire to think how the rain was falling on her baby's grave in St. Martin's churchyard. She went every day to look at it. And she shrank from meeting her next-door neighbour, who had a little living babe of the same age as her dead Peter.

Kindly gossips warned Mr. Harvey that he must begin to take care of his wife. The good man did his best. He took her to Bath and to Cheltenham. She did not refuse to walk with him on the Parade, and she accepted all his proffered amusements with a piteous gratitude.

She was fading, and fading, and even her mind was losing its old bright energy of grasp. What would be the end of it, nobody knew, —except God.

When her husband told her that he must leave her awhile at Bath, and return to his business, she cried a little, and begged him to take her back too. But he was fain to flatter himself that she was benefiting by the fresher air and varied scene, and perhaps thought it might not be an unkindly experiment to throw her a little on her own resources. So he was firm, and came away. And then she cried a little more to herself, and thought of the final separation of death, and only looked at the sunshine and the trees to remember that they would go on when all who were enjoying them were turned to dust.

She sat still day after day, with her active white hands folded on her black dress, and her kindly landlady said to herself that this sort of thing had gone on quite long enough.

Was it chance that had sent Elizabeth Harvey to the house of a woman who had known almost every sorrow under the sun, who had buried husband and children, who

was a weakly woman and a poor woman, who had to slave for daily bread under the whims and fancies of her thoughtless fine-lady-lodgers; but who knew God her Father, and carried such a bright face, and such a merry heart, that many a puling madam was fain to pay her the compliment of unreflecting envy?

We cannot stop to tell how it happened—indeed, neither of the two women could have detailed it themselves. But Elizabeth found that the homely widow had sweet secrets to impart. She never spoke of her "lost," but of her "dear ones with God." She no more thought of them as in the humble graves on which she sometimes snatched time to plant a rose-bush or an evergreen, than as in the stiff jerky old drawers where she had folded away their poor garments. She did not look at life as a drama to be hastened on ere the curtain fell, but as a work to be diligently done ere the curtain should rise.

It was a mode of thought which had such attractions for poor wrung Elizabeth, that she would have gone anywhere to find the key to it. Her good landlady only invited her to accompany her to Mr. Jay's chapel.

Now, as we have said before, Elizabeth's whole training was not favourable to self-revelation. She said very little. But she went to the chapel again and again, attending week-day services for which her hard-working friend could find no opportunity. And she took to reading the Bible. It was wonderful how little she knew of it. It had been kept in her father's house, wrapped in green baize, as if its mere presence was a sufficient charm, though to be sure her mother had an old black-letter edition, over which she sometimes pondered on Sunday evenings.

She said very little, but presently bands of white were introduced among the dense mourning which she had hitherto cultivated in morbid vanity of woe. And she took her little baby's miniature (painted after death) from the black crape bag where she had kept it, and went out and bought a purple velvet frame for it. And she wrote to her husband, and told him that she was quite well enough to return home, and was only sorry she had been so selfish and troublesome already, but at any rate she would not bring him out on his way to fetch her, but would take courage and travel by herself.

Peter Harvey was glad to have his bonnie Bessie again, still more glad to find that she could once more venture to open the piano and softly play him some of the sweetest of his favourite songs, even though his favourites were nearly all pathetic. She had improved

in her singing too. She welcomed back their old acquaintances. She embroidered a little frock for the birthday of the baby next door.

In the face of this soft sunshine Peter Harvey was fain to wink at some other changes of which he did not so heartily approve. Elizabeth seemed somewhat seceding from the ways which he thought best for a woman. She was as delicately neat as ever, but she did not seem to cultivate being as "fine" as other women. She began to ask her mantua-maker how soon she "could" execute her orders, instead of issuing them, to be obeyed, whether or no. Her dinners were as punctual and as dainty as ever, but she developed curious inclinations to include another class of guests—people who did not always give invitations in return. As for her gentle persuasions that they should attend a more faithful and devout ministry than that they found in their genteel chapel-of-ease, Peter Harvey was quite willing to accede to them, for it was a matter of indifference to him, and certainly their former clergyman was very much given to attend operas and balls, and to absent himself at his brother's, the country squire's, with whom he followed the hounds, and Peter Harvey was a man who thought there should be some limits to license, and that clergymen, at least, would be better within them.

But altogether Peter Harvey was well satisfied with the restoration of his handsome, gracious wife, and though at first he was inclined to say to himself that some of the minor changes to which he took slight exception would be sure to pass away when other children came to enliven the house, presently Peter became aware that these very changes had a subtle charm of their own. Not in the least that he learned to understand their origin or their spirit. But he found Elizabeth more at his service than when she had been engaged in laborious vanities to outshine her neighbours. And among their new and poorer guests Peter not only found people more kindly and entertaining than the pragmatic aldermen and their pompous wives, but presently some of these humble visitors did him better business service than the richer ones had done.

Elizabeth started in her upward course in all humility and trembling, too doubtful of her own Christianity to begin straightway to question that of others. Her sweet womanly nature was ready to infer that as she had looked up to her parents and husband in all worldly ways, so they were probably before

her on this. But by-and-by, the truth forced itself even on her humility.

It is one of the saddest experiences of human life when, even socially or intellectually, we pass before those with whom our heart dwelleth. It is a pang which balances the pleasure of prosperity or fame. But it is nothing to the agony, when crossing the line which divides the renewed man from the old Adam, we suddenly discover that we have left our nearest and dearest at the other side. This is a nameless anguish. The heart that really feels it never dares to clothe it in words, even to itself. It would be its own death-blow.

Elizabeth instituted no bravado parallels between her own yearning affection and the mysteries of the Divine Love. She simply clung to her new-found faith that God was good, and pitiful, and full of tender mercy, far beyond human imagining. But she did not try to draw hard and fast lines as to how such goodness and tender mercy must exactly manifest themselves. She was wiser than many sages, inasmuch as she was wise enough to know that the working of the moral attributes of the Almighty, like his secret ways in earth and ocean, might be quite above her comprehension.

She had her hopes. How can any of us mistrust a God who has provided that these shall spring, like fresh grass, in every barren place? One hope was that she might be mistaken in her own judgment of what seemed to her as hard and selfish and worldly. Another, that the way was open, by which she herself had escaped from bondage. And a halo of trustful confidence rose like an incense out of these simple hopes, and mounted far beyond them.

Morning and evening she prayed fervently for her dear ones. Nay, every thought became prayer, and shaped itself into the beautiful life that was as a witness and a testimony before them. As we said before, Elizabeth had been trained to silence, and was a shy woman naturally. But science tells us that the dumb have sometimes articulated under the pressure of anxiety and alarm about their darlings. And so Elizabeth found her spiritual speech.

It was—as spiritual speech generally is—of a sort with her natural speech—discreet and gracious. Her father and mother first listened, then she thought they encouraged it. Sometimes her mother would stamp her thoughts and aspirations with a hearty endorsement. Sometimes her father would ask her to repeat a remark, and would observe

that "there was something in it." Elizabeth noticed that her mother became less impatient with her run of stupid servants—she could not quite check the old habit, but she pulled it up very often with a word of commendation.

"I'm thinking we ought to bear with one another, for the Lord bears enough from all of us alike," she said to Elizabeth.

Her father left off smoking in the best room, and put his pipe away altogether on Sundays.

"Your mother never liked the smell among her curtains, Bessie," he observed, "and it's time I gave her her own way, at last. And if I put the cost of my Sunday pipe into the Bible Society's box, I gain more than it does, for I needn't drowse away any more Sundays, when I don't know how few may be left."

The mother died quite suddenly, the father also, after a long illness, which almost wore all his mind away. But their lives did not go out, to return no more, without first leaving a sweet olive branch of hope and promise with their daughter.

As for Peter Harvey, whenever his wife ventured to bring her new interests before him, he listened with respectful, dubious silence, and thought to himself that she was becoming a clever woman. Nor was he wrong. God's sunshine in the heart quickens the mind. A Christian, however slow and stupid, is brighter and acuter than he would be without his Christianity. And the highest unconsecrated genius has missed that finest point of intelligence and sympathy, which only intimate contact with the divine nature can impart. Peter and Elizabeth had once been very equally mated. Both were well educated, according to the education of those days, and both were fairly endowed by nature. But her soul had undergone a refining and elevating process, through which it had passed out far ahead of his. She did not in the least notice this herself. But even mere gossiping acquaintances whispered that "Mrs. Harvey was very superior to her husband."

Children came round the Harveys' hearth, and for a long time their quiet domestic happiness might have seemed to give the lie to scriptural declarations as to the enmity of the natural heart against God. But the longest time is not for ever; and the best wild fruit of human nature always falls rotten to the ground before the gathering season.

Just as family cares were thickening round Peter Harvey, he met with severe and un-

foreseen losses. He was a man of sanguine temperament, soon depressed, and rash and reckless in his schemes of recuperation. He fancied he saw a way to speedily retrieve his losses. It only involved him more and more.

He was certainly unworthy of his wife Elizabeth; for he had never attained the wisdom of the "virtuous woman's" husband, whose heart "safely trusted in her." Only from his look and manner, never once from his words, did she gather that things were going wrong. Now she had always been severely economical. Her establishment had cost at least a fourth less than most houses of its elegant and fitting appearance. But straightway Elizabeth hinted that she could manage perfectly with one servant, and that sundry simplicities, quite compatible with health and comfort, might be immediately introduced into their table arrangements.

That was the only occasion that Mr. Harvey ever spoke harshly to his wife. He rebuked her interference. He scoffed at such paltry retrenchments. He straightway hired a boy to assist the maids with the knives and boots, and that very evening he brought home a huge Chinese chest of tea at twelve shillings a pound.

Elizabeth was a wise woman. That night as she was storing the week's washing in the linen-closet, perhaps a few tears fell on the fresh garments. But she remembered a homely saying of her mother's, "that the cow was never brought home by the man pulling its head, and the woman its tail." She had to obey her husband and to serve his best interests too. So her quarterly allowance for dress went unnoticed into the house-keeping. She dropped her single glass of wine for dinner. That would save a whole bottle in a fortnight. She thought no more of a good teacher for her little girls, but quietly continued to instruct them herself.

But nobody can save a man's soul—or his fortune—against his will. Elizabeth soon became sorrowfully aware of new expenses that swallowed double the value of her meek savings. The wine went faster than ever, and Mr. Harvey repaired slowly and sulkily to his office in the morning, and often returned far too late for any plea of business.

Alas, alas! but when moral declension can turn success and prosperity into an apple of Sodom, what fearful bitterness must it add to the sour cup of loss and sorrow! How sad when the character falls beneath the fallen fortune!

We have said before that Elizabeth Har-

vey was a wise woman. She gave no word to her wifely anguish. Only she was glad with a bitter sweet gladness that her parents were gone from her before this trouble grew out of the very dependence and protection for which her father had been so thankful for her sake. And she was thankful, oh so thankful! that she knew One to whom she

could tell her troubles without rending her heart anew by shaming the man that she loved so tenderly.

The end came. Peter Harvey lay down to die in the prime of his days. He had shortened his own life. Well, he shrunk from seeing his boon companions. He said to his wife, "I should have done better if I



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had taken your counsel." Over and over again, he asked her to read her favourite hymn, "Jesu, lover of my soul." He bade his boy to "mind his mother in everything;" and not long before he died he said to Elizabeth, "I've no right to leave my widow and fatherless children to God; but He'll take you nevertheless." That was all.

But it was enough for love, which can keep

hope alive and strong on very scanty food. Nevertheless, when their children looked back, after long years, they remembered that it was on the day of their father's death, and not in any of the troubles which came after, that their mother lost the last bloom of her beautiful youth.

And thus she came to sit in her widow's cap in the twilight, thinking over all these things, as we first saw her.

CHAPTER II.—CICELY BROOK'S MODE OF HELPING A NEIGHBOUR.

MRS. HARVEY was waiting for the arrival of a distant relative and a lawyer who had spent the whole of that day, and of many days before, in her dead husband's office, and who had engaged to come that night, and bring her a final report of her pecuniary position. It was a dull waiting of fear, for she knew it was only a question of how bad matters would be.

She roused herself from her reverie at last, and lit the candle, for she only lit one, though there were three in readiness in the heavy old candelabra. The reaction of the mere act of rising made her feel unable to settle down again. She went out upon the stairs, looked into a bedroom, and then into the little breakfast parlour opening from the hall.

There had been a light there for a long time, for her eldest child had not yet gone to bed, and this was the room where he learned his lessons. He was sitting at the table, with his feet tucked up on the rung of the chair—a delicate boy of about twelve, who looked almost transparent in his deep mourning. He started when his mother opened the door, for the house had been awfully soundless since the little ones retired. He was one of those children who are constantly getting into higher classes, almost against their teacher's will, and at this instant he was busy translating Homer pages beyond his appointed task. He knew nothing about coming trouble, and had private dreams of going to college in two or three years' time.

"George, dear," said Mrs. Harvey, painfully struck by his pale thin face, "what has kept you so late with your books? They should have been all put away long ago."

"Oh, mother, I only wanted to know how Menelaus and Paris got on in their duel. But I've done now." He had been trying a few stanzas on his own account since he had ceased the translation. He did not mention these.

"It's right for you to like your books well, my child," said his mother, with her hand resting fondly on his shoulder; "still there are other things beside books. It would be sad and wrong for you to pore over them till you hurt your health. Such learning does not make a really wise man. I should like to see you heartier and more active. You've had your own ways too much for these last few weeks, and it mustn't be any longer. Go off to bed now, and wake up in the morning bright and early."

"Oh you needn't fuss about me, mother," said the boy, with a boyish horror of anything like "moddle-coddle," which is often at least as strong in the fragile and studious, who require some of it, as in the hale and stout, who sometimes even seem to like it for a change. And with a good-night kiss he obeyed, and had scarcely gone before a sounding knock warned her to retreat to the best room and receive her dreaded guests.

The lawyer looked the kinder of the two. The second cousin seemed hoarding his civilities like a man who is afraid lest such may be mistaken for promissory notes, payable at some future time.

"Well, madam," the solicitor began blandly, "we have got through our work at last. It seemed a very complicated matter when we began. But we have got through." There he paused, and somehow poor Elizabeth suddenly and inconsequently remembered a smooth-speaking old surgeon who in the days of her girlhood had once performed a painful operation on her hand.

"We hoped for better things, though," said the second cousin gloomily.

"Ay, to be sure we did," the solicitor responded. "I am sorry to say, madam, that things might have been a great deal better."

"They couldn't be worse," decided the second cousin bluntly.

"Well, well, that's hard to say," interposed the lawyer, pitying the strained, worn face that he had known so fresh and bright. "Of course, we will give you any details that you require. But the plain fact is there are no assets to speak of, and a good many debts."

Elizabeth sat silent for a moment, and then asked in a dry harsh whisper—

"Do you mean there is nothing even to pay the debts?"

"Well, I'm afraid it amounts to that," admitted the solicitor; "there is little money owing to the estate, and there are really no effects except the goodwill of the business, the stock—which is very limited—the lease of this house and the furniture; and if they are all most favourably disposed of they will not cover the two thousand pounds, which it appears must be paid out of the estate before the other creditors can claim anything."

This referred to the deceased merchant's settlement on his wife, but the words had no meaning to her. She knew there had been certain legal processes gone through at her marriage, but she had never thought of them as securing her comfort amid the general ruin. She had taken Peter Harvey "for better, for worse," and had long made up her mind

for the "worse" without dreaming of evading it.

"It's very fortunate for you that Peter made so liberal a provision," said the second cousin reproachfully, for he was thinking, "She didn't bring a penny with her, and I dare say she's been extravagant, and all the poverty is her own fault."

The second cousin was of Mr. Harvey's side of the house.

Elizabeth looked at him, half-mystified for the moment, but just then memory gave one of its singular dives into the dark, and brought back the old marriage settlement.

"Do you mean that the money meant for me takes precedence of the just debts?" she asked.

"Yes, indeed," said the lawyer, "the property settled on you at your marriage is regarded as yours, distinct from your husband's."

"It certainly don't seem quite fair," observed the second cousin, who had lent Mr. Harvey £20 on an I.O.U.

"Is it mine to do what I like with?" Elizabeth inquired.

"It is yours," returned the lawyer. "The deed, whose draft I have, reserves to you power of absolute disposal. It is singularly brief, and, I should say, was made at the last moment, and was only intended to be temporary, and then got left as it was."

"Just Peter's way," groaned the second cousin, with the inward addition, "She'll get married again, and let the poor children go to ruin, or drift upon their father's relations."

"Then I can pay the debts with it, at least as far as it will go," said Elizabeth, with a bright flush spreading over her wan face.

"She's so unpractical that she thinks she and the children can live on air; she'll expect us to keep the whole lot," thought the second cousin again.

"Why, madam," said the lawyer, "deeds like this are actually made for the protection of wives and children in such contingencies as the present. In this instance most of the creditors are wealthy men, and considering the efforts your late husband has recently made to straighten his accounts, in spite of the great depression in his branch of business, I am sure they must all feel they have been honourably dealt with. You have no reason to indulge in the least feeling on their account."

"Certainly not," said the second cousin briskly; "men in a large way of business calculate on such losses. But I can understand your feelings, cousin, and after you have realised your poverty, which is really a

very handsome provision, and some little time has elapsed, say three months or so, you might quietly pay any smaller sums that may be due in any private way. As you are not obliged to pay any, I don't suppose any one could interfere with you paying who you like. A small debt is a greater loss to some people than a larger one to others. If I had a little free cash just now, I ought to be taking my poor little pale children for a breath of fresh air."

"Mrs. Harvey must not be allowed to pledge herself to anything in such a sudden way as this," said the lawyer peremptorily. "The sum she can claim is by no means more than sufficient for a very simple maintenance of herself and her young family."

"But I cannot touch it, it is not mine," protested Elizabeth, repeating her words to every argument that they brought forward, till, at last, they rose and said it was time for them to depart; they would not go into any papers to-night, and there need be no hurry, —she would think better of it when she had a little time for quiet consideration.

Elizabeth lighted them to the door, and said good night mechanically, and then returned past the parlour, and went on to her own solitary bedroom. There were no sounds but the weird sounds of silence, the clock ticking on the stair, the flicker of the candle, the river lazily lapping the terrace below. She had a curious disembodied feeling. She lifted a chair, and set it down sharply to wake herself.

Her soul turned a forlorn gaze over the dead level of the long past years. What had there been in them to train her for this conflict? Marked decisions and active efforts had never come among her duties. It had been hers to submit, to persuade, to endure. How could that prepare her for this? Ah, Elizabeth, the tender Father, God, knew best, and the patient doing of one duty can never unfit for the brave doing of another.

"Why should you give it up?" asked the Tempter. "Who would do as much for you? These creditors would not have been paid up as well as they are but for your caring and sparing. If you had been but a hired housekeeper all these years, you would have had something of your own; why should you have nothing because you have been more than a housekeeper, have given more than faithful service, have strained your very soul in this behoof?"

"You are going to plunge yourself into a poverty you don't understand," the Tempter went on, "not such a poverty as your aunt

Mary's, with even her little pension of thirty pounds. She used to say that she knew her cloth, and cut her coat accordingly; but what cloth at all will you have? You will be as badly off as your mother's old charwoman, who worked from six on Monday morning till twelve on Saturday night, and was very glad of an extra loaf or blanket from the parish. What can you do for a living? How much are people paid for needle-work, and what would your drawings fetch? What will you do with children? You'll sink to the lowest, and then fall sick and die, and they'll be turned into the street. It's only the common lot of such as they'll become. And when they're in workhouses and jails, a disgrace to themselves and a curse to society, shall you have done the world a service? Why should you fancy that you and your children will be above the ordinary temptations that come to destitution? You are on a level with the rest of humanity, and only need the same candle to reveal the same dark places in your hearts." (The devil's best lies are made of half-truths.)

"Two thousand pounds," pursued the beguiling voice, whispering at the poor wrung mother-heart, "why, you could go and settle in the country, and live the quiet life that has been your ideal in these latter days of anxiety, and moil, and terror. You can live near some endowed school for the benefit of your dear, frail, clever son" (and against the blank wall of the chamber the Tempter conjured a phantasm of the child, with his transparent hands, bending over his books in the yellow candle-light). "Then, between scholarships and exhibitions and such-like, you need have no fear for his future. Very likely your boy will be a great man, and will be able to pay off old scores quite easily, with something over to the people for waiting. And you can bring up your little girls at your own side, and, well-kept and well-bred, you need be under no stress of fear for their establishment in life. You will be poor enough, but you will be genteel, and not lack friends. You will have leisure, and you will be able to do so much good among the villagers. You may become a spiritual Lady Bountiful."

The Tempter seemed tugging at her heart—tempters are generally very eager and exigent—and the Something that should have answered him seemed to Elizabeth to stand far off, silent, with reproachful gaze.

Seemed, we say.

For who was it that upheld her, as with one strong shudder, like the shaking off of a physical weight, she crossed the room to the

ebony bureau, whose every pigeon-hole she had learned by heart during the last few days. There was but one which she had not looked through lately. It was the farthest to the right, and it held a single yellow deed.

It was her marriage settlement. With other papers, it had returned to her husband's hands, on the death of her father, who had been sole trustee. It should have been in other custody, but these were simple people, who avoided legal interference as much as possible, and the new solicitor had only seen an old draft copy.

As she drew it forth, a little withered flower fell out and dropped to the ground. An orange flower. The document had never been opened since the time of bridal trappings.

She clutched it in her hands, as if to hold it away from some unseen Presence that might grasp it from her. She looked round the room. There was no fire in the grate, bright with its summer polish. There was no tinder-box on its usual stand, the negligent servant had forgotten to place one there. "May not this be a check sent from Providence to curb you?" the Tempter began again.

She threw the deed behind the bars of the fireplace, and thrust the candle through them. How hard it was to get rid of that thick parchment! What a many opportunities it gave the Tempter to whisper, "It is not too late yet!" But she only thrust the candle further in. It would not have cost her so much had it been her own hand. Before the deed was ashes the whole candle was used, and it was in utter darkness that she dropped upon her bed, with one convulsive sob—

"My God, thou hast saved me from myself!"

Let those who toss sleepless or dream-haunted in their troubles try one safe recipe before they resort to the baleful poppy. Let them walk straight into the darkness of their woe, and grapple with its worst phantom. Let them make their souls wholesomely weary with active exercise in the fresh air of God's precepts and promises. We nearly all sleep soundly in the midnight of our tribulation, when God's rod has struck us so sharply that we forget to beat ourselves with our little pricks. It is in the twilight afterwards, the hour of dim forms and nameless shadows, of doubt and weakness, that we lie moaning and staring.

That night Elizabeth Harvey slept like the dead.

She did not wake till she heard her servant's footstep on the stair, and pleasant

familiar sounds of life on the terrace beneath. She woke slowly. Her soul seemed to have a long way to return.

She bathed her face and tidied her hair. She remembered what she had done, and was glad she had done it. But she was glad with a humble joy. For she feared she could not do it again.

Then she went to her boy's room. She passed her serving damsel in the passage, and spoke cheerfully to her.

George was already up and dressed, and at his books again. It smote her to see it.

"Put them away, dear," she said, "I want to talk to you. I have something to tell you. You are my right-hand man now, you know, George."

The boy pressed up to her, half fondling, half proud.

"You won't mind when I tell you that we are very poor now, George."

His face fell a little, for the college was uppermost in his mind. Scarcely daring to look at him, his mother hurried on. "We shall have to leave our dear old house, and go away somewhere else, and we shall all have to work very hard, and go without many things that we like, at least for the present. You'll be my brave boy, and help me all you can by being bright and cheerful, won't you, George? Then I shall not mind anything else."

It troubled her that he stood so quiet. It need not. Life hangs before children like the sheet of a magic lantern, and as each new view supplants the last, the last is forgotten, and the present one seems the prettiest. But there are some scenes that return often. The college will come back to little George's long-fancy, but never mind, at present it is blotted out for quite a new and fascinating design composed of notes of interrogation. Poverty meant that they must leave this house, said his mother. Where would they go? Would it be into the country? George only hoped it would be away from the river. He had never liked that. As a baby, he had cried when taken to the windows overlooking it, and though brave enough in every other respect, for as frail as he was, he was still frightened to be in a boat. George rather wished the new home might be farther east, somewhere deeper in that great, unmeasurable wilderness of bricks and mortar, on whose margin he had hovered once or twice, and in whose mysterious precincts his imagination played at a perpetual Arabian Nights.

She fancied she guessed his thoughts. "As God wills that we shall be poor, He will take

care of us," she said gently. "He will give us all we need. He will teach you himself, my Georgie, as you are not able to go to school any more."

"School!" Why, George felt already far beyond that elementary formula. It is not from his first glimpse of practical life that any healthily made boy recoils to his books.

When the lawyer next saw Elizabeth he thought that she had become quite reconciled to her small sure provision, she looked so calm and happy. He was very angry when she told him what she had done. That came of clients keeping their papers in their own hands, he said. He told her that her rashness need not inevitably stand good. It might be a fair case for an equitable settlement if there was anybody to take it up. But he was a kindly-hearted man, and appreciated her motives, though his admiration found its only expression in blame and grumbling, and he indignantly repudiated the widow's only suggestion that the creditors need not know the sacrifice she had made.

He told them. And they each and all said, "Well, it was really fair that a man's own should suffer first in his misfortunes. Still, not many women would have done as Mrs. Harvey had, and they honoured her for it." Apart, Mr. B., whose debt was thirty pounds, said that if he was Mr. C., whose claim was four hundred, he should be ashamed to take it all, that he should, a rich man, keeping two carriages and three hunters, and giving away ever so much in subscriptions to charities. In Mr. B.'s opinion, Mr. C. should only take half, and think himself well off to have got that. But it never struck Mr. B. to set the example by commuting his own claim to fifteen pounds.

Mr. C., on the other hand, observed that for his part he thought the widow had behaved like a heroine, and that certainly something should be done for her. He had heard some whisper about commuting their claims. He did not think that would be pleasing to a lady of her highly independent mind. But she should not be allowed to want, and her children should be looked after in some way. He could not do it himself, he lived so far from London, but he could trust the two next largest creditors—Mr. A. and Mr. D.—to do everything that was right and considerate.

Mr. A. thought her rather a fool for her pains. Didn't believe she'd have done it unless she'd got some money put away safe somewhere.

Mr. D. was always very busy. Thought a

man had a right to his own, without the burden of any moral obligations to the person who paid it to him. But was ready to do what he could. Would give his five pound if a subscription was organized.

The creditors all received their money, and they all made their professions, but everybody's business, as usual, proved to be nobody's, and they each passed on their way and forgot all about it.

All but one. There was a poor old maid, a Miss Brook, who had earned a scanty living as agent for some of Peter Harvey's goods, among his poorer outlying customers. A small sum, something like six pounds had been due to her for commission. She had trusted to it for her rent, and when its payment first seemed doubtful, she had gone to the Harveys' solicitor, and pleaded her peculiar case and her great poverty very forcibly. He had engaged that she should not suffer much in any event. Finally, of course, Miss Brook was paid in full. She gave one or two inarticulate grunts as she took the money. She had to pay it all over to her landlord that very evening.

Next day she "took the liberty," in her own phrase, of calling on Mrs. Harvey. She was a tall gaunt woman with bushy eyebrows and wispy bonnet strings, and she carried a great gingham umbrella, which she clasped about its waist.

"If there's anything to do that I can help you in, I'll do it," she said fiercely, with a frown. "I'm used to most things."

"It is really very good of you," said Mrs. Harvey, with grateful sincerity (whereupon the old maid frowned fiercer than at first). "The fact is, there are so many things to do, that I scarcely know where to begin."

"You'll have to get lodgings and to pack," observed Miss Brook, with a decisive definiteness that was more strengthening and comforting than any amount of wordy sympathy; "I can help in that. I know all about lodgings, and having 'em got into good order before you go in, and all that. I won't be put upon by landlords—I know 'em."

Grim Miss Brook had neither silver nor gold to give, but she had all her own hard-earned experience of life, and all the courage that she had learned in her loneliness. She helped Mrs. Harvey greatly, by being the first to name every necessary hard fact. It did not seem so cruel after she had spoken of it as a matter-of-course.

"Don't you go and be afraid of living in very lowly places," she said. "There's no

need to be. There's good and bad of all sorts in them as well as everywhere, only there's more of both. While you've got to be a poor woman, my dear, be one, and don't break your back with straining to be anything else. Keep as close in everything as you can, that you may have the more to spare in bread and beef, for that's blood and bone to the children. There's all sorts of nice clean places cheap enough for the poorest. Little old cottages belonging to monthly nurses, and watchmen, and the like. I'll soon look out and find you one."

She did. It was in a mean, broken-up old street just at the beginning of the Mile-End Road. The lodgings were two tiny rooms with sloping roofs and projecting windows. The stairs were narrow and cracked. But the place was respectable, and the rough, cheerful landlady—forewoman at a neighbouring laundry—was quite prepared to re-whitewash, mend broken panes, &c., at Miss Brook's suggestion.

The very extremity of the change made it easier to be borne. It was like going out into a new country.

"You'll never repent it, my dear," frowned Miss Brook, "there's nobody about here that knew you before, to be breaking your heart with their pity. It'll go quite the other way. The woman of the house says she can see you're the thorough lady, and so will the other folks, and that will put you on your mettle to keep yourself up. Ah, my dear, Cicely Brook knows by experience, that one way of life is about as good as another, if you look at it right down to its bottom."

Mrs. Harvey took away but little of her furniture. In her determination to pay all the debts possible, she let it all go. And the debts were paid,—a glorious and comfortable conclusion, which enabled her to endure the sight of the second cousin's wife cheapening her own dear mother's treasured stock of lace. The second cousin and his wife were very punctual at the sale, and carried off a good many of the little Harveys' toys for nothing, because "it was such a pity to leave them where they might be kicked about and destroyed." However, as they did not plunder Hatty Harvey's armless doll, or her sister Milly's broken kaleidoscope, Mrs. Harvey forgave them, these oldest playthings being the more particular personal favourites.

CHAPTER III.—IN MILE-END.

So when they "moved" to Mile-End, it was with the servant's bed, an old couch, a

damaged crib, a few cane chairs, a painted table, and a dozen pieces of willow-pattern crockery. Elizabeth saved the black *silhouettes* of her parents and husband, but her portrait in oil was sold, in a lot with the initialled silver, and the family crest in wools. Some furniture dealer bought them all. Well! it is pleasant and honourable to have family heirlooms and specialities, but sometimes it is even more honourable to have lost them!

And after all, the little slanting rooms did not look so bad. They had a few green plants for the window-sill, and a bit of red glazed cotton for a curtain. They put the willow-pattern china on the mantelpiece, the dish in the middle, and the plates at the side, with the cups and saucers in front, just as the Sèvres set had stood in the cabinet in the old home. They hung up the *silhouettes*, and George's common bedroom book-shelves, on which they ranged their Bibles and Prayer-books, and a few old favourite volumes, which they had been able to keep partly because they were so old and worn. And then the two little girls clapped their hands and said it was "as good as a game."

But George was quieter, and his mother's heart was yearning tenderly over her boy. What did all this mean for his future? Ah me, she knew that it meant that he must take to hard early toil—he, poor lad, young, half-trained, innocent, must mix with rude, rough, vulgar people, and either break in such a fierce crucible or pass through it, leaving behind something of his own. Then, again, how—oh how!—was she to tell her child that he must find out some way by which to earn a few shillings a week, and must not mind hard, dirty hands, and coarse, soiled clothes? Miss Brook never hinted at this. She feared to touch the torn tendrils of the mother-heart. This was a winepress which the good woman had not trodden herself. And to Elizabeth it seemed harder to bear than to put that document into the fire as she had done. The widow had not yet proved the blessed truth that when we take one determined step on the steep ladder of righteousness and self-sacrifice, then God himself comes and lifts us over many succeeding rungs.

She never needed to speak to George on the subject. He spoke first. The boy had not been learning nothing in these few weeks since he had left school. He had fathomed what poverty meant, that it meant one did not get food and clothing without knowing exactly what they cost, and where the money came from.

"Mother," said he, in the twilight of that very first evening, amid their pathetic novelties, "you always said I read writing well, didn't you?"

"Yes, dear," she answered, wondering.

"I could always make out the queer hand-writings that came to father, couldn't I?" he asked again.

"Yes, dear, often better than we could ourselves," she said.

"Do you know that they hire boys to read writing in printing offices?" he inquired.

"Yes, I know they do," she replied, with a jump of the heart.

"I used to know the reading-boy at the Apollo Press, which I passed on my way to school," George went on. "I never spoke to him, but I always saw him. He was a nice, decent-looking fellow. Somebody told me his father had been a dissenting minister." A pause. Then suddenly, "Mother, a reading-boy is wanted by a printer just round in the main street here. Will you let me go?"

"Do you think he would take you, darling?" she asked, in fond, unreasoning despair.

"I know he will," said George proudly; "I've been in already and spoken to him. He gave me a paper to try me, and I read it right off without a blunder, and he said I'd do finely. But I said I must speak to you first. He'd give me six shillings a week to begin."

"I suppose you must go, George," she said, with a smile that would not be sad.

He jumped up and kissed her. He was quite as happy as he could have been had he won the first prize for Latin verse.

Now in the earlier days of her poverty, before her eyesight weakened and her hands grew unsteady, Miss Brook had got her living by waistcoat making. It was not so very badly paid in those days, when domestic service absorbed so much female labour, and machines were unknown. Miss Brook advised Mrs. Harvey to try it. She could get her work from her own old employers, and she would teach her and help her till she was able to give full satisfaction. Elizabeth was only too glad to follow her advice.

It may be remembered that Elizabeth's worthy mother had spoken as if the good education her daughter had received would stand between her and want, and it may be superciliously thought that it must have utterly failed her before she was reduced to such a humble resource as this. Not so. Elizabeth could have kept a school, and a good one,

had she possessed capital to start with. But she did not. She could have gone out teaching. But she wisely preferred anything that kept her at her own hearth, and gave her own little girls the benefit of her society and instruction. And do you suppose there was any one part of her education which did not help her now? Was it not her well-disciplined mind which made her such a quick learner that Miss Brook held up her hands in astonishment? Did not her skill in delicate needlework stand her in good stead when it enabled her to throw herself into the gap caused by some sick embroideresses at the very moment when a large fancy order was driving her employer to despair? Was her drawing quite thrown away, when at last new patterns were suddenly wanted, and she revealed that she could supply them, although she had not been prepared to starve till that genteel work came in her way, and although that genteel work not being very constant or trustworthy, she contentedly returned to her stitching in its intervals.

All her rare gifts of economy and "household good" found worthy service now. She could make wholesome and dainty dishes at less cost than her neighbours' unsavoury messes. These neighbours were not unwilling to learn of her either, for she was no despised "French madam," suspected of frogs and grass. She could also teach her own little girls. She knew, too, the most effective and simplest modes of cleanliness.

Do not think that her life was all sunshine.

It takes an inward struggle before eyes that have been used to rich carpets shine contentedly on bare boards. (And bare boards continued the fashion with the Harveys for many a day, for even when little odd prosperities came to them Elizabeth would not spend any perceptible sums on luxuries until they had made a little hoard against a possible time of sickness and adversity.) And it takes a great struggle for a delicately-bred lady to accept that it is her duty to God and man to go out bare-handed, and store her one pair of gloves for Sunday wear. And it takes a greater struggle still for a mother to pass in and out among words and scenes which she would die to keep from her children's ears, and yet to believe that God's angels close their wings over them and shut them in from harm.

Neither think that her life had no galas.

There was a genuine merriment in their Saturday evening marketing, with sometimes

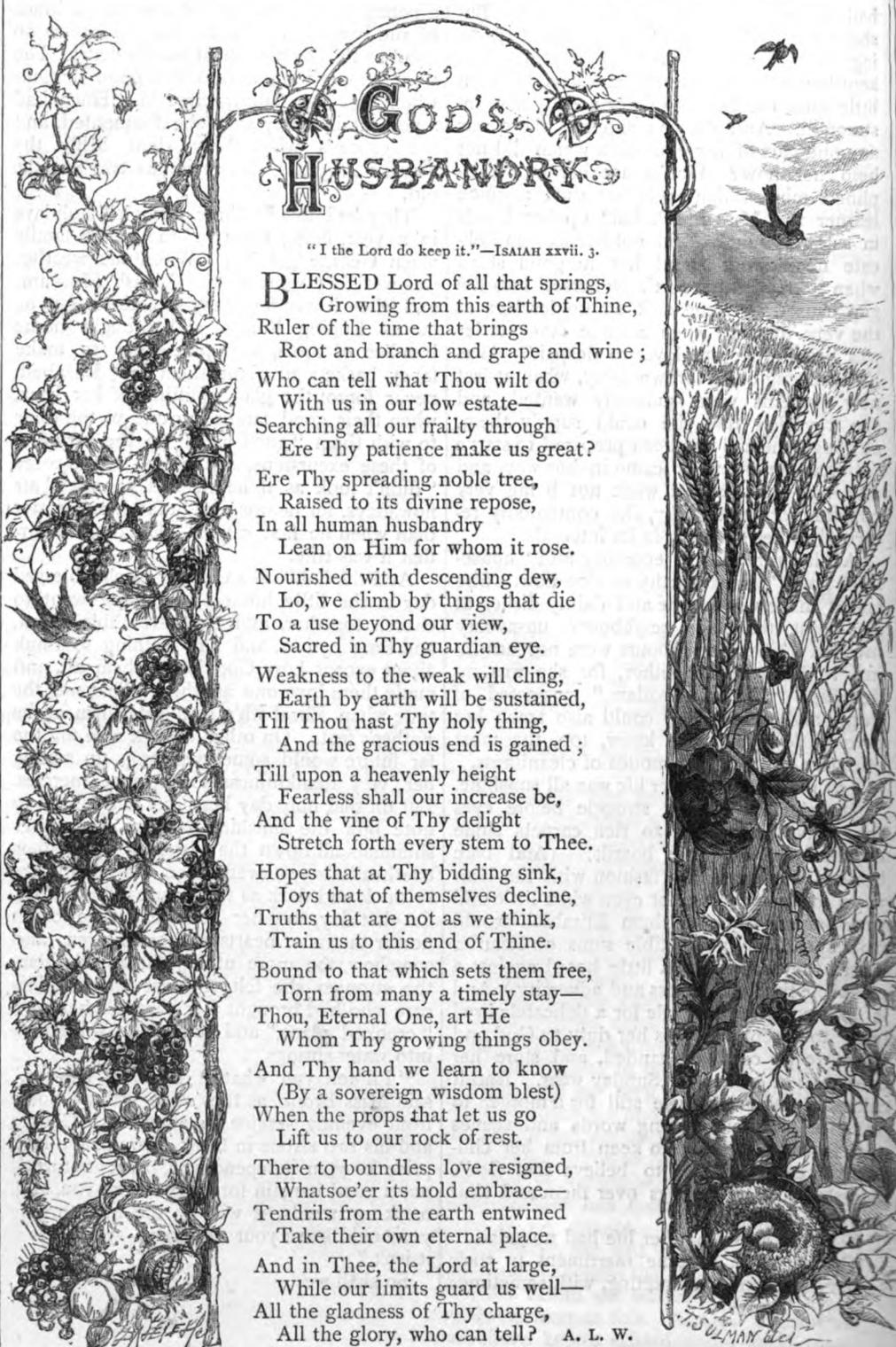
a penny over for a bunch of flowers or a brace of ruddy apples. [N.B.—No apples are so good as those which must be divided.] The tradespeople were always in a good humour when that little family came in. Hatty had a pet cat in every shop she frequented, and the grocer's wife always lent Milly the *Youth's Magazine* before it was two months old.

They had two or three "whole" holidays in a year, fixing them for the whole family when George got his. When the weather was wet they went to the British Museum, and when it was fine they sometimes got as far as Epping Forest, and brought home bundles of roots, and pine-cones to make fancy baskets to plant them in. Elizabeth never forgot the glad uplifting of her heart when their good landlady came to the door to wish them "good luck" on the very first of these excursions, and added that George "didn't look as if he needed change o' air nowadays, for he was a sight fatter and rosier than when he first came." Elizabeth knew that it was true.

And the Sabbath was always such a blessed day in the little home—when they went to church together, and read the Bible aloud, and sang hymns, and had nothing to think about except how God loved them all, and made them love one another. That was the time when Elizabeth's soul sat down at its Father's feet. On other days a care for the far future would sometimes crop up among her very thankfulness for present mercies. But on that holy day her heart had leisure to note how the sunshine of God's promises shimmers all down the vistas of life, and is overhead always, even when the boughs are so thick and dark as to obscure it for a while. On that day, too, her heart had time to get nearer the inner hearts of her children, and somehow, the more utterly she loved them, the stronger she felt to trust them to His care who had brought her through her own "crooked place," and turned its wilderness into water-springs.

"I'll tell you what it is, Mrs. Harvey," said Miss Brook, as they once walked home from evening service together, with George and his two sisters in front, "you paid a high price for your independence, but it has turned out a good bargain for every one of you, and, mark my words, it will be the best fortune you could leave your children;—you'll see if it isn't."

So shall we.



GOD'S HUSBANDRY

"I the Lord do keep it."—ISAIAH xxvii. 3.

BLESSED Lord of all that springs,
 Growing from this earth of Thine,
 Ruler of the time that brings
 Root and branch and grape and wine ;
 Who can tell what Thou wilt do
 With us in our low estate—
 Searching all our frailty through
 Ere Thy patience make us great ?
 Ere Thy spreading noble tree,
 Raised to its divine repose,
 In all human husbandry
 Lean on Him for whom it rose.
 Nourished with descending dew,
 Lo, we climb by things that die
 To a use beyond our view,
 Sacred in Thy guardian eye.
 Weakness to the weak will cling,
 Earth by earth will be sustained,
 Till Thou hast Thy holy thing,
 And the gracious end is gained ;
 Till upon a heavenly height
 Fearless shall our increase be,
 And the vine of Thy delight
 Stretch forth every stem to Thee.
 Hopes that at Thy bidding sink,
 Joys that of themselves decline,
 Truths that are not as we think,
 Train us to this end of Thine.
 Bound to that which sets them free,
 Torn from many a timely stay—
 Thou, Eternal One, art He
 Whom Thy growing things obey.
 And Thy hand we learn to know
 (By a sovereign wisdom blest)
 When the props that let us go
 Lift us to our rock of rest.
 There to boundless love resigned,
 Whatsoe'er its hold embrace—
 Tendrils from the earth entwined
 Take their own eternal place.
 And in Thee, the Lord at large,
 While our limits guard us well—
 All the gladness of Thy charge,
 All the glory, who can tell? A. L. W.

THE ULMAN del.



"CROOKED PLACES."



THIS IS THE WAY.*

"A word behind thee, saying, This is the way."—ISAIAH xxx. 21.

TWO gifts of God are distinguished in this prophecy. One is for the eye; the other is for the ear. One is in front; the other is behind. "Thine eyes shall see thy teachers." "Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee."

There is one thing common to the two promises. Both offer guidance. Both imply the blessedness, both presuppose the desire, of being guided. God Himself can open to the sincere person no greater happiness than that of right guidance.

To the sincere. And to them only can God speak. To the double-minded there is a special call, but it is of a preliminary kind. Cleanse your hearts, that God may speak to you. He cannot deal with you as you are, save in judgment. You will misread, mishear, misunderstand everything that God says, till you are in earnest. When you are—when the Advent call has found you out, "Sinner, prepare to meet thy God"—then you will ask in good earnest, "What wilt Thou, Lord? What shall I do? Where, and what, is eternal life?" and you will count yourself the happiest of men in that day, if the twofold promise should unfold itself to you:—

"Thine eyes shall see thy teachers ;"

and,

"Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying!"

It is with the latter that we are concerned now. There is something mysterious in that "behind thee." It will bear pondering. I think it distinguishes the wanderer from the steadfast. The "teacher seen" is the director. He is in front of the wayfarer, guiding the steps. He is in time to prevent error; to say, "This is the way; keep it, and you find life." The "word behind" is the voice of the corrector—following the straying footsteps, and bringing back the right-hand or left-hand rover into the way of peace.

Guidance itself—Divine guidance—has two parts, two aspects, two functions and offices, towards His people: the one is the office of direction, the other is the office of correction.

Which want we, my brethren? which of the two guidances? the teacher in sight, or the word behind?

Yes, for us, here assembled on the Eve of Christmas, muffled up before men with our secrets of life and our mysteries of soul, but before God, each one, "naked and open"—

direction and correction are practically one and the same; but, if we are asked and must answer, I know you will all say—

"For me, for me, the word behind! Direction for the saint, correction for the sinner!" A word behind thee, saying, This is the way.

The possible voices are many.

There is the voice of inclination, saying, This is the way.

What harm can it do, just once, and just once more, to indulge passion, to give the rein to self-interest, to ambition, to vanity, to folly, to lust? does not every one so?

And there is the voice of indolence, saying, This is the way.

It is irksome, it is intolerable, to be always on the stretch; to be looking narrowly, pedantically, at each thing as right or wrong, as safe or perilous, as a duty or a sin. Surely, surely, there are many things of neutral colour—neither this nor that—words, enjoyments, actions too, which God has mercifully left to us unsaddened, unsoured, by the religious question. At all events, life is short, and pleasure shorter; and there will be sickness, there will be sorrow, there will be old age, there will be death, to make these subjects less distasteful, more congenial—therefore for the time I will take my fill of that which is. I will say to the monitor of eternity, as Felix said to-day to St. Paul, "When I have a convenient season, I will call for thee."

And there is the voice of unbelief, saying, This is the way.

All is uncertain—Revelation, the Bible, Jesus Christ most of all. It is unsafe to take that way, the way of simple faith, of humble trust, of personal love to the Invisible One. I will show thee a way, which, if not all that thou desirest, is yet enough for thee—the way of duty and morality, the way of kindness and charity, the way which must be part of the right and may be the whole of it; walk in that; yes—quoting Scripture as usual—do justly, and love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God; visit the fatherless and widow, and keep thyself unspotted from wickedness, and thou canst not be lost; thou mayest (even if there be a Christ) be saved for thy well-doing.

This is one of the voices, and thousands listen to it, and walk for a lifetime in dim darkness, when Christ is offering them the very daylight of God.

And there is the voice of custom—the world's, the church's custom—saying, This is the way.

Be quite sure that, whatever fanatics and enthusiasts may tell you, however they may for a time vex and convulse consciences, or even galvanize mind and life into a temporary revolution of being, it is always the middle course, the creed and practice of moderation, which has the truth and will prevail. Be with the multitude, not of the godless or profane or licentious, but of the respectable and regular and religious—and you must be safe. Shun extremes, stand on the old paths, and there will be, for you, few regrets and no remorse.

And then, once again, there is quite another voice in your ears, different from all these, the voice of a new-old teacher, saying, This, this is the way.

You are weak, and ignorant, and a child ; you cannot study the Bible for yourself, so as to draw from it its hidden secret ; you cannot expect to see where wiser men have been blind ; you cannot expect to decide where great men, mighty men, saintly men, have differed : resign your intellect, your judgment, your conscience to me, and I will guide you. I am the voice of the Church, speaking the wisdom of the first and purest age, ere yet Christ was divided, or heresy had intruded itself into the bosom of infallible truth. I will undertake you—I, represented by some priest of the Church Catholic, will direct, correct, discipline, guarantee you. I will receive your confessions, I will minister your absolution, I will apply the requisite medicine of the wounds, and the blood, and the passion, and the Cross of Jesus. That which you cannot do for yourself without infinite risk—that which God Himself does not for you, save through the Church—you shall thus have from me, in its purity, in its comfort, in its certainty, in its strength. This is the way, walk ye in it !

Brethren, we speak that which we know. These are among the counterfeit voices, more specious or less, which are bidding for your souls. God forbid that we should confuse or confound them one with another—as though there were no difference, in these matters, between the voice of selfish passion, and the voice of idle worldliness, and the voice of religious earnestness : still, we cannot think that any of these are the very thing spoken of in the text. God help us to apprehend it : it is, might we but grasp it, the life and the light of men.

We have erred and strayed—this very verse says so—to the right hand and to the left. And God promises a word behind us, saying, "This is the way."

There are many lesser, lower senses in which He fulfils it ; and they are all true fulfilments, unless they be divorced from the one, the all-embracing.

1. Providence itself is oftentimes such a word behind us.

How often have we fallen into some snare of the devil—laid for us in evil companionship, laid for us in worldly connexion, laid for us in bosom sin—and we were entirely captivated and captured ! We lay, at uneasy rest, in the thing that was wrong ; we loved it, or we acquiesced in it, or we despaired under it : and it would have held us fast till this hour ; but God interposed—prepared one of His strong east winds, or one of His insignificant worms, of which the Bible tells, and smote our gourd, or let the sun beat upon our head : either satiety, or fickleness, or treachery stepped in—perhaps a fever, perhaps a death—the snare was broken, and we were delivered. Then we began to see and to loathe ourselves in our own sight. Why ? Because the word was then at last audible behind us, This, this is the way—the way of duty, and therefore the way of peace.

2. Conscience is one of these words behind us. More often, perhaps, than it is the "teacher seen." St. Paul himself—we heard it this morning—found it no easy matter to keep his conscience always in front of him. He says he had to "exercise" himself—the original word is that which gave its title to asceticism ; it expresses a perpetual practising and disciplining of the whole life, the whole man, unto obedience, unto godliness—"to have always an unstumbling conscience," a conscience which does not trip and fall over hillocks of guilty memory—such is the figure—as it reviews and sits in judgment upon the thing, the history that is past.

Conscience, even in the faithful, is too often a word behind, reproving rather than guiding : yet even thus it is one of God's words. Yes ; through it, chiefly, are any of God's words spoken. Conscience is the self-knowledge, the self-privy, which tells me what I am, and of what sort that thing is. Conscience, taught of Christ, is the very word of words as to duty. Even heathen moralists and satirists could tell of its retributive lash—could write startlingly, thrillingly, of its force as a word behind. Often has it been God's first voice in the man, preparing him for Christ ; saying, This is the way, and

in this way without Christ thou canst not walk.

3. Pre-eminently, predominantly, is the Gospel the word behind us. How often in the night-watches has the face of the Man of Sorrows, stricken, smitten, crucified by us as for us, brought the conviction of sin into some hard heart! Oh, surely it was the wisdom as well as the love of God—His “manifold” wisdom angels call it—which devised that plan and scheme of the re-purchase! The Gospel of Jesus Christ ought to be, is in countless thousands, the teacher seen, the Cross itself the spectacle of persuasion and of direction. More often still is it the other—the conviction of sin unto correction of the sinner.

Surely, surely, there is a loving God who gives energy and power to His Gospel. Every day, were the eye of this soul but open to behold Him, we should see signs and proofs of His working.

A few weeks ago—I vouch not for the particulars—I repeat but at second-hand, ignorant of names and dates, the fact itself, which yet I thankfully accept in its substance—a few weeks ago, at this Sunday service, there entered this Church, as any common casual worshipper might do, a young creature in deepest distress and despair—so wretched, that she had resolved on self-destruction, and brought with her into this presence the poison which was to end life. The service began. There fell upon her heart, with a meaning unfelt before, those words of the General Confession—Oh, who has pondered them to-day?—“We have erred and strayed”—yes, there was the voice behind, “when we turn to the right hand and when we turn to the left:” presently there was the pleading cry—and then the tears could not be restrained—“Spare us, Good Lord, spare Thy people whom Thou hast redeemed with Thy most precious blood:” then the hymn: then the sermon—I know not what—she left the church, and threw the poison into the Thames. Now that disconsolate life, that desperate soul, has found entire rest and peace in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. God followed up His gracious work by other instrumentality, till He made the word behind a word also within.

Great solemnity is given to these Temple Church Sundays by one such history, one such experience. Oh what ought to be the earnestness of the minister, what ought to be the devoutness of the congregation, when he knows, and they know, that, in the very midst of them, there may be a fierce battle

like this raging in secret between Christ and the devil! How frightful does such a reflection render the profaneness which is (I had almost said) rampant here side by side with the agony! I myself see from the Altar-Table a levity and a trifling which would be incredible without the eye-witness. Scarce a Sunday or two after the secret wrestling of that soul which was here saved as by fire, two other persons—as young, as seemly, as decorous (doubtless) in other things, as she of whom I have spoken—were discussing half-aloud, during the service or sermon, to the terrible discomfort of others, their plans of departure and of journeying! Would to God that the word might this day be heard behind these, if they be again by chance here present, Repent, and believe, and be saved!

4. But neither Providence, nor conscience, nor even the Gospel, is the very voice itself, which is here predicted and promised.

There was one special gift and grace of this final, this closing dispensation, so wonderful, so stupendous, in its character, that even saints under the Old Testament—even the Baptist, who had a dispensation all his own, between the Old and the New—were not in the Kingdom of Heaven for lack of it. That promise, that gift, that grace—the fulfilment of the promise here open before us—is the Holy Ghost the Comforter.

We stay not to enquire, to-day, in what respect the Pentecostal gift differed from the Pre-Messianic—or “He dwelleth with you,” from “He shall be in you.” Enough for us to record, to emphasize, and to lay to heart the Scripture. The word, the voice, saying, not once for all, but in each instance and each instant of duty, This is the way—when we, but for it, are turning aside to the right hand or to the left—is that of God’s Holy Spirit; purchased for us on Calvary; out-poured upon us—yea, upon the Church and the Christian of all time—at Pentecost; sought day by day, received day by day, in each emergency of being, but not less in the unmarked, colourless days of existence, by every believing man, as the anointing oil of the day’s consecration, as the informing, enabling, empowering influence of every duty and of every devotion; as the vital supply which makes the whole body of Christ one; as that present possession which guarantees in the future the resurrection of the just, and the everlasting life of heaven.

Whither, my brethren, has this hope of the Church fled, that we seldom hear of it now, save in some vague, generalized, impersonal

figure, such as influence, assistance, or grace? Sure I am, that, if we would ever know what the true life of God is, we must stir up within us the revelation of the Holy Ghost. Sure I am, that, if we would ever find comfort in prayer, access to the Throne, or strength for holy living, we must find each, find all, in a far more intelligent, reliant, affiant, entreaty for the personal presence and indwelling of the Holy Ghost. What are we not missing by our indifference, by our unbelief? Saints of old "prayed in the Holy Ghost," "were in the Spirit on the Lord's Day," had "the love of the Spirit" for their chief plea one with another, had the "supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ" for the very life-blood circulating in the soul's veins, giving vigour to their health and vitality to their life.

Oh, when the Son of Man cometh, shall He, even in this one primary, vital point, find faith in His very Church? What might not preaching be, if the sinful man who rises with "his word of exhortation for the people," had first clothed, endued, hidden, lost himself in the Holy Spirit? "O hide this self from me," we pray, half in vain—

why? Because we do not half realize as we ought that only possible way of putting off the old man, which is the putting on the new! Only he can be indeed self-forgetting, who is pervaded, transfigured, re-created, by receiving into him the Spirit which maketh all things new. Only he can do one day's or one hour's work, not for self, but for God and Christ and eternity, who prays, not in word but in deed, for the entrance into him of the Holy Ghost to enable him both to will and to work of God's good pleasure.

Then, in each difficult duty—then, in each critical struggle—then, in each depressing circumstance, inward and outward, whether of loss, or of weakness, or of solitude, or of self-reproach, or of utter, wretched, desperate self-abhorrence—we shall still, listening for it, hear the word behind: Thou hast done all this wickedness—yet this is the way: God, who has been pleased to buy you back with the blood of Jesus, will not leave nor forsake you: He will guide you still with his counsel; He will receive you at last to His glory!

C. J. VAUGHAN.

FLETCHER OF MADELEY.

JEAN GUILLAUME DE LA FLECHERE, commonly called Fletcher of Madeley, was the youngest son of a Bernese gentleman, Colonel de la Fléchère, and descended from a noble house of Savoy. Colonel de la Fléchère had distinguished himself in the armies of France and Switzerland, and on his retirement from the service, had settled at Nyon, near Geneva, where his son Jean was born, Sept. 12, 1729. Jean was, with his brothers, educated at the college of Geneva, where he was remarkable for his extreme diligence, for, besides devoting the whole day to his studies, he would frequently spend a great portion of the night in making notes of what he had read. He carried away several prizes, among them two of those awarded for distinction in classics, and this, as more than one of his biographers remark with surprise, although some of the competitors were nearly related to the professors who conducted the examinations. From Geneva he went to Lenzburg, in the canton of Aargau, where he learnt German; and having acquired that language, he returned home and devoted himself to the study of Hebrew and mathematics. His

parents, seeing that he was of a thoughtful disposition, were anxious that he should become a clergyman, and they were both surprised and displeased when he announced his intention of going into the army. His reasons we give in his own words:—

"From the time I first began to feel the love of God shed abroad in my heart (I think at seven years of age), I resolved to give myself up to God and the service of his Church if ever I should be fit for it; but the corruption which is in the world, and that which was within my heart, soon weakened, if not erased, those first characters which grace had written upon it. However, I went through my studies with the design of going into orders, but afterwards feeling I was unequal to so great a burden, disgusted by the necessity I should be under to subscribe to the high Calvinism of the Geneva Articles, and disapproving of entering upon so sacred an office from any secular motives, I yielded to the desire of those of my friends who advised me to enter the army."

Colonel and Madame de la Fléchère would not consent to their son's becoming a soldier, but he was not to be turned from his purpose; and, after carefully studying the works of Cohorn and Vauban, he went away to Lisbon and accepted a commission, seemingly at the head of a body of his young countrymen, in the service of the King of

Portugal. He was to sail at once in a man-of-war for the Brazils, and wrote home for a large sum of money, which he hoped to lay out to great advantage there: this was refused by his father, and Jean resolved to go without it. He was on the very point of starting when a servant, in waiting on him at breakfast, let the kettle of boiling water fall on his legs, and scalded him so severely that he was confined to his bed for some weeks, during which time the vessel sailed, and was never more heard of. Jean then determined to join his uncle, who was a colonel in the Dutch service, and from whom he had the offer of a commission; but the peace which was declared just as he arrived in Flanders, and the death of his uncle, which took place shortly afterwards, put an end to his military prospects.

The strong opposition which Colonel de la Fléchère had shown to his son's wishes made him unwilling to return to his home, and whilst he was wavering in his choice of a profession, he arranged to spend a short time in England. He went, for the purpose of learning the language, into the school of a Mr. Burchell, at South Mimms, in Hertfordshire, and studied English literature with much diligence for nearly two years. By this time he had returned to his early desire of being a clergyman, but wishing for leisure for consideration and study, he procured (at the recommendation of M. Déchamps, a French minister in London) the situation of tutor to the two sons of Mr. Hill, M.P. for Shrewsbury, who lived at Tern Hall, near Atcham, on the Severn. Here Fletcher, as he began to be called, devoted much of his attention to religious subjects, and was very frequent in his attendance at church. But he was soon to take a more decided step. As Mr. Hill and his family were travelling up to London for the meeting of Parliament, they halted at St. Alban's, and Fletcher strolled out into the town, and remained away so long that he was left behind. When he overtook the rest of the party and was asked the reason of his delay, he said that he had heard an old woman talk so delightfully of Jesus Christ that he could not leave her. Mrs. Hill exclaimed in surprise, "I shall wonder if our tutor does not turn Methodist!" "Methodist, madam," said Fletcher, "pray what is that?" She replied, "Why, the Methodists are a people that do nothing but pray; they are praying all day and all night." "Are they indeed?" he answered; "then, by the help of God, I will find them out if they be above ground."

Accordingly, on his arrival in London, Fletcher joined the Methodist Society, by becoming a member of the class under the care of Mr. Richard Edwards. He considered at first that he was quite one of the best persons among the Methodists, and "endeavoured by doing much to make himself acceptable to God," but he was roused by a fearful dream from this condition, and, on hearing a sermon upon saving faith, he became convinced that he did not understand its nature. "Is it possible," he asked himself, "that I, who have always been accounted so religious, who have made divinity my study, and received the premium of piety (so called) from my university for my writings on divine subjects,—is it possible that I should yet be so ignorant as not to know what faith is?" He added that he felt sure that "nothing but a revelation of the Lord Jesus to his heart could make him a true believer." In a diary which he kept for a little while at this time, he wrote:—

"When I saw that all my endeavours towards conquering sin availed nothing, I almost gave up all hope, and resolved to sin on and go to hell. But I remember there was a sort of sweetness even in the midst of these abominable thoughts. 'If I go to hell,' said I, 'I will serve God there, and since I cannot be an instance of his mercy in heaven, I will be a monument of his justice in hell, and if I show forth his glory one way or the other, I am content.' But I soon recovered my ground. I thought Christ died for all, therefore He died for me; He died to pluck such sinners as I am as brands out of the burning. And as I sincerely desire to be his, He will surely take me to himself; He will surely let me know before I die that He hath died for me, and will break asunder these chains wherewith I am bound. . . . So I went on, sinning and repenting, and sinning again, but still calling on God's mercy through Christ."

After a long struggle with the coldness and deadness of feeling which so distressed him, Fletcher began to hope that he would be able to find strength and peace, and at last the time came. He had one night continued his prayers till very late, when he accidentally opened his Bible at the 55th Psalm, and saw the words, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee."

"Filled with joy," he says, "I fell again on my knees to beg of God that I might always cast my burden on Him. I took up my Bible again, and opened it on these words: 'The Lord, He it is that doth go before thee: He will be with thee, He will not fail thee, neither forsake thee; fear not, neither be dismayed' (Deut. xxxi. 8.) My hope was now greatly increased, I thought I saw myself conqueror over sin, hell, and all manner of affliction. With this comfortable promise I shut my Bible, being now perfectly satisfied; and as I shut it I cast my eyes on that passage, 'Whatsoever ye ask in my name, I will do it.' So, having asked grace of God to serve Him till death, I went cheerfully to take my rest."

Fletcher devoted all his spare time to reading, meditation, and prayer; he sat up during two nights in each week, and on other evenings he made it a rule to read in bed as long as he could keep awake, until one night his curtains and cap took fire, and he narrowly escaped being burnt to death. He refused to dine at Mr. Hill's table, and lived wholly on vegetables, bread, and milk; but in after life he said that, although he did not then feel the need of the sleep and substantial food of which he deprived himself, he would not so abstain if he had the same time to spend over again. He read scarcely any books but the Bible and the "Christian's Pattern," but we may suppose from the regret which he so often expressed afterwards that he had never had time to read Shakespeare, that in this respect also he wished he had acted differently. Almost his only recreation was a walk by the Severn between the services on Sunday, in which he was accompanied by an old servant of Mr. Hill's, who entertained views very similar to his own, and who had once severely rebuked him for copying music on Sunday. But Fletcher felt the need of friendly counsel; and at first selected Mr. Edwards as an adviser. He afterwards turned to Charles Wesley, and continued to consult him as long as he lived.

In 1756 Fletcher made the acquaintance of the Countess of Huntingdon, and at her request preached several times at her house. He had by this time almost determined to become a clergyman, and in the second year of his residence at Tern Hall his resolution was finally taken. After much thought, and consultation with Charles Wesley (in whom he had such confidence that he only asked as an answer—Persist, or Forbear), Fletcher was ordained deacon on Sunday, March 6, 1757, by the Bishop of Hereford, and priest on the following Sunday, by the Bishop of Bangor, in the Chapel Royal, St. James's. The same day he hastened to the West Street chapel, where he assisted Charles Wesley in his service, and he constantly preached there, in Spitalfields, and in other London chapels, both in English and in French. On his return to the country he was asked to preach at Atcham, but his plain speaking gave offence to the congregation; "they gazed at him as if he had been a monster," and he was not for some time invited to preach to them again. Indeed, during the next six months he did not preach more than six times, on each occasion in one of the Shrewsbury churches, or at Wroxeter.

In the next year, when Fletcher accom-

panied his pupils to London, he stopped on his way to see the Rev. John Berridge of Everton, of whom he had heard much, and introduced himself as one anxious for instruction and advice. Mr. Berridge, perceiving him to be a foreigner, asked where he came from, and on hearing that he was a Swiss, inquired if he was acquainted with a young man named Fletcher, who had preached for the Mr. Wesleys, and had gained much praise from them. Fletcher replied that he was, but added that if the Mr. Wesleys knew that young man as well as he did they would not praise him so much. When Mr. Berridge expressed surprise at his visitor's thus speaking of a countryman, and at his doubting the justice of the opinion formed by the Mr. Wesleys, Fletcher discovered himself, and Mr. Berridge requested him to preach for him next day that he might form his own opinion of him. They became great friends, and were scarcely even separated by a warm controversy which they had when Fletcher published his "Checks to Antinomianism," and Mr. Berridge answered and remarked upon it in his "Christian World Unmasked;" for in the end of 1776, when they met, not having seen each other since their first introduction twenty years before, Mr. Berridge embraced Fletcher, exclaiming, "How could we write against each other when we both aim at the same thing, the glory of God and the good of souls? But my book lies very quietly on the shelf, and there let it lie!"

Fletcher was invited to preach in French to the prisoners on parole at Tunbridge, but the Bishop of London, from some unexplained reason, rejected the petition made to him on the subject, and the sermon was never preached. He occasionally officiated in London, and on his return to Shropshire, he so frequently assisted Mr. Chambrey, the Vicar of Madeley, that he was called his curate. In this year, 1760, Fletcher's duties as tutor came to an end, for his pupils went to Cambridge; the eldest of them died soon afterwards, but the youngest lived to succeed his father in the representation of Shrewsbury and to become Baron Berwick of Attingham House—for so he called Tern Hall. Mr. Hill asked Fletcher if he would take the living of Dunham in Cheshire, telling him that the parish was small, the duty light, the income good (£400 a year), and the place situated in a fine healthy sporting country. Fletcher with many thanks refused the offer, saying that Dunham would not suit him, for there was too much money and too little labour. Mr. Hill said it was a pity to refuse

such a living, but as his object was to make Fletcher comfortable in his own way, he asked if he would prefer Madeley, as Mr. Chambrey would gladly go to Dunham, that being worth more than twice as much. This exchange was accordingly effected, and in the end of 1760 Fletcher was established as Vicar of Madeley.

Madeley was even then a very busy and populous place, full, like Coalbrookdale, of collieries and iron-works, and possessing also an extensive china manufactory; the people were lawless, drunken, and devoted to bull-baiting, cock-fighting, and other cruel sports. Fletcher set himself to improve their condition by every means in his power; he held frequent services and prayer-meetings, he made the acquaintance of every one of his parishioners, he personally attended those who were suffering from infectious fevers and who could get no nurse to approach them, he denied himself in all ways in order to be able to relieve their necessities—going without fires, and even giving up many letters to save the then considerable expense of postage. His sermons, which, after he was able to speak English with ease, were always extempore, were very powerful and striking, and his delivery so good, that Wesley considered that he had never met his equal as a preacher; but the influence which he gained in Madeley was in a great measure due to the extreme kindness which marked all his actions, and to the ready wit with which he would point a remark or draw a lesson from some passing occurrence; and his active habits, energy of character, and great personal courage were not without their effect on his rough parishioners. A few instances will show the way in which he dealt with the people. To one collier who would not listen to any of his remonstrances or entreaties, he said, "Well, John, you must either turn or burn." To another, just as he was about to register his marriage, he observed, "William, you have had your name entered in our register once before this." "Yes, sir, at my christening." "And now," continued Fletcher, "your name will be entered a second time. You have no doubt thought much about your present step, and made proper preparations for it in a great many different ways?" "Yes, sir." "Recollect, however, that a third entry of your name, the register of your burial, will sooner or later be made. Think, then, about death, and make preparation for that also, lest it overtake you as a thief in the night." One man, in consequence of a reproof from Fletcher, vowed

that he would never enter the church; and once, coming with a funeral, he remained in the porch during the service. Fletcher came out to him and begged him to leave off his evil ways, and at last, finding him obdurate, he said, "Oh, John, if you will not come to God's house on your own feet, prepare, at any rate, for the time when you must come there on your neighbours' shoulders."

Fletcher held stirring services in the open air, and thus attracted many hearers who would not come to church, and on Sunday he would go round his parish with a bell (starting at five A.M. in order to reach the most distant houses), to call those who had excused themselves from morning service because they could not wake in time to get their needful work done before they went. He continually preached against the cruel sports so common in Madeley, and against the evils of the wakes and fairs which were often held there. He was, in consequence, frequently threatened by the rough colliers, who would not give up their amusements, and once some of the most lawless planned a "parson-baiting," as they called it, in which he was to be pulled off his horse and worried by their fierce dogs. But Fletcher's courageous spirit in time commanded their respect, his kindness and tact began to tell, and his church gradually filled. The opposition of the neighbouring clergy and squires, who resented his interference with the established pursuits of the neighbourhood, was more slow to yield, and showed itself in constant petty persecution; but this also in time gave way before the untiring zeal with which Fletcher pursued his object. He wrote to Charles Wesley:—

"When I first came to Madeley I was greatly mortified and discouraged by the smallness of my congregation. . . . But now, thank God, things are altered in that respect, and last Sunday I had the pleasure of seeing some in the churchyard who could not get into the church."

But in less than a year he had to add:—

"My church begins not to be so well filled as it has been, and I account for it by the following reasons: The curiosity of some of my hearers is satisfied, and others are offended by the word; the roads are worse, and if it shall ever please the Lord to pour his Spirit upon us, the time is not yet come, for, instead of saying, 'Let us go up together to the house of the Lord,' they exclaim, 'Why should we go and hear a Methodist?' I should lose all patience with my flock if I had not more reason to be satisfied with them than with myself."

Fletcher worked steadily on, adopting the plan of preaching a sermon of Archbishop Usher's, or of reading one of the Homilies,

at his afternoon service, and "taking leave to make observations on such passages as confirmed what had been advanced" in his own sermon in the morning; by this plan those persons who only came to find fault were silenced or baffled, and by degrees his church filled with willing hearers. He devoted himself to his work so entirely that he never left Madeley for ten years after his appointment, and declared that a parish was a greater tie than a wife. However, in the spring of 1770 he was persuaded to take a holiday, and travelled for five months with his friend, Mr. Ireland, in the South of France, where he preached to the Protestants in the Cevennes: he ended by visiting his old home in Switzerland.

But Madeley was now an orderly parish, and Fletcher in consequence was not obliged to occupy himself so exclusively in his work there. Lady Huntingdon had never lost sight of him, and on his return to England she asked him to become the head of the college which she had established in 1769 at Trevecca, in South Wales. This college was intended for religious young men of all denominations, and the terms of admission were that "the students should be truly converted to God, and resolved to dedicate themselves to his service." They were boarded, clothed, and taught for three years at Lady Huntingdon's expense, and after that time were to become either clergymen of the Church of England or Dissenting ministers, as they chose. Fletcher declined the governorship of this college, as he would not leave Madeley; but he consented to act as a sort of superior in it, and made frequent visits to it to appoint masters, to admit or exclude students, to judge of their qualifications for the ministry, and to overlook their studies. But very soon the college began to be divided against itself. We cannot indeed wonder at its failure (even without a clear understanding of the points of difference), when we read the description given by Mr. Cox, one of the biographers of Fletcher. He says—

"Lady Huntingdon, the founder of the college, leaned to supralapsarianism; the Hon. Walter Shirley, the president, to sublapsarianism; Mr. Fletcher, the visitor, maintained the doctrine of general redemption; and Mr. Henderson, who had just resigned to Mr. Benson his office of classical tutor, was an Universalist."

Mr. Cox goes on:—

"The superior talents, eminent piety, and conciliatory manners of the visitor, might for some time longer have neutralised these jarring elements, had not Mr. Wesley, in his zeal to check the progress

of Antinomianism, publicly borne his testimony in his Minutes of Conference against that error in language which was supposed to border on Pelagianism."

Upon this Lady Huntingdon forgot her liberal views, and declared that any student who did not fully disavow the doctrines of those Minutes must leave her college. The masters and students had to give their opinion in writing, and Fletcher sent in his resignation, saying that as he should always believe that Christ died for all men, he considered himself to be discharged from his post. Mr. Benson left the college at the same time, and Fletcher thus wrote to him:—

"So far as we can, let us keep this matter to ourselves. When you speak of it to others, rather endeavour to palliate than aggravate what has been wrong in your opponents. Remember that that great lady has been an instrument of great good, and that there are inconsistencies attending the greatest and best of men."

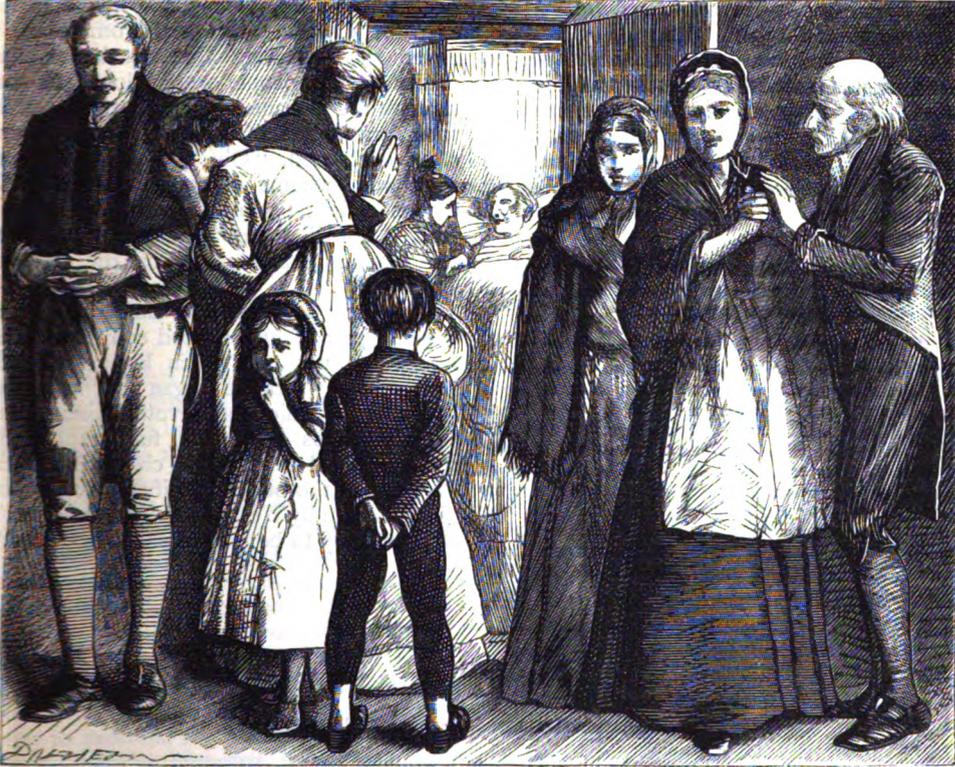
But, as was to be expected, the controversy became public, and was continued for some time; Wesley passed on his share in it to Fletcher, and he now wrote his "Checks to Antinomianism"—his principal opponents being the Rev. Augustus Toplady (so well known from his hymns), Sir Richard Hill, of Hawkstone, and his brother the celebrated Rowland Hill, and the Rev. Mr. Berridge. The dispute was carried on with extreme warmth, and the following anecdote will show the almost incredible bitterness of feeling which it called forth:—A person who took the opposite side to Fletcher in the contest came to hear him preach, and, after plainly showing his objection to the discourse during its progress, said at the end, "I do not like your doctrine, sir, because before the sermon you prayed that all men might be saved. That is false doctrine, and if Christ himself came from heaven to preach it I would not believe it."

Fletcher himself deeply regretted the vehemence shown during the controversy, and used to lament that those engaged in it, "though Christians, wished to gore each other." He seems to have confined himself to the purely argumentative side of the matter, and to have drawn back from the personal attacks into which it would have been easy to fall, and he did his best to make friends with all his opponents. To one angry controversialist who refused to shake hands with him, he said, "My dear brother, we serve the same blessed Lord; why then should we disagree because our liveries are not turned up exactly alike?" But the constant worry and distress which such a quarrel could not fail

to bring to a man like Fletcher had a bad effect on his health, which was already weakened by his frequent journeys in all weathers to Trevecca, and by his unceasing labours at Madeley. He would often be out in his parish or holding services at five o'clock in the morning; he generally worked for sixteen hours a day and took no regular meals, and he wearied himself by going to preach at places several miles from Madeley. He was offered another living by the King, whose notice he had attracted by his tract in support of Wesley's view of the right England

had to tax the American colonies, but he declined it, saying, "I want nothing but more grace."

However, in 1776 he was obliged to leave Madeley for a considerable time, for his health had completely broken down, and he was thought to be in a consumption. He never expected to recover, but he consented to try the Bristol waters, and to give himself complete rest. At Bristol he was visited by a man who, although far gone in decline, refused to believe that he was dying; after some conversation with him, Fletcher laid



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his hand on his own chest, and said, "God has fixed a loud knocker at my breast and yours. Because we did not regard as we ought the gentle calls of his Holy Spirit, his Word, and his providences, He has taken fast hold here, and we cannot get out of his hands. Oh, let the knocker waken you!" Fletcher wrote also in a similar strain to Miss Ireland (whose father had taken her abroad in the vain hope of checking the disease of the lungs from which she suffered):—

"To see the bridge of life cut off behind us, and have done with all thoughts of repairing it to go back

into the world, has a natural tendency to make us venture forward to the foot of the Cross. Reflect that though your earthly father loves you much—witness the hundreds of miles he has gone for the bare prospect of your health—yet your Heavenly Father loves you a thousand times better, and He is all wisdom as well as all goodness. Allow then such a gracious, loving Father to choose for you, and if He chooses death, acquiesce, and say, as you can, Good is the will of the Lord; His choice *must* be best."

The Bristol waters had no effect on Fletcher's health, and he left England, going first to Aix-les-Bains, and then to his old home at Nyon, where he remained for more

than three years. The complete rest and pure air did more towards his recovery than could have been expected. At the end of the three years he was able to preach, and on the few occasions that he did so the church at Nyon was far too small for the congregations which assembled, and ladders were placed against the windows, and covered with listeners. During this time Fletcher wrote his principal work, "The Portrait of St. Paul;" it was written in French, but has been well translated into English.

In April, 1781, he returned to England, and in the autumn of that year he married Miss Bosanquet, a lady with whom he had been acquainted for more than twenty years. With the exception of one short visit to some friends in Ireland, Fletcher and his wife stayed at Madeley during the four remaining years of his life—he working among his people with undiminished energy, and she helping him in every possible way. But he was well aware of his precarious condition. To a friend he wrote:—

"God has lately shaken Mr. Wesley over the grave, notwithstanding I think he will survive me. . . . I have been long walking around my grave."

And to Wesley himself he wrote, later:—

"I keep in my sentry-box till Providence remove me; my situation is quite suited to my little strength. I may do as much or as little as I please, according to my weakness; and I have an advantage here which I can have nowhere else in such a degree—my little field of action is just at my door, so that if I happen to overdo myself I have but a step from my pulpit to my bed, and from my bed to my grave. If I had a body full of vigour, and a purse full of money, I should like well enough to travel about as you do, but as Providence did not call me to it, I readily submit. The snail does best in its shell."

Fletcher's last illness was short. In the beginning of August, 1785, many of his parishioners were ill of fever, and one night, after having been among them for more than twelve hours, he complained of extreme fatigue and weakness. He would not, however, take sufficient rest, and on the following Sunday he insisted on doing the whole of the morning service. In the course of his sermon he nearly fainted, and Mrs. Fletcher, pressing through the crowd, entreated him to stop. But he revived a little when a window was opened and a bunch of flowers given him to smell, and went on to the end. Then his strength failed completely, and he was carried from the church to his bed, from which he never rose. During that week he sank gradually; his people were allowed to pass through the passage by the open door of his room, and he, full of distress at leaving them, often exclaimed, "Oh, my poor, my poor, what will become of my poor! But," he always added, turning to his wife, "God is love." He died on Sunday, August 14th, and was buried at Madeley on the following Wednesday.

Fletcher's labours were carried on in an obscure part of his adopted country, his few books are not now much known, but the energy with which he began and continued the work to which he devoted himself, and the saintliness of his life, fully explain the reverence still felt for his character and example, and thoroughly justify the description given of him by Wesley—"A pattern of holiness scarcely to be paralleled in a century."

C. PALMER.

LOVE AND ADORATION.

"Thomas said unto Him, My Lord and my God."—JOHN XX. 28.

OH I would love Thee as I would adore,
 My Lord, my God; my God in whom I live,
 Claiming my life's devotion evermore;
 My Lord, who for my joy Thy joy didst give
 To anguish: for my life Thy life to loss:
 Who more than Maker, more than Master art,
 Claiming my love's devotion, from Thy Cross
 Pleading, "I love thee well, give me thine heart."
 Creator and Redeemer, God and Lord,
 Pledging my life I kneel before Thy face,
 From Thee apostate, yet by Thee restored,
 I pledge my whole heart for Thy tender grace.
 Yea, I would love Thee as I would adore:
 Oh to be worthier! Oh to love Thee more!

S. J. STONE.

FOOTSTEPS OF THE COLPORTEUR.

THE Colporteur movement in Scotland has been a great success. In the north of Ireland, too, it has done remarkably well; England alone, of the three kingdoms, has looked at it shyly. In Scotland, it is as yet but a stripling of seventeen, but as the saying is, it has made a good use of its time. It is a healthy fir-tree that, when sawn across, presents a distinct ring for every year of its life; what shall we infer from the subjoined section of the colportage Scotch fir?—

At the close of 1855 there were 3 colporteurs.

"	"	1856	"	7	"
"	"	1857	"	25	"
"	"	1858	"	54	"
"	"	1859	"	90	"
"	"	1860	"	110	"
"	"	1861	"	124	"
"	"	1862	"	126	"
"	"	1863	"	126	"
"	"	1864	"	131	"
"	"	1865	"	142	"
"	"	1866	"	159	"
"	"	1867	"	164	"
"	"	1868	"	167	"
"	"	1869	"	169	"
"	"	1870	"	179	"
"	"	1871	"	202	"

We like this quiet, steady growth, indicating so clearly that while the branches are spreading, the roots are deepening and the trunk is thickening. But who and what is the colporteur? The simplest answer to this question would be—See the SUNDAY MAGAZINE for 1865, page 822. But we do not flatter ourselves that in more than perhaps one case out of a hundred, this reference would be turned to account. Let us say then in one word, that the ideal colporteur—and in cases not a few the real colporteur as well—is not a mere book-hawker, but an earnest Christian man, who tries to promote the sale of cheap and wholesome Christian literature, with a view to the highest good of the people, and avails himself of the various openings for Christian usefulness that occur in the course of his peregrinations. Chosen without regard to sect or denomination by friends interested in the Christian welfare of the people in their neighbourhood, he is supplied with his ammunition by a society in Edinburgh, and once a month traverses his district, embracing a population of perhaps eight thousand, selling books and Bibles, supplying periodicals to his subscribers, offering tracts to whoever will take them, and using his personal influence in every suitable way for the discouragement of vice, and the promotion of godliness. Wherever he has

average success, the profit on what he sells defrays at least one-half of his salary, and a sum of about thirty pounds a year is all that is needed from local contributions. It is the cheapest of all mission-agencies; it is one of the most catholic, and the results already realised show that it is also one of the most useful.

The origin of the scheme may be traced, we believe, to certain cheap London papers—penny journals and miscellanies that are sent over the country in hundred weights and tons. It was remarked that these were pouring into the homes of the working classes in towns, and even penetrating to the rural districts, absorbing the attention of the young, and giving to their minds a most frivolous if not pernicious direction. In very many cases they furnish the Sunday reading of the people, the magazines being read by the younger members of the families, and the newspapers by the older. Closer investigations brought out the fact that there is much matter surreptitiously circulated of a grossly obscene and disgusting kind. The art of photography, for example, has been employed to an extent which is incredible, in the production of pictures of unsurpassable grossness, and there are women vile enough to traverse the country and endeavour to find purchasers for such infamous filth. Since the colporteur scheme came into operation, the dangers arising from the circulation of unwholesome literature have not decreased, except perhaps in so far as they have been counteracted by the movements of this society and similar agencies. Sensational journals, dealing in police reports and the proceedings of the divorce courts, and accompanying their narratives with hideous pictures, are familiarising the lower class of minds with crime and disorder, and encouraging not a few to go and do likewise. What profess to be biographies of the most abandoned characters, male and female, present the details of the guiltiest careers to readers by the hundred thousand, professing perhaps to show the misery they breed, but really rendering vice interesting, and softening and finally removing the horror with which it is regarded by the healthy conscience. The worst of these things is that they tend, by the very law of their existence, to become worse and worse. The prurient appetite clamours for more and more exciting food, and the ingenuity of the debased and demo-

ralised writer is stimulated to discover how, without incurring the penalties of Lord Campbell's Act, he may make his dishes spicier and spicier. It is beyond doubt that a large section of the people of these islands are trifling with the currents that have been so destructive of the moral fibre of France, and have made that country an easy prey to Bismarck and the Germans. And Acts of Parliament, we must remember, are a poor and feeble protection against corrupting tendencies. No law can be permanently enforced that is not backed by strong public opinion; and if British sentiment should become easy and tolerant of the ways of the *demi-monde*, our laws would be little more effectual than children's walls of sand on the sea-beach against the roll of the advancing ocean.

Perhaps the best way for the general reader to get an idea of the colporteur's labours is to take a tour with him, and see how he gets on. It is the beginning of the month, and he has just got his parcel of periodicals and books from the Edinburgh dépôt. And here comes his first enjoyment. Who does not know the pleasure of the first look of a new number of a favourite magazine, especially if it be well illustrated? What sort of cartoon has the *British Workman* got this month, and what are the texts of Spurgeon's sermons? What is there to attract the youngsters in the *Children's Friend*, and what has the *Adviser* got to rouse the better feelings of the drunkard? Has the SUNDAY MAGAZINE got any of the charming experiences of dear old Edward Garrett, or of his sister Ruth? Where has Dr. Guthrie been wandering, and is it one of the London Charities, or one of his pulpit sermons that he makes the subject of his paper? Ah, here is something in another magazine that just meets a difficult case that puzzled him last month, and that will tell him what so and so wished to know. And what are these tender lines somewhere else, on the death of the Shunammite's son? Full of balm and sweetness to a poor mother in his beat, who has gone through the Shunammite's experience of grief, and may thus be encouraged to lay hold, in some measure, of her resurrection experience too. We would not grudge to the skilful colporteur a little more time than perhaps he usually takes to acquaint himself with the contents of his parcel; for if he read with his customers and people in his view, and store his mind with things adapted to this case and the other, and use them skilfully and readily as he goes along, the time so spent will be as usefully employed as any.

And now he is ready to set out. But first let him kneel down and commend himself and his wares to his Master, and humbly implore that to all with whom he talks he may be guided to say the right word, and that every page that he parts with may bear a blessing to the reader. In the town or hamlet where he resides, he will have a good many periodicals to deliver. Perhaps as he goes along he will have some good news to hear. One day a woman comes up to him and asks, "Do you remember the little book I got from you three weeks ago?" and before he can remember what it was, she says, "It has been the means of saving my soul"—and hurries on, leaving him dumb with surprise and pleasure. Another time he hears that a little book which one of his customers lent to a drunken neighbour has had a marvellous effect, and that she is now quite a changed woman. Possibly the change is on one nearer home, and a house that has been the scene of utter misery gets a streak of Paradise thrown across it. When handing sixpence to the colporteur for a book which he had sold to her the previous month, a married woman remarks—"It has been the best sixpence worth ever was in our house, I can assure you: for I had been reading it, and left it on the settle, and when my husband came in, he took it up and read it in silence, and then aloud, and I rejoiced to see the tears running down his face, and at last he was like to choke; and there and then, for the first time, he saw he was lost, and cried to God for mercy, and has obtained peace through believing. Mrs. J—— and I met every day for prayer, and asked God to change the hearts of our husbands, and you see our prayers have not been in vain. And to think that God employed that little book as the means of bringing him to seek salvation. We had lived a most miserable life about twelve months. We had come to an agreement to part altogether, and I was determined to do so, if I was to experience another of his mad fits. But you see old things are passed away, and all things are become new; for since the change took place he is as peaceable as a lamb, and we are so happy. And now we have family worship, which he takes a delight in."

Another of his happy experiences is to meet with persons in humble life who, at no little cost of time and money, are trying to do good. Here, for example, is a young woman who spends threepence a month in purchasing periodicals which she lays down in the jobbers' room in the slaughter-houses,

for the benefit of the butchers in their leisure hours. Threepence to her may be nearly as much as the two mites of the widow; but encouraged by what she has experienced, she resolves to double the sum; sends word to the colporteur to send sixpence worth hereafter, and for this the men receive monthly the *British Workman*, *British Herald*, *Cottager*, two *Happy Homes*, two *Appeals*, and one *Adviser*, besides a good supply of tracts supplied by the society; "and I believe," adds the colporteur, "that these are the only means of grace that are brought to bear on the most of these poor men. They are the most careless class of men ever I came in contact with, and yet many of them are soft-hearted men too, for when I have the opportunity of speaking to some of them, I have often observed the big tears rolling down the cheeks of the most hardened looking of them all. I asked one of them one day if the periodicals were read by many of the men. He said they were, and the little stories were the subject of conversation many a time when it would have been nothing but cursing and swearing. He said that many of them longed for the first of the month. I ask your prayers that these silent messengers may be blessed to some of these poor men and boys."

Another enjoyment which the colporteur sometimes has, in consequence of his customers belonging to various classes of society, is to suggest to the more comfortable, little ways of helping the distressed which might not otherwise occur to them. Most large houses have a lumber-closet, whose contents only occupy space and are of no use whatever; bring the colporteur, or the Bible-woman into contact with them, and see what treasures they will be found. At present our story is about an old piece of carpet. "When visiting in this locality two months before, I called on an invalid, whose sister stays with her. Both are old, lean, and spent creatures, but though very poor, they keep the attic in which they live very clean; but it being like themselves, pretty old, the floor is much open, and consequently is very cold. My visit then paid, I went to a mansion in the neighbourhood, and desired to see the lady's companion, to whom I unfolded the case of the two old, spent, thin-blooded sisters; of their bare, old open floor; and said that I thought they perhaps might have some tags of carpets laid uselessly by; and wished her to try and see if anything could be done to make cold, gloomy winter more cheerful to the aged pair. She promised to see. So, on calling last Wednesday on the

old people, I ran up-stairs to engage in prayer with them, having quite forgot all about the carpets. On my entering, a smile of contentment and satisfaction played on their countenances, as, seizing my hands, they began pouring out blessings on my head, and on my family. 'Look,' they said, pointing to the floor. A glance brought the whole affair to my remembrance, and soon revealed the secret of the joy they exhibited, for there I stood on a comfortably carpeted floor; 'and,' says the invalid who was in bed at the time, 'the lady has also sent a warm rug for my feet at the fireside.' 'Ay,' says the other sister, opening the chest and displaying a nice, clean, folded piece of carpet, 'we have all this over for any other purpose; and the lady told us it was you we had to thank for the whole; blessings on you.' Having conversed a little, we knelt in prayer, and thanked God for our many comforts."

The journeys of the colporteur bring him into contact with a great variety of people, many of them very inaccessible to the more ordinary means of grace. A rainy day is not always the worst for him. In smithies and barns and bothies he may come upon considerable numbers of persons, and he finds it a good opportunity of showing them his wares, and getting into friendly conversation. The bothy, as many of our readers know, is the insoluble problem of Scottish civilisation. It is the dwelling-place of the unmarried labourers on the larger farms, very rough outwardly, and, for the most part, still more so inwardly. It is a special charge of the earnest colporteur. And now he finds himself more at home there than he used to do. The lads are not left to exercise their ingenuity and their wit in settling what kind of animal he is, and what kind of wares he carries. Often he enlists them among his subscribers, and sells to them a number of his books. "I am happy to say," says a colporteur, "that there is a great difference since I began to travel here. I have had several conversations with young men in bothies since I wrote you last. I am glad to see some young lads who have not much to buy with glad to get me to stop a while with them, that they may see my books, some of them will be busy reading all the time, and when returning the paper or book they were looking at, will tell me, 'If I had money I would buy that one.' I try to convince them that it will be far better for them to invest their money with me than with the landlord of the most spacious public-house. I find that some of the Temperance Tales I have sold have been carefully read in the bothy,

and lent to others. The Rev. Mr. G—, in one of his visitations, recommended a *British Workman* to four young men in a bothy where there had never been anything but trash read before. He told me of having done so. I went, and now I take every month three *Sunday Magazines*, one *Good Words*, and a *British Messenger*, besides at times a few other things. Two of them are now leaving, and anxiously inquire if there will be a colporteur where they are going."

Another very necessitous field is the mining district, with its rude, roystering, well-paid but careless population. "I find that there is great need for religious literature in this district, especially amongst the mining classes; but the Lord is opening up a great field for me here, so that I am getting the good seed sown in one row of miners' houses. I have sold no less than fourteen of the Society's reduced Bibles at three shillings; and what is more remarkable still, there was no such thing as a Bible in their house before, and I verily believe never would have been but for this agency."

Even the Irish Roman Catholics are not wholly unreached:—

"I sell a good number of the small three-penny Testaments to Roman Catholics, and also the 'Pilgrim's Progress,' and 'Come to Jesus.' One day I was passing by a Papist's house, and the man's wife followed me to another house and told me to come back, for her husband wanted to buy Baxter's 'Saint's Rest.' So I went back, and he told me he saw one of them in a Catholic house, that I had sold a few days before; so he bought it, and the wife entered her name as a subscriber for the *Children's Friend*, for her children. And there are many things similar to this that I have not mentioned."

No place is too unpromising for the colporteur. He drops into a stable, finds a number of young men engaged as stable-boys generally are, gets into friendly conversation with them, and persuades some of them to buy a book or to become subscribers for his periodicals. He sees an encampment of tinkers, wild and repulsive-looking enough to scare away any ordinary visitor; but without hesitation he lays himself alongside of them; and if he cannot find readers among them, he can at least interest the children in the coloured cards and illuminated texts which form part of his ammunition—perhaps touch their hearts by telling them a Bible story, and create in them a desire to be able to read for themselves. And generally, if he have the knack of interesting children, they will come

to be among the most enthusiastic of his friends. The hymns that he gives them at one visit are often committed to memory against another; if he be musical he will sing new hymns and tunes to them, introducing them to the "Beautiful River," or some other favourite melody, so that it is no wonder if his arrival be eagerly waited for, and warmly welcomed. Few things can be more encouraging than the welcome of children; and any colporteur may well forget the fatigue of a long tramp on the hard highway if, at some well-known corner, there are half-a-dozen smiling faces and cheery voices to welcome him, holding out their little hands for illuminated texts and hymns, and bounding off in delight to show them to their companions and carry them home.

Occasions sometimes occur when he needs a wider knowledge and a larger acquaintance with literature to be able to meet the questions with which he is plied. The free-thinker will occasionally assail him with his objections, and to deal with them effectually will make a considerable demand on his intelligence and skill. A sceptical shoemaker tells him that the Bible cannot be from God, because its account of the creation is untrue. The colporteur refers him to Hugh Miller's "Testimony of the Rocks," and indicates that if a man like Miller did not feel his faith in the Bible impaired by geology, his friend the shoemaker may rest satisfied on that head too. Like many a disputant, the sceptic finds it easier to assail the character of his witness than to dispose of his testimony. He does not think that one whose death came about as Hugh Miller's did can be a valid witness on the side of religion. The colporteur has the opportunity of turning on him and asking him whether such a style of arguing denotes a sincere desire for truth—whether it does not rather evince a strong prejudice against it. Sceptical objections to the Bible and to Christianity are always starting up somewhere; it is of the last importance for the colporteur to be armed with handy and conclusive arguments on the other side.

Such illustrations of the colporteur's work make it very plain that it is as a supplementary labourer, in connection with other agencies, that his Christian usefulness chiefly lies. To fancy that the colporteur single-handed can grapple with the tremendous problems which the state of farm servants or of the mining population presents to Christian zeal, would be absurd. He may do occasional good service here and there; but other agencies are eminently needed for the state of things

presented by these classes. Still, it is a great thing to do a little ; as Romney Leigh discovered, hard experience compels us to abandon the youthful notion of putting the whole disorders of society to rights, and to be content with being like one of the seven men whom it takes to make a pin—content if our efforts to do good to the world enable us “to mend its rents a little.” The colporteur, even in his most ideal state of perfection, can do no more.

We have spoken of the colporteur chiefly as a missionary. And this is really his leading function, nor would the greater part of the friends who support him care to do so if the benefits which they expected from his labours were of an inferior kind. Still there are subordinate benefits which, at least in some instances, spring from his labours. A taste for reading is encouraged, a stimulus is given to the thirst for knowledge, and young men of the more ardent type are led on to higher efforts in the way of self-education and mental improvement. It may probably not be so in all cases, possibly not in many, but it certainly is so in some. An Aberdeenshire colporteur tells of a young man who after devouring the provender with which he has supplied him, goes off to college, and may some day perhaps emerge a minister of the gospel or a medical missionary. And in some instances it is the colporteur himself that is developed into the educated man. A few months ago a sad announcement appeared in the newspapers—a steamer was run down in the China seas, and among those who perished was a young and very promising medical missionary, Dr. Thomson. His history was eminently interesting. Originally a collier-lad in Linlithgowshire, he had commended himself by his Christian steadfastness to his pastor, and under his countenance had become the colporteur of the district. He had discharged the duties of that humble office so well, and had shown such a capacity for general culture and for Christian usefulness, that he was encouraged to go through a college curriculum, and qualify himself as a medical missionary. The struggles of that long preparation had come to an end, he had just entered on his work as a missionary in China, and had given the highest promise of usefulness, when his career was ended in the disastrous manner that has been adverted to. Other such cases may have occurred, and more will in all likelihood be heard of ; for in Scotland especially the thirst for knowledge grows by what it feeds on, and success in the humbler walks of usefulness has a wonderful

effect in begetting a desire for the higher spheres.

In the books and periodicals of which the largest number of copies are sold, according to the list annually published by the society, it is obvious that the predominating qualities are earnestness and a direct capacity for usefulness, and that works in which there is more regard to the literary element occupy a somewhat secondary place. This is what was to be expected ; the missionary character of the scheme must ever be the prominent feature. But a scheme of this kind, wisely conducted, will embrace among its secondary benefits an elevation of the literary taste, and a widening of the literary sympathies of the more intelligent class of readers. And it is well to keep this in view from the beginning. In the first stage of not a few earnest religious movements taste has been utterly neglected, and the consequence has been that after a time a reaction has set in ; there has been a rush to the opposite extreme, and the æsthetic element has stifled or at least dwarfed the spiritual. In places of worship built by men intent on the conversion of souls, architecture has often been despised ; by-and-by a reaction has come, and in place of the big barns which were the original structures there has been reared chapels of white marble, with magnificent organs and all the luxuriant fittings of modern device, such as the Methodists and others are now building in America. The true way to prevent this extreme at the end of a religious movement is to avoid its opposite at the beginning. We are thankful to observe that in many of the forms of religious earnestness in our day the claims of good taste are obtaining more attention. In psalmody, in the selection of tunes, in hymnology, there is a steady progress from primitive rant to a purer style. The first era of tracts was sufficiently rude ; now it is felt that the appearance even of the smallest piece of printed matter goes for something. Human nature is many-sided ; and though it be well to obtain access at first by a vigorous appeal to some single faculty, if permanent and complete possession of it is to be held, regard must be had to all its wants and appetencies. Some time ago we were much interested in getting from a very earnest minister of the gospel in Glasgow an account of a class of mill-girls, in which one of his exercises was to read and comment on books fitted to purify and elevate their taste—one of them, as we remember, being the poems of Elizabeth Barrett Browning. The beginning of his labours had been in the Wynds, amongst

the worst dregs and outcasts of Glasgow society; the preaching of the gospel had gathered them in, the Spirit of God had been poured out at revival meetings, and the reception of divine truth, while it had satisfied their earnest spiritual cravings, had served to stir other faculties, and among the rest that sense of the beautiful, in some of its subtler forms, which poems like Mrs. Browning's are fitted to gratify. Directors of spiritual movements do well to remember that in proportion as they succeed in their more immediate object, they are broadening out the human soul, they are slowly and silently rousing dormant faculties on this side and on that, and are creating new cravings, the supply of which is sometimes a more difficult matter than the provision for their more earnest and vital wants.

Among the secondary demands of a time of spiritual quickening are books such as Arnold used to long for; not directly religious, but on common subjects written in a religious spirit. Earnest men are sometimes apt to suppose that their own efforts and the efforts of others are thrown away unless they are directed to the production or the circulation of the highest essences of spiritual food—tracts and books bearing on the most fundamental interests of the soul. But Providence takes a wider view of what is needed for the world's welfare. Good men are moved by God's Spirit to undertake work of wonderful range and variety, and in the end it will be found that every portion of it is required for the building up of that perfect temple which is ultimately to issue from all the varied activity of Christians. Thus Milton joins with Bunyan and Baxter in building up the kingdom of God; and Butler's "Analogy" and Paley's "Natural Theology" are in their way as indispensable as Doddridge's "Rise and Progress" or James's "Anxious Inquirer."

It is in this direction that members of the bookselling trade will eventually find compensation for any small loss which may accrue to them at first from the work of the colporteur. It is quite possible that in some few instances the colporteur may interfere with the local bookseller. To whatever extent this may happen, it is to be regretted, as any

and every operation is to be regretted, however good its design, which discourages honest and self-relying industry. But in the end, the colportage movement is fitted to benefit the bookseller. Whatever quickens the appetite for wholesome reading, whatever elevates the taste and enlarges the minds of the masses must in the end tell in his favour. Whatever turns expenditure from the public-house to the literary mart, and makes men in large numbers to feel that they must have something to satisfy their cravings, not for strong drink, but for intellectual refreshment, must be a good thing for the bookselling trade. The mere huckster who aims at making a living, no matter how, will of course be ill pleased at anything that cuts off from him the slightest atom of business. The man of larger soul, who sees in the book trade a great engine for elevating and purifying the character of the people, will rejoice in any scheme that bears in this direction. To such a man, the existence of low literary tastes on the part of the masses, is a source of the deepest distress; no brighter vision could flit before him than that of a people scorning the miserable garbage now so eagerly pounced on, and finding a high gratification in the best and purest of our literary treasures. Why may the vision not become a reality? A great impulse is in the course of being given to the cause of common education; a considerable enlargement of the intellectual faculties may surely be looked for, in harmony, as we trust and hope, with the claims of divine truth. If such an intellectual enlargement shall take place, it is a great question, how it is to be fed? To our mind the answer is plain. Such agencies as that of the colporteur will bring the people into acquaintance with wholesome literature of the more elementary sort; but the larger and profounder treasuries of knowledge will continue to be supplied, only on a larger scale, by the regular trade. And while the humbler agency has a sphere of great usefulness before it in dealing with those whose tastes and habits are at the lowest, the opportunity lies before the other of aiding in the indefinite elevation both of the literary taste and the literary provender of the nation at large.

W. G. BLAIKIE.



IN REFORMATION TIMES:

Some Glimpses of Life at a Great Era.

PART I.—A SCOTCH SCHOLAR.

CHAPTER I.—LITHGOW AND ITS GRAMMAR SCHOOL.



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and loch were the centre of a district of pasture lands, and of ancient forest cut down and awaiting fresh planting. The whole formed a green hollow, rising in slightly swelling uplands, and bounded on the west by the blue hills of Stirlingshire. In this hollow slept the steel-blue loch, and along the side of the loch stretched the town in a fashion not uncommon in Scotland. But the Lithgow of those days was different from the quiet, quaint little country town of present times. In spite of primitive rudeness and little comfort, Lithgow boasted then a palace—not a ruin, but in stately perfection—honourable among the palaces of its day, with park, avenue, and grand gateway—the favourite residence of Mary of Guise. In its western tower was born another Mary, whose beauty and misery still raise for her champions. In its Parliament Hall, sittings of parliament were not rare occurrences. The little brown town, the houses of which were mostly composed of wood and thatch, held two or three monasteries of black and white friars and carmelites, and the battlemented town houses of several of the nobility, including those of the Duke

of Chatelraux and the Archbishop of St. Andrews. At no distant day a treacherous occupation of one of those houses was to cost Scotland her head, and darken the dawning of her liberty and order.

But it is not with the higher and mightier dwellings that we have to do. It is with a humble enough building in which, nevertheless, there was fostered a power greater than mere outward authority. The same power, like Hercules in his cradle, was strangling serpents, and rising to gigantic labours and achievements all over Scotland. On the Mount hill near Cupar-Fife; at St. Andrews amidst the mists of the German Ocean; at Glasgow by old St. Mungo's cell; at Haddington in the fat Louduns, the light was kindled—the one irresistible impulse of truth, justice, and faith, which may admit of persecution and violent death, but which cannot, as God is in heaven, admit of final defeat. It was meet that poor little Scotland—where men in the middle of their fierce passions and stern necessities were keen-witted, with a craving after knowledge—should play an early and considerable part in that wonderful drama which we call the Reformation. Granted that the learning, besides the massive Latin and (a little later) the polished Greek, was in its metaphysical heart dry and dogmatic, so that it tended to nurture hard-headed, saturnine men, who when bitter persecution was added to the rest of their education, became on occasion harsh in manner and arrogant in tone: still, learning did its work, and the old Scotch scholars, for the most part, had hearts as firm and incapable of being uprooted as their mountains—hearts, the warmth of which, like peat fires behind volumes of pungent smoke, glowed out of the gloom on the friends whom the scholars trusted and who believed in and followed them.

The grammar school of Lithgow, under the wing of St. Michael's Church, was then a long, low building, having turf walls thatched with heather, and its earthen floors strewn with rushes, as much to save the masters from rheums and agues as the scholars from chilblains. The nature of the accommodation was not of much count in a hardy age. The great thing was that there was a grammar school, where not only the laird of Briechsidge's

son and the sons of other neighbouring lairds could acquire a little useful and polite learning without the burden and cost of resident tutors; but where humbler persons, sib to gentle blood and venturing to share in the aspirations of their betters, could get their sons, if they showed capacity, carried beyond the horn-book at a reasonable rate of payment in kind—in flour and flax, butter and wool, with special dues of home-made candles for candlemas, and cakes and ale for yule.

Such a person with a promising son was Mistress Dundas, of the Port-House. Her husband, deceased, had been a thriving wool-comber in the town, of such eminence in his trade that he had been one of the eight deacons helping to constitute the town council, which was incorporated in the late reign. Death had cut short his temporal fortunes; but he had left his widow sufficiently well-off for her to continue to occupy, at the west port of the town, a narrow, high wooden house, known as the Port-House, and to manage, by the help of her servants, to till a field or two which, with their hovels of offices, belonged to the Port-House.

On one of the benches in the dark grammar school, at the close of a tempestuous March afternoon, sat Thomas, or Tam Dundas, a big-boned boy of thirteen or fourteen, in his grey doublet and purple hose, with his little ink-horn fastened to his side, like a young clerk. No pretty boy was the lad. He had rather a wiry, terrier-dog aspect, with his dry, rebellious, sand-coloured hair standing on end above a tanned, high-cheek-boned face. He had, besides, a blunt nose, a strong jaw, a straight chin, and in the precocious sagacity and intrepidity which they expressed he looked almost queer. The forehead was powerful; and the redeeming feature, with reference to beauty, presented itself in the eyes, yet they were neither large nor dark, only a grey hazel and deep-set, but very keen and lustrous.

Tam was occupied along with the other lads in a course of grammar, and the rudiments of Latin, mathematics, and philosophy. But there was this distinction in Tam's case, that, while his fellow-pupils in great proportion worked either dully, or diversified their work by boyish diversions, he learned with a will and a relish, evident in the pleased, engrossed saving backwards and forwards of his lank body, and the contortions of his face, which accompanied the contented drone between the hum of a bee and the purr of a cat, with which, unconscious of the babble around him, he went over his tasks.

The masters were two that day—one was the regular master, a stout, easy-minded old man, who had waxed fat and slothful at his post, yawning with little disguise behind his book of rules and simple Latinity, and winking largely at the negligence and turbulence of his scholars, by whom he was half liked, half despised. The other master wore a priest's cassock, and was indeed a priest who had come to live with the vicar of St. Michael's, and had taken the grammar school under his particular superintendence. Master Nicol was so far gone in lethargic self-indulgence, that he hardly heeded or resented the interference; and the boys were slow to respond, save by fear and abhorrence, to the rousing discipline of a man with whom the ordinary boy-nature had not a particle of sympathy.

His reverence's was a cold, rigid, logical soul, looking out of a spare body and pale face. Having subscribed in spirit to a creed, he acknowledged a code of duty and a round of discipline, and refused to allow a single soul, however differently constituted, to swerve a hair's breadth from his rules. Master Ninian Wingate was such a man as is sure to become a great authority, because a crystal-clear, steel-cutting, unshaken guide; or else an equally great incubus over his bewildered fellow-creatures. Tam Dundas was the only lad in Lithgow grammar school who had any appreciation of the disinterested, indefatigable man, who was voluntarily attempting the reformation of the school—only demanding that it should be worked out from within and be conducted entirely according to his own principles.

"The cock is in earnest," pronounced Tam, in his seeming irreverence, "and kens something he can show us," he proceeded in his canny, practical Scotch fashion; but Tam and his teacher were not kindred spirits. They were utterly unlike in most respects, except in earnestness, and in that quenchless thirst for the water of classic fountains, struck from the rock by the mighty dead, and just then beginning to be unsealed after the barren drought of the dark ages; and for which all the nobler hearts of the generation seemed to pant. Tam and Master Wingate were not unfrequently in antagonism, as they were presently.

The master came and looked at Tam's lesson—a sum in arithmetic correctly worked out, but not done according to the rule.

"You have hit the mark, but no thanks to you for it," declared the teacher; "your success is little better than a chance guess; you

ought to have gone according to the rules laid down for you."

"The answer is richt," Tam defended his product stoutly. "What does it matter though I have brocht it out in my ain way?"

"It matters this, sirrah, that there is a right way and a wrong way, and you have chosen to take the wrong, with the right plainly pointed out to you. Moreover, to abide by law is your duty."

Tam made no more audible protest, but he noted to himself emphatically—

"Then the law ought to be gey siccar, my man, and I ought to be satisfied of its siccar-ness, else what is to be said for the bursters of bonds and founders of kingdoms that we read o' in baith sacred and profane history? Hout, the like o' Wingate would hae William Wallace and King Dauvit himsell naething but twa law-breakers."

Soon afterwards the grammar school broke up for the day, but the pupils did not immediately disperse. There was an extensive playground round the rude "biggin" of the grammar school, more in accordance with the requirements of modern physical science, than anything of the kind which could be found in use in Scotland two centuries later. There were bow butts for archery, wrestling rings, a field for golf; and the lads, in place of being left to their own unorganized games, were systematically initiated into the exercises and sports, which were rightly judged necessary for the effectual training of the body in the offensive and defensive warfare of the battle of life. Master Nicol, who had been a skilful archer and famous golfer in his day, awoke up to something like animation in assuming the office of arbiter in the games, and in accepting the lagging tribute of respect to his experience and prowess.

What should a man of peace and learning have to do with mimic fighting? These were days when priests put on hauberks over their cassocks; and monks at times threw off their frocks, donned corslets, and went into battle with their vassals. Better this a thousand times than the effete uselessness, the base wallowing in the mire of the lower appetites, the horrible corruption, of which Davie Lyndesay had written with fearless plainness in plays and ballads. The plays and ballads had been condemned to be burnt by the common hangman the year after the king's favourite's death; but in his lifetime, they had been so acted and sung throughout Scotland, that even Tam Dundas with his ever-open eyes knew the substance of them. Honest priests like Master Wingate, still bent on

thundering forth the infallibility of the Church and on crushing heresy, were forced to own, with sorrow and shame, that the very church during the last century had been a charnel-house, from which a resurrection of some sort was imperatively demanded.

Tam Dundas was a prominent figure on the exercise ground as on the school forms. He gave all his heart for the time to shooting, golfing, and wrestling; so that, with his growing strength and accurate observation, he was one of the fairest performers, and his feats acquired for him among his comrades a readier popularity than any diligence at his book—a distinction rather provocative of suspicion and spite. But Tam Dundas, even as a boy, was not of the soft or sensitive mould on whom disfavour among fellows acts as a blight and canker. He was hardy and self-assured, giving gibe for gibe when he provoked criticism.

At last he went off alone, whistling, and leaping over the obstacles in his way, not minding the bleak scouring March wind, nor seeking for company, though he would have taken it, if it had come to him. He was a lad to whom his own convictions and his own company could prove sufficient, though he was not of the stuff to despise sympathy and society when he might have them. The road he chose to the Port-House, however, was not the most direct road. He took a passing glance at the swaggering retainers in the court of the duke's mansion, had a passing word with the corders' and baxters' apprentices at the doors of their masters' shops, diverged down a narrow wynd to the loch, to visit a coot's nest which he had "fund," as it swung there among the reeds on the curling water, and which, though treasure-trove peculiarly his own by the whole constitution of boyish honour, he was careful not to disturb.

CHAPTER II.—THE PORT-HOUSE AND ITS PEOPLE.

At length Tam reached the steep outer stair and nail-studded door of his mother's house. Mounting briskly, he entered through the spence with its water-stoups, and passed into the ha', with its wide chimney, black corner-cupboards, oak settles, and single leather-covered arm-chair, occupied by his mother since his father's death, till it should in due time be occupied by Tam as head of the house. Tam found the early supper set out on the long table—stock fish for those who wanted it, scalded whey, porridge and ale, scones and bread and cheese. Mistress

Dundas and Giles were only waiting for Tam, to take their places at the upper end ; while below them sat the servants—a huge heavy ploughman, and a halfin' herd in hoddin grey, their broad bonnets doffed, with two buxom and vigorous lasses in red petticoats, smock sleeves and snoods, who worked more in the fields or among the kye and sheep, than in serving Mistress Dundas and Giles.

Mistress Dundas herself was a comely, busy, middle-aged woman, in her black gown and white curch. She was so kindly that her kindness gave a certain enlargement—above all where her children were concerned—to a nature more noted for caution than daring, and tempted to a little guile in its mingled shrewdness and simplicity.

And Mistress Dundas had seen a good deal in her day to make her wary. Living on the skirts of the court, having humble pretensions to sibness with gentle birth and breeding, all unlettered and homely as she was, she formed one of the links between class and class. She could remember when the two young and royal French kinswomen, queens in succession of James V., had come, the one after the other, with great feasting, diversions and masques, to Lithgow Palace, and when the sanguine and thoughtless of the nation had seen nothing but promise in the future of king and queen. Mistress Dundas had known all that was mortal of Magdalene of Lorraine, whose beauty and sweetness were the ecstatic flush of a dying girl, become dust and ashes within the year of her royal bridal. Mistress Dundas had heard faint rumours how Mary of Guise, with all her discretion, virtue, and good-will for Lithgow, was yet a weak woman in the hands of foreign kindred, so that neither discretion, virtue, nor good-will could avail her in preserving the confidence of the people over whom she was called to rule.

Mistress Dundas could recall when King James had brought the lawless moss-troopers to order, when he had begun to work the Scotch mines, when he was the glad and gallant promoter of national games. And she could recall still more vividly when his council was rebellious, his army mutinous, his lad-bairns dying—and when the battle of Solway Moss had been disgracefully lost, and the king, a broken staff in the prime of his manhood, had flung himself, in the perversity of a sick heart, from palace to palace, until hearing of his lass born at Lithgow, he said his sad say, turned his face to the wall, and died.

Mistress Dundas had attained to more significant and dangerous knowledge in the course of her fifty years' life than these purely public events. She had looked with half reverential, half horrified eyes, on some of those copies of Tyndale's New Testament in English, which merchant ships brought in secret bales among ships' cargoes to Scotland, and which, though the books were translations from Holy Scripture, Pope and council forbade to the unlearned, and inquisitors searched out and burned. As Mistress Dundas could not read, one might have thought that she was out of temptation ; but, if she could not read, she could listen, and had always had fascinated, inquisitive eyes for the very boards and clasps of that book, with regard to which men said that it was at once the well of life and of death, and a great example of the old tree of knowledge, of which to pluck and eat the fruit with unlicensed hands was to die.

Later, Mistress Dundas had become, perforce, acquainted with results which caused her to shudder at the bare recollection that she had gazed in secret among the disaffected gazers on Tyndale's New Testaments. Patrick Hamilton, evangelist, apostle, and martyr, had offered to Scotland the spectacle, unprecedented in his generation, of a man of birth and rank, not only entering the Church, but turning saint. He had stooped to teach the poor, comfort the stricken, and convert the sinner, bravely professing the doctrines stamped and banned as heresy, defying the consequences, and going gladly through his baptism of fire. And he was a Hamilton of Kinclaven, a Lithgow man by descent. It was at Lithgow that Patrick Hamilton preached his sermons to multitudes, taking hold of the people, and inspiring them by all manner of nobleness and gentleness, and by the old, winning words, so long unheard in Scotland, of free pardon through Christ's blood. Mistress Dundas had formed one in these multitudes, and had, like other "common people," heard the Master's faithful servant gladly. But when the powers whom she had been taught to reverence unquestioningly, suddenly seized the reformer, condemned his doctrine as damnable, and had him led out and burnt to death as a man tainted and accursed, and dangerous to the common welfare, then the sprouting grain of faith in Mistress Dundas was scorched and shrivelled almost out of existence. If brave, stern men, instructed, enlightened, and like-minded with Patrick Hamilton, though less matured than he was, recoiled from such a

sentence, with its bitter execution, what wonder that a simple woman quailed utterly? Such questions, and their settlement, were not for her class or sex. Let powerful nobles, scholars, and priests raise them or lay them at will, Mistress Dundas would not meddle farther with matters which were out of her way and beyond her capacity. She would mind her own business, and impress upon her husband to mind his; rear her children, say her prayers;—there could be no harm in that, and surely some merciful ear of homely saint, or virgin mother, or blessed Saviour, would hear them. She would be regular in her attendance on the Church's ordinances, and in paying the Church her dues, as the vicar and priests enjoined, while she said as little as she could help saying, and thought as little as she could help thinking.

But though Mistress Dundas had suffered trials and losses, it was a unique proof of the enlargement which natural affection and kindness of temper produced in a timorous and crafty spirit, that in an age when knowledge was held to be pernicious by all, save a few gentlefolk and scholars, she had seen with secret delight that her son Tam was fond of his horn-book, and mastered its contents greedily, and was proud in the thought that she could pay for Tam's becoming a scholar in the grammar school of Lithgow. "What for no?" she would ask herself decidedly when an anxious doubt would intrude and wrinkle her matronly brow. "Gin I had kenned what would come of having him taught his letters, I micht have swithered; but since he has got them, and can sign his name like a gentleman and a writer in the big towns, he's sae brodent on lear, he would mak it out for himsell whether I helped him or no. He's sic a maisterfu' dour cheild for a widow's son is my Tam. Yet I'm an ungrateful quean not to be blythe, that as he's no a silly daw, neither is my fine laddie a diel. The laird o' Brieche side wished his son, who was keen on the sword exercise of the men-at-arms, were as keen of his book."

Mistress Dundas had even extended her complacency to allowing Giles, Tam's elder sister, to attain the rare acquirement then for a woman of a little reading and writing, which had been picked up from her brother. But as Mrs. Dundas made apology, "Puir Giles wasna, and was never like to be, as her married sisters" (for Mistress Dundas had elder daughters already established in houses of their own), "or as ither lasses."

And Giles, waiting there with her mother for Tam to come home, in order to sit down

at the supper-table, in her riband snood and cloth kirtle, was indeed a painful contrast to the blooming young servant lasses in their worsted snoods and smock sleeves. Giles had a prematurely old and worn look, though in reality she was only a year Tam's senior. In place of being blooming and straight, she was sallow and shrunken and crooked—one of those invalids from their cradles who are not unfrequently destined to be either the torment or the comfort of their homes. Giles had been largely a torment, that had been borne with motherly patience and pity on Mistress Dundas's side, and on her brother's partly with disdain and a tendency to mockery, and partly with an instinct of manly long-suffering; for Tam's bark was from the first worst than his bite, and in his latent strength he had forbearance, half scornful though it might be, with weakness.

"I wonder at you, Giles," Tam had once, on a momentous day, condescended to remonstrate with his sister on one of her wantonly mischievous tricks—after the achievement of which she set everybody at defiance, and jeered at the discomfited household, all the time wearing so eldritch an expression on her sickly face, that the servants ventured to whisper that surely Giles Dundas was a changeling or bewitched. Then her mother hurried the girl away to strive to control and soothe her in private, while she checked peremptorily the baneful whispers that rose in her hearing.

"If to the unhappy bairn's natural misfortunes is to be added that hicht o' ill-luck o' being pinte'd at wi' the finger o' scorn, and set upon and exorcised, as they ca'd, by a pack o' prood, guzzlin', ill-living loons,—that I suld say the word,—wha nevertheless sall never lay a finger on my distressed bairn while I'm to the fore to keep them off,—heaven help the lass!"

"I wonder at you, Gilesy," lectured Tam, more to the purpose and with some unconscious relenting in his indignant voice, "that you can find nothing better to do than to ravel hasps, tell tales, and set the hoose by the lugs."

"And what suld I find to do, maister?" inquired Giles, with a desperate pain in her ironical demand; "busk my bonnie body to meet men's smiles, and bake and brew and spin, when the idlest cutty among the lasses can beat a feckless fule like me in sic troke, and lauch ower her shouter at me, though, gin mither-wit had a chance, I culd buy them at the ae end o' the town and sell them at the ither?"

"Weel, lad or lass needna beat you at a book," remarked Tam carelessly, not weighing his words.

Giles caught and pondered the deliverance. She crept cunningly to Tam's side when he came home of nights and on holiday afternoons, craving him to teach her from his own book—the original of all school collections. Tam, with that inclination to impart his treasure to others which distinguishes the scholar alone among treasure-holders, and only some even among scholars, complied with his sister's solicitation. The dissatisfied, restless girl, with an acute mind preying on itself, learned even more quickly than Tam had learned, and gave very little trouble to her teacher. Naturally, he grew proud of his pupil's progress, and found it no unpleasant task to play the patron and pedagogue.

Mistress Dundas had not the heart to interfere with the brother and sister's occupation. It served to divert Giles, and kept her from continuing to provoke the various members of the family; it gradually established an intimacy and friendship between brother and sister.

"Birds o' ae nest and maist eildens, they never took to ane another afore," reflected Mistress Dundas with tender forethought; "but now they're like trusty freres. An' gin I were taen awa' wha would Gilesy, that's as sharp as a needle, and is growing to stick as close to Tam as his shaddy, ha'e to look to but Tam? A seat at even a gude brother's ingle is a driech seat; but my Tam is as constant as he's fair, and will never see his silly sister want. Na, gin he get fond o' her, he will not suffer wife or bairn to gie her the cauld shouter."

This afternoon there was an unexplained secret of importance pursuing together Mistress Dundas's lips, and causing Giles's lips to fall asunder, though the house-mistress tried to behave as usual, and even to direct the conversation during supper into a common channel, by asking Tam—

"An' what hae you been thrang wi' the day, my man?"

"What suld I hae been thrang wi' but syntax and vocables, gin you ken them?" replied Tam, in general terms, succinctly, and with a little supercilious doubt of any woman's right to interfere with a man's—that is a boy's—studies.

"Were you ploughing the Langriggs the day, Jock?" Tam said, turning to examine the ploughman with more reason and interest, as Tam thought, in his question.

"Ay, Tam; and they were unco sappy," answered Jock, with a long-drawn breath between every word, and between the poisoning in the air and the disposing down the yawning cavern of his throat of his "saps" of porridge and milk, heaped and brimming over the edges of a horn spoon.

After the supper, when Tam was about to leave the table to go out with Jock and see to the ordering of the kye and of the yoke of horses for the night, or to sit with the herd boy "Hairy," constructing ingenious "springs" and "girns" for birds and vermin, Mistress Dundas told Tam she wished him to remain where he was, that she might speak a particular word to him. So the mother, son, and daughter still sat at the top of the board after the dishes had been cleared away, and the servants had retired to their out-of-door avocations, their essays in mechanics, and their wheels by the fire.

"Tam," announced Mistress Dundas, unable to contain her tidings longer, "the laird o' Brieichside has been here. His son is bund for France for perfyteness in sculin'. The laird wants a kened, douce lad, whose keep the laird will see to, to bear his lad company, and he has bidden you, Tam Dundas."

"Hooray! hooray!" shouted Tam, startling the maids and Hairy by the ingle nook, as he thundered with his fists on the table, his face all aglow. "Our leddy and the Laird be thanket," he added more soberly, a little affronted at his own outburst, "I see my way now to being as grand a scholar as is among them."

"Nae doubt it is a brow chance; but how am I to part wi' you, laddie?" asked his mother wistfully, and with a little accent of reproach, as she put her apron to her eyes, though she was reluctant to damp his joy.

"I'll come back again, mither," replied Tam, with a shade of compunction—in-capable as a boy like him was of fathoming the heart which was ready to be broken were it to promote his welfare. "I'll come back better worth you're carin' for; you'll a' be proud o' me when I'm a scholar," declared the lad with unconscious audacity and egotism.

"That will we, Tam," cried Giles, who had been unwontedly silent. I would that I had your fortune; but I'll forgie you for being a brisk lad, while I'm naething but a silly lass, gin you'll come back a great man, garring the lave stand about, and lifting up my mother and me from our howe when you stoop to us from your hicht. You may be a priest—wha kens? A lord abbot in purple, or a lord cardinal in scarlet."



"IN REFORMATION TIMES."



The girl clenched her thin nervous hands together, her sallow pinched face flushed and expanded in anticipation of the goals to be reached, and the honours to be won by the knowledge which was power.

"Na, na," negated her mother hastily, "let them be priests wha hae a vocation. I trow, Tam, a mettlesome lad like you has nae to a frock and cowl, to shrieving auld wives, and starting up at the sound o' the dead bell to claim the Kirk's cow and coat. Gin you dinna incline to the 'oo trade or the plough, and troth your fine education would be wasted at carding or grazing," she admitted with a sigh, "turn your attention to the law, that's a wise laddie. There's mony a canny, prosperous writer body in the big towns. It's no canny for a bauld, honest spirit to try priestcraft in thae times—Gude forgie me for lichtlying the ghaistly calling—aboon a' furrin priestcraft. I mind me o' Master Guillaume, who gaed a sair gate afore puir Master ——. Oh, laddie, laddie," she broke off, throwing up her hands in testimony against the mysterious horror she would wave off, "have nae troke wi' strange priests."

"Never fear," declared Tam confidently, "I dinna gang to France for wily priestcraft, but for plain knowledge. As you say, mither, I hae nae broo for wearing the monk's cowl on my head, let the monks and Davie Lyndesay answer to ane anither for what lies aneath. It is the wisdom o' the ancients and the truth o' the universe that I seek to reach. You're wrang, Gilesy, I'll no come back a pursy abbot or a dour cardinal. Let them that will try that road. I'll be a leal son o' the Kirk: gin she'll let me be, I'll let her be; but I'll no be a priest to pu' down or build up priestly biggins. This common world is enough for me to spell my short day in. But if I'm eydent, wha kens but I may win a gown and cap too, and bide, or come back a university regent like Mayor? An', Gilesy, I'll gie you my coot's nest on the loch, as arles till I come back."

"Laddie, the coots will be a' flown ere you win hame," foreboded his mother.

CHAPTER III.—AT MONTPELLIER, IN THE COLLEGE.

WITHIN ten years Tam Dundas was actually Dr. Thomas Dundas in the Moorish founded University of Montpellier. There was nothing very wonderful in the early dignity at a date when there were other scholars who were still sooner distinguished. Men grew apace then, and beardless boys looked manly

and wise in the bachelor's red cloak, and the professor's chair.

Dundas, and the young laird of Briechside, had drifted to Montpellier, instead of to Paris or Louvain, from the circumstance that a distant kinswoman of the laird's, having married a soldier of fortune in France, and being, in a sort, naturalised there, and left a widow with one child, was glad to eke out a living by affording lodging in her house in Montpellier to those students of the university who, after the fashion of Scotch students, did not live in college, but beyond bounds in all quarters of the town. The young laird of Briechside had soon fulfilled his college course, and returned home to participate in the political troubles and brawls of Mary's reign. But Dundas still tarried in Montpellier, supporting himself as a poor scholar by filling the post of tutor to various young men of rank, and at last by entering the house of Dr. Ferrard, one of the professors, as assistant in his classes.

Few wider contrasts could be found than that between the natural features and climate of Montpellier in the soft South, and those of Lithgow in the bleak North. The chief town of Languedoc, rising on the ruins, and built largely of the materials, of magnificent old Roman amphitheatres, baths, and temples, lay in a garden almost unrivalled in Italy itself for rich blossoming over decay, for dreamy and inspiring associations, and a thousand picturesque touches and interludes alike in the landscape and in the life which had been lived within sight of Pyrenees and Alps, the Bouches de Rhone, the wild, haunted solitudes of the Cevennes. Possibly Dr. Thomas paid little heed to the details, hardly noticed consciously the rich pink bloom of the almond orchards in spring, the dense mantling of the fig-trees in the summer, the purpling clusters of the vines in autumn; and far less stooped to gather posies of the gem-like meadow flowers—bright blue lobellia, great white magnolia, golden and purple iris, according to the season. Very likely he heard, without once pausing to decipher the chords of melody, the early song of the nightingales. Though men were then eagerly resuming their researches into the secrets of nature, as into the wealth of classic literature, still it was only the students of nature pure and simple, the elected sons of science, who took up the study. Scholars like Dr. Thomas Dundas had neither time nor inclination to analyze nature, whether in its open beauties or its occult forces. As a whole, the young man

admired warmly and affectionately — for France, in her university, had indeed been an alma mater to him—one of the loveliest landscapes which the world has to show; but he did not stop to examine it minutely, and pick it to pieces. He was accustomed to regard such practices as puerile and womanish—men had more to think of in his day. The sounding sea, at no great distance, the mountain peaks, so much higher than his own Grampians, the mass of a forest, the expanse of a plain, deserved to arrest a man's notice; but to stand noting every field, and examining every weed, was fit only for husbandmen, herbalists, and children. Dr. Thomas was better fitted to enter into the changing history of the place, from its Moorish to its Roman days, from its persecutions of the Albigenses to its tolerance of the awful mixture of Lucifer, Satyr, and human-hearted man in its Rabellais.

Dr. Thomas had kept his pledge to Giles in winning his doctor's degree, but it had been different with his word to his mother that he should abstain from theological disputes, which, so far from dying out in the ashes of the martyrs, were raging more fiercely than ever at Wittenberg, Worms, Geneva, Zürich, Amsterdam, in the Sorbonne among learned doctors—in the halls and castle, and on the bare sea braes of St. Andrews. Dr. Thomas was already a Lutheran, and on his way to being a Calvinist. There had been no choice to him save between a greater and a less apostasy. While the young man pursued his studies in philosophy and metaphysics, he could not shut out morals and theology. These formed the questions of his day; and, as his inexperienced boyhood had not guessed, they hemmed him in, priest or no priest, and summoned him to a decision. As he hated a lie, he could not continue his faith in the canons of the Church, its elaborate rites, and such living epistles of it as he could not choose but read in the words and deeds of many of its notable professors.

There was no refuge for Dundas, unless he had been so miserable as to find it in the dreary, gross, and mocking cynicism of the master of modern intellect; but the grace of God, and Dundas's wholesome Scotch balance of reverence, independence, and kindness, saved him from that pit.

It might very well be that Dundas would stop with being a protesting and believing scholar; nay, that in years to come, when he was more and more entangled in the subtleties and warfares of the schools, in splitting hairs, pointing epigrams, and flinging about

taunting invectives and stinging satires, with a remnant of the savage joy, which the old Northmen used to feel when they wasted, burnt and slew their enemies, he might hold his faith more and more as a thorny, dead letter, and be content to serve learning, and not religion, continuing a scholar, and growing ever colder and harder, while he never rose to be a reformer.

But at present, in his young, ardent life, rough and vehement as he remained, his principles were rather active than passive. He was vexed to the heart by the supineness, the double-dealing, the altogether half-hearted Protestantism of his professor Ferrard—the more vexed that he was keenly conscious of his own want of grace and blandness, and had greatly admired the courtesy and affability of his professor.

In the college rooms which the professor and his assistant shared, and where they were waited upon by an old servant of the former, there were abundant marks of increasing civilisation and intellectual life. A great advance was made on the Port-House of Lithgow, for in the college of Montpellier there were tapestry hangings and cushioned seats, books and maps, even a porcelain vase among the silver tankards, while above the pinnacled chimney-piece hung a dark painting of a weighty-browed professor.

Dundas, in the freedom of intercourse permitted to him, did not hesitate to urge his senior to a more pronounced and declared expression of his opinions. Why attend mass, the popular explanation of which Dr. Ferrard held to be idolatrous,—that is, if he accepted a creed at all; for without a recognition of Godhead there need not be idolatry. Why maintain by his example the employment of sacramental tests in the university? Why decline to proclaim his convictions, leaving them to be only guessed, at the best—at the worst, misunderstood and maligned?

Dr. Ferrard, in his black velvet cap, with his doctor's bands fastened by a jewel, his physique displaying the sensitive olive skin, the glittering black eyes, the bird-like nose, of a true Languedocian, was amused and inclined to play with the hot-headed zeal of his subordinate.

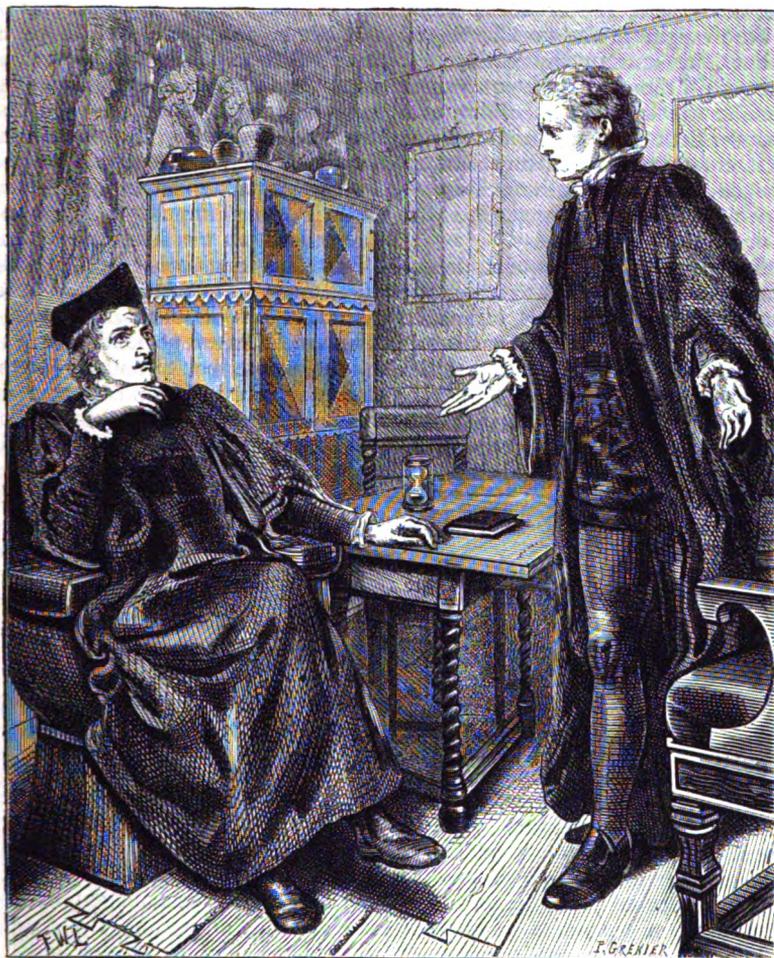
"Thou art young, thou art young, Dr. Thomas," he would say. "When thou art full grown thou wilt know how much may be argued on the side of expedient temporising. Is every principle so clear that I should risk my seat—nay, my neck—for it? To what purpose a loud profession which is bad tone

in philosophy? It serves for recantations and burnings. Would I be a better man because I was driven to recant, or would the world gain by my burning?"

"Yes; for might it not be that truth would gain?" Dr. Thomas would put in.

"Truth would gain, sayest thou? Ah! but to some truth comes as a negative, not an affirmative; and from them she does not ask

such a tremendous attestation. I am not a hero, I, any more than Michel de Montaigne, and he had the priests called in at the end to keep him right either way. Did not Socrates pour out a libation to the gods whom he had doubted, the last thing? I do not pretend to be wiser than Socrates, my son; it is not easy to tear up even the roots of a bastard tare-like superstition, and leave



its lawful brother and sister of wheat-like faith free to grow in the human heart. When thou art as old as I, thou wilt take things quietly, and let them work by degrees of themselves, as it were, and as Heaven wills. Heaven does not want our miserable, blundering aid, according to the opinion of Erasmus."

"If my professor please, I should prefer to perish in my green nonage," protested

Dundas bitterly, "sooner than ripen to such trimming and time-serving policy. Was the Lord Christ not wiser than Socrates, and did He not set us the example of testifying to the death? Did He not leave a command with his followers to go and teach all nations—teach what?—corruptions, sophistries, juggling tricks, monstrous lies, or divine truth?"

"Thou art beyond me, Dr. Thomas." Dr. Ferrard dismissed the subject, still without

passion or resentment, only a little wearily and querulously. "Notwithstanding, the experience of four-and-twenty does not compass all experience. If thou reservest thyself to die like Tyndale, or Wishart in thy own country, good go with thee! it is no business of mine to balk thy aim; yet bethink thee that thou art no more than a youth, and no better than my assistant, with all thy attainments, whose views and stubbornness in maintaining and suffering for these views will have little weight in the world. So an' it please thee, sir, restrain thy passion for being a martyr till thou canst be so to some purpose amidst the distractions of thy own country,—never Scot yet came under my rule who was not cross-grained and turbulent, so that the Languedocians were nothing to him,—and save me the trouble and danger of either defending or disowning thy heresy."

It was after one of these frequent discussions, stormy on Dundas's part, to which the easy manners, and untrammelled intimacies of the schools, together with the accessible character of Dr. Ferrard, had led, that Dr. Thomas thought to refresh himself by paying a visit to some old acquaintances in Montpellier. He did not particularly require refreshment. At no period of his life did strife come otherwise to him than as the wind blowing over the barren hills and moors

of his country, rousing and bracing him for contest.

With his harsh, but sagacious and far from ignoble face aglow with the late encounter, as the town of Montpellier was aglow in sympathy with a gorgeous August sunset, Dundas took his way through steep streets and narrow lanes having the trottoir already deep in shadow, past tall lit-up gables, fantastic corbels and cavernous portals—presenting contrasts of positive blackness, and here and there a relic of massive Roman ruins still spared, and bound together over and above their cement by the long clinging arms of the wild gourd, while crowned by feathery grasses and dainty snapdragons. The old boyish exuberance of energy was not spent as Dr. Thomas Dundas strode along amidst a lively population. He caused his weather-beaten cloak to wave behind his long limbs and his walking rapier to clank in its scabbard, while he exchanged greetings with his fellow-passengers—students like himself, of every political and theological shade, whose books and swords were their sole stock in trade, and citizens in decorous cloth doublets, who in the time immemorial feud of town and gown, were disposed to look upon the unruly students, though kinsmen, lodgers, and customers, as also tyrants and persecutors.

THE FARMER OF BAAL-SHALISHA.

A Harvest Miracle.

2 KINGS iv. 42.

FAMINES were very frequent in Palestine in ancient times. The narrative, from which the subject of the present paper is taken, describes one that happened in the days of Elisha, and was long remembered by the people. For seven years it prevailed, and was the cause of deep and widespread misery. The changes of the seasons, as during the deluge, were obliterated, and a uniform monotonous drought burnt up the vegetation, and dried up the rivers and brooks. The sower no more went forth to sow; the reaper's song in the harvest-field was no longer heard; the pleasant noise of the grinding-mill in the village homes was stilled; all the glad sights and sounds of rural labour had ceased and were almost forgotten; and over all the country brooded a desolate gloom. The whole population was

reduced to the greatest straits for want of food. The pious Shunammite, whose son was restored to life by Elisha, though in the most affluent circumstances, and possessing a lordly heritage near Jezreel, the most fertile part of the Holy Land, was obliged by the repeated failure of the crops, and the scarcity of provisions, to migrate to the territory of the Philistines, where the famine, owing to more favourable conditions, was less grievous. But the universal calamity pressed most heavily of all upon the schools of the prophets which had been established in different places throughout the land, and which were almost entirely dependent upon the contributions of the charitable for their support. It was felt with especial keenness by the college of Gilgal, situated in the midst of a fierce and lawless people, who had little or no sympathy

with the mission of the prophets. To such a pitch of destitution were the pupils of Elisha at this place reduced, that their food consisted solely of any kind of edible wild herbs they chanced to find in the wilderness; and the whole party would have been poisoned on one occasion by one of the products of the waste had not the prophet interfered, and by supernatural means neutralised the deadly element, and converted the noxious pottage into a safe and palatable meal.

At the close of this terrible famine, when the covenant-bow was again appearing in the gathering clouds, and the promise of seed-time and harvest was again about to be realised, a farmer came one day from Baal-shalisha to Gilgal, with a present of the first-fruits of the harvest to Elisha. God had blessed his labours with a small degree of success. The earth, after long and utter barrenness, had yielded to him a scanty increase; and in the gratitude of his heart he hastened a long day's journey to the nearest school of the prophets to lay an offering of it before the Lord. This act showed that the man was a pious Israelite, a devout observer of the law; for under the law the first-fruits of the harvest were sacred to the Lord, and belonged to the ministers of the sanctuary. While almost all his countrymen had thrown off the Levitical yoke, and given their homage and their offerings to Baal or to the calves of Jeroboam, this man remained steadfast in his allegiance to the God of his fathers. The name of the place where he lived, Baal-shalisha, indicated that it was one of the seats of Baal-worship; and it can easily be imagined how painful would be the position of a worshipper of Jehovah in such a place. Day by day his whole nature would be shocked by the foul and foolish practices of idolatry. His friends and neighbours would resent the singularity of his faithfulness to the ancient worship, and would show in a hundred petty ways how much they disliked it. Probably it was not without considerable difficulty that he was able to carry out his purpose of dedicating the first-fruits of his harvest to the Lord. His intention would be known to the people of the place, and they would place every obstacle in the way of its execution. When we take all these circumstances into consideration, we must assign a high moral value to the act of the farmer of Baal-shalisha.

The fact that the sons of the prophets received a gift, which, according to the Levitical institution, belonged to the priests alone, indicated the changed relations of these two

most important offices in Israel. The most lamentable thing about the national apostasy was, that those whose duty it was to have prevented it were themselves the ringleaders of it. The priests of Jehovah, almost to a man, had become the priests of the calf-worship of Jeroboam, or of the Baal-worship of Jezebel, and were more zealous in the foul practices of idolatry than they had been in the service of God. Owing to the separation of the kingdom of Israel from that of Judah, the inhabitants of the northern provinces were shut out from the city of Jerusalem, the local centre of their common faith. In this state of isolation, deprived of the ordinary means of grace, prevented from going up annually to the solemn temple festivals, the sacrifices and offerings of the Mosaic law speedily fell into desuetude. The Jewish ritual separated from its holy shrine, where alone it could be efficiently performed, and from its past glorious history, lost its hold upon the imaginations and the hearts of the people, and they were easily persuaded by their unscrupulous rulers to substitute the gross licentiousness of idolatry for the pure worship of Jehovah. In these sad circumstances God gave to those who remained faithful some compensation in the grand development of the prophetic schools, and the extraordinary energy of individual prophets. Elijah and Elisha, with their disciples, who had only the inward call, supplied the place of the priests who were regularly called according to the Aaronic succession. They kept the sense of the true religion alive in the hearts of the people, and were the centres of resistance against all the attempts of the royal family to establish the worship of Baal and Astarte. And as a reward for these noble and distinguished services, the God-fearing in the land, of whom the farmer of Baal-shalisha was the representative, tendered to the prophets the Levitical offerings, which they refused to those who had become the priests of the calves or of Baal.

The offering of the first-fruits of the harvest had a deep significance to the Israelites. Among all the nations of antiquity it was customary to dedicate a representative part of the produce of the fields to the tutelary god of agriculture. Offerings of wheat and corn were laid by the Greeks and Romans upon the altar of Ceres at the close of a prosperous harvest; while by the northern races the last sheaf cut in the field was dressed in the shape of a maiden with fantastic garments, and hung up in the guest-room of the house till the next harvest, as a

symbol of homage to some unknown deity that presided over the growth of man's food. But all these offerings were mere nature gifts in acknowledgment of the god of nature. They were simply tokens of gratitude, and had no other religious significance. But besides being expressive of national and individual thankfulness for the bounty of Providence, the offering of the first-fruits of the harvest by the Israelites was linked with the holiness of God. It brought the whole harvest—all the objects and processes connected with it—within the sphere of religion, and invested them with a sacred character. It was all tabooed or made sacred; for if the first-fruits were holy the lump was also holy; if the first-fruits—which were the earliest and best part of the produce of the harvest—were presented to the Lord, the entire crop partook of the same consecrated character. Hence the offering of the first-fruits signified that all who reaped and enjoyed the harvest came under vow to employ its produce only in the service of God. The bread formed from it was to be man's support as the servant of Jehovah, living in obedience to God's law, and in devotion to His worship. None of the strength and health imparted by God's bread was to be employed in the service or worship of idols. It was because this grand principle was not recognised, and did not exercise a salutary influence upon the common life and labours of the Israelites, that the harvest so frequently failed in Palestine, and famines were so common and grievous. God would not give to His people the means of alienating them from Himself—would not strengthen, as it were, the hands of His enemies and rivals—would not allow His own good gifts to be perverted to the service of Baal and Astarte. By breaking their staff of bread He would punish His people for their idolatry, prove to them that their harvests were covenant blessings, bestowed only on condition of their obedience to His will; and thus lead them to repentance, bring them back to the service and worship of Him who giveth rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling men's mouths with food and their hearts with gladness.

To the priests the offering of the first-fruits of the harvest was especially significant. It was upon their faithfulness that the annual harvest itself depended. If they guided the people aright and kept them in the fear and love of God, then an abundant harvest rewarded the labours of the year, of which a liberal share would be given to themselves. But if they forsook God, and taught the

people to neglect and despise the ordinances of grace, then drought or blight destroyed the labours of the field, and involved priests and people in one common ruin. Thus in a land where all nature was, so to speak, plastic to man's will, and gave or withheld its blessings according to man's moral condition, was obedient to the people who were obedient to God, and hostile to those who transgressed His laws, the principle of the first-fruits consecrated the whole nation, taught them that they would not enjoy the fruits of the earth—the common bounties of Providence—unless they put to their proper spiritual uses their powers of body and soul which were sustained by these natural means.

Our forefathers also gave, for the support of the ministers of religion in this country, the first-fruits of the harvest. Their payment is still made in corn, and depends upon the plentifulness or scarcity of the corn. The word stipend comes from a Latin word signifying a straw. It would be well if the religious principle upon which this wise arrangement rests were more generally recognised. Both ministers and people, owing to the artificial character of modern life, and its means of support, overlook the inseparable connection between the harvest and the covenant of grace. They forget that when the first-fruits are given to religion, as in the payment of its ministers, the whole produce is thereby sanctified, and should only be employed for good and gracious purposes, in carrying out God's great ends in the church and in the world. Our harvests, notwithstanding our vastly improved methods of agriculture, depend as much upon our religious character as a nation, as did the harvests of Israel in the primitive times of Elisha. There is no difference in the growth of the corn; its vital processes are always and everywhere the same. Science cannot guard us completely from the accidents and mishaps to which it is ever liable; or, indeed, greatly diminish the zone of uncertainties that must ever surround the growth of our daily bread. It is a most significant fact that both the production of our food and of our clothing should depend upon very small and insignificant-looking agencies. The staple manufacture of one of the greatest countries of the world, and the principal produce of another, depend upon the apparently accidental irregularity upon the surface of a hair—the twisting seen in the ultimate cotton fibre under the microscope, produced by its peculiar method of growth, by means of which it can unite with its fellows, and form with them a

cord strong enough to be woven. So, too, with the food of the whole world. It is produced by the fertilising action of the slender hair-like filaments called stamens and pistils which hang out of the green ear at a certain season when the corn is in flower. Were these to fail in their work—were they to shrivel up or be blighted by unfavourable weather—and it would seem as if a fiercer ray of sunshine, a ruder breath of wind, or a heavier fall of rain than ordinary, might do this, the whole produce of the fields would fail; and all the swift ships and extensive warehouses, and complicated arrangements of trade, and institutions of society, which man's skill and power have thrown up as breakwaters against the tides of fortune, would be of no avail to stem the universal disaster. The life of man thus literally hangs upon a thread. Science, therefore, cannot make us independent. Science cannot be substituted for religion—for conscious dependence upon the great Being who twists the little cotton-fibre every summer that the looms of the nation may be kept busy, and that the shame and misery of our nakedness may not appear; and gives every year favourable weather, by which the ear of corn may hang out its tiny staminal thread, and complete its all-essential functions, so that the sower and the reaper may rejoice together with the joy of harvest.

God's bow is still suspended in the favouring heavens that bend over the growth of the corn. He connected His great world-covenant, that seed-time and harvest should never cease, with the righteousness of Noah; and year after year He still connects it with the righteousness of His people. As man approaches the season of harvest, he draws near to the limit of his free-will. He may devote his wondrous powers to evil and rebellion, but in his dependence upon his daily bread, and in the fact that the annual harvest suffices only for the annual food of the world, God retains His hold over him. He may harden his heart and shut his ear to every direct appeal from heaven; God may thunder His commandments in vain; but so long as man needs bread and can suffer from the want of it, God can reach him and make him understand the deadliness of sin. Every year in autumn we reach the limits of that accumulation of the necessities of life which the physical laws of the world permit. The world as a whole is poor. There can be no heaping up of true riches—of daily bread—by the richest nation. Poverty is the constant companion of the great majority of the human race; starvation

is often within a day's march of countless thousands, and once a year is within a month of all, rich and poor alike. God has thus a bit in the mouth of man's rebelliousness by which he may be made submissive to the Divine will. Judgment is God's strange work, but He will assuredly have recourse to it if gentler methods should fail. He adopted this method frequently of old, when His people turned their backs upon Him. He broke the staff of bread, and proclaimed by the mouth of His prophet, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." Baal—the vaunted god of plenty, whom they worshipped, the apotheosis of nature, of its fertilising and productive power, to which the Phoenicians attributed their unrivalled accumulation of material riches—should for three years and a half be found unable to supply the wants of his votaries, powerless in the exercise of his most special attribute. And we have shown to us in the clearest and most outstanding light on the page of history that there is a most intimate relation between the beauty and fertility of a country and the goodness of its inhabitants. The first sin changed Eden into a wilderness; the first crime was avenged by the barrenness of the earth that drank a brother's blood. God said to Cain, "When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength." And sin, vice, and wrong, ever since, have made a waste in nature; and the thorns and thistles of the fields without have reflected the blighted desert within man's heart. The punishment of the first transgression is repeated upon every transgression. The relations between sin and that curse which makes the earth a wilderness are maintained as earnestly and inflexibly as at the first. Why is the brutal savage abjectly dependent upon the caprice of nature, and why does he find her such a cruel tyrant? Why are famines so frequent in heathen countries and so rare in Christian lands? Why is Palestine, once able to support millions, now unable to support thousands—the fruitful fields reduced to deserts, and populous cities to the lairs of wild beasts? Is it not because man has become alienated from the life of God by reason of wicked works, and has forfeited his right to the means and the blessings of life? While on the other hand, *all things* work together for good to them that love God. They are working in the line of His gracious purposes, and the fertility and fruitfulness of nature is the smile of God made visible to them.

The offering of first-fruits by the farmer of Baal-shalisha to the prophets of Gilgal, actuated as it was by such pious motives, and presented amid such difficult and trying circumstances, was well-fitted to be the basis of a signal display of divine power and goodness. What was a gift of piety and love would be made a blessing to many. What was a proof of faith would be made a miracle of power. It showed the power of God's grace in the man's heart; it would show the power of God's arm in the home of the prophets. The offering brought by the farmer consisted of twenty loaves of barley. The mention of barley is one of the illustrations that constantly occur of the surprising accuracy, down to the smallest details, of the Bible narrative. Barley is the cereal crop that ripens with the greatest rapidity; less than two months frequently intervening between the seed-time and the harvest. The consequence is, that in some countries they are able to procure two crops in one season. On this occasion, therefore, the barley crop would be the first to be ready after the long famine; from its hardier nature it would be able to overcome the unfavourable conditions which would prevent the other more tender crops from ripening. And though its coarser nature rendered the bread made from it less palatable on ordinary occasions, it would be highly prized at this time by all who could get it. The full ears of corn brought along with the barley would be considered a great luxury on account of their scarcity. The smallness of the offering of both kinds of grain shows how severe had been the famine, how difficult it was for even those who were best off to procure the commonest necessities of life. The supply was altogether inadequate for the large company who were in want of provisions. When we read of twenty loaves of barley, we immediately think of our own wheaten loaves; but the barley loaves were far smaller: indeed, it would require three of them to form a meal for a single person, so that altogether the twenty loaves would have been inadequate for seven persons. We do not wonder, therefore, that the servant of Elisha, who was, in all likelihood, Gehazi, scrupled about obeying the command of the prophet to set such an insignificant supply of food before so large a party of famishing men. It would seem like a cruel mockery. "What!" said he, in mingled tones of surprise and contempt, "should I set this before an hundred men!"

If Gehazi was indeed the servitor who said this, it is only what we should have expected

from him. He acted in character. He was carnal, entirely under the dominion of sense, and could trust only what he could see and understand. Notwithstanding his familiarity with Elisha, he was a stranger to the prophet's true character, appreciated not his holiness, his spirituality, his power with God. And as he stood affected towards Elisha personally, so, doubtless, did he towards the high and holy work in which the prophet was engaged. He saw the miracles, but they neither solemnised nor awed him. To his mind they were but mere thaumaturgic displays, in which he delighted only as proofs to the multitude how great a master his was, and, by implication, how great a man his follower must be. Thus insensible to the glorious manifestations themselves as redemptive signs, and alive only to their effects upon others, we are not surprised at the incredulity which he displayed when asked to feed the multitude, and at his want of faith in the power of Elisha's God. And yet we must not altogether condemn him if we consider the unusual difficulties of the case. What he was required to do on this occasion would have proved a stumbling-block to most people. A similar test staggered the disciples of Jesus themselves. When Philip was asked to feed the five thousand in the wilderness of Capernaum with the five barley loaves and the two small fishes, he hesitated and looked altogether sceptical. "What are these among so many?" We should ourselves have laughed to scorn any prophet who commanded us to feed a hundred men with twenty barley loaves. We should have said, "What is the use of trying?" It is an absurdity—an impossibility on the very face of it! We should only expose ourselves to ridicule by our abortive attempt. Now it is in the overcoming of these difficulties and absurdities of sense that the power of faith is manifested. To the faith that obtains a victory over the unbelief and natural incredulity of the heart all things are possible. Faith, the miracle within that removes mountains of moral difficulty, rises to meet the miracle without that removes mountains of physical difficulty. And assuredly nothing can put implicit faith to a severer test than to promise effects as the result of causes in themselves wholly inadequate to produce them. Had God engaged to shower down bread from heaven to feed the prophets at Gilgal, as He sent manna to feed the Israelites in the wilderness, as the result of His own direct omnipotence, a simple reliance upon the truth and ability of Him that promised would have silenced every doubt.

The mind would repose at once, without question or dispute, upon the boundless resources of the Almighty. But when second causes and intermediate instruments were employed—when Gehazi was requested to feed the multitude with the barley loaves and ears of corn—then the weakness of sense came in. He would not believe that effects could be brought about by causes, which the dictates of his own understanding, and the established course of nature, pronounced utterly inadequate to produce them.

Elisha therefore reiterated his command; and in condescension to the weakness of his servant's faith, gave the reason and the assurance—"Give the people that they may eat. For thus saith the Lord, They shall eat and shall leave thereof." Yielding mechanically to the prophet's command, the servant set the limited provision before the company,

and the hunger of all was satisfied. They left behind some basketsful of the fragments. The scanty produce of a seven years' famine became an abundant, yea, an overflowing feast. The provision grew with the use made of it. In giving the multitude to eat, the servant did actually give them to eat. And is it not so also with many a duty of the Christian and secular life to which we are called? It seems above our strength, our wisdom, our grace; we are afraid of it; and did we consult the timid suggestions of nature, we should never attempt it at all. And yet when we do actually proceed to discharge the formidable duty, we find that its seeming impossibilities have vanished. It becomes easy to us; we receive grace and strength to do it; and we ourselves are surprised at the result.

HUGH MACMILLAN.

(To be continued.)

AMONG THE STRICKEN.

I.—CRIPPLE BOYS' HOME AND CRIPPLE NURSERY.

BY no means the darkest page, but one of the most painful, in King David's history is that which relates the injustice he did to a cripple; to one who, for many reasons, deserved very different treatment at his hands. Mephibosheth, to whom we refer, was the son of Jonathan. Misfortunes pursued him almost from his cradle to the grave. He was but five years of age when tidings of Gilboah's fatal battle reached the ears of his nurse. Faithful to her charge, and fearing that the Philistines would follow up their victory by exterminating every member of the royal house, she instantly caught up the boy, and fled; but unfortunately, with such hot hurry that—an example of the proverb, The more haste the less speed—she fell with him, or he fell from her arms, and in consequence was lamed for life.

This accident was the least part of his misfortunes. He suffered a greater fall: when Saul and Jonathan perished in battle, falling from the steps of a throne into a mean position; from being the heir of a crown, to be dependent on charity; to be maintained, sheltered, and concealed from public sight in a kind man's house on the other side of Jordan. There this royal cripple lived in such obscurity that David seems for twenty years to have been ignorant even of his existence. Some circumstance at length occurred to remind the King of what he should never have

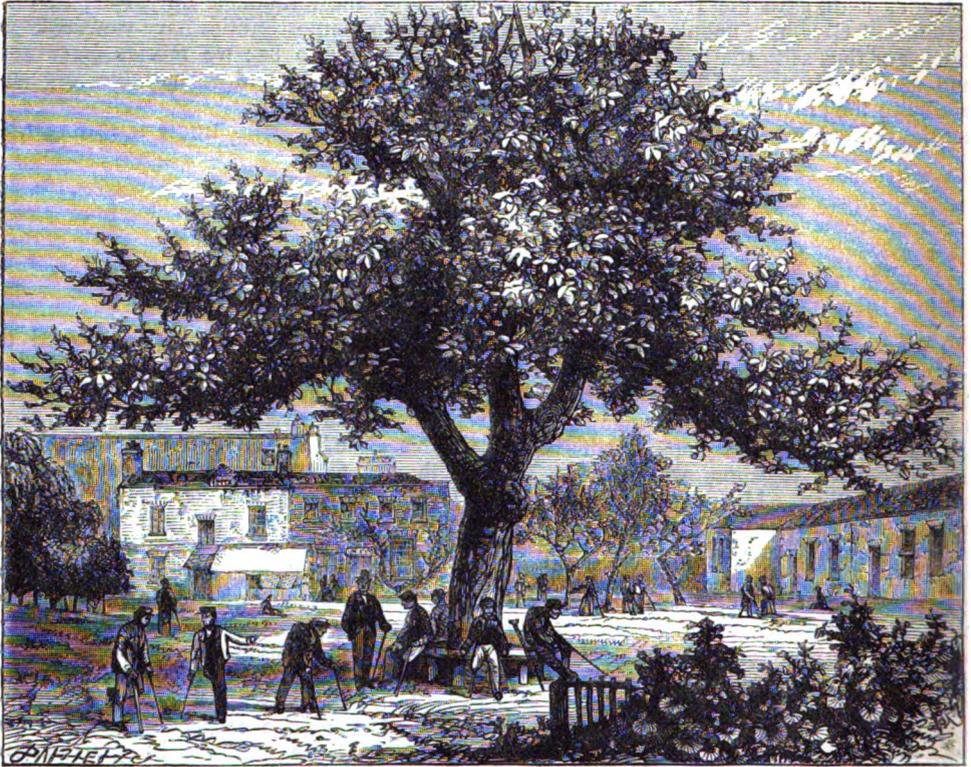
forgotten, the debt of gratitude he owed to Jonathan; and in consequence of this he was led to inquire whether any of his descendants still survived.

This issued in the discovery of Mephibosheth, and to an interview between him and David. At the sight of the child of Jonathan "the fountains of the great deep were opened:" tender recollections of other days rushed on David's memory: his heart glowed with kindness: and we can fancy, to use the beautiful language of Scripture, that he lifted up his voice and wept. It must have been a touching interview. How could it be otherwise? Scripture records few things more beautiful than the respect Jonathan's son showed and the gratitude he expressed to David; the confidence he reposed in the kindness of his father's friend; and his uncomplaining, gentle submission to the will of God. It touches one's heart to read how, on being introduced into the presence of the king—of one that, occupying the throne which should have been his own, had supplanted him, "he fell on his face, and did reverence;" such his humility and such his gratitude for the kindness David promised to show him for Jonathan, his father's sake, that he exclaimed, as he bowed himself to the ground, "What is thy servant that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?"

These were no words of course, the mere

exaggerations and hyperbolic language of Orientalism. His father's son in the depth and sincerity of his friendship, no man more tenderly sympathized with David, when Absalom sought his life. Though hindered by his infirmity and by the villainy of a servant from sharing, as he wished to do, in the king's flight and fortunes, during the whole time of that monstrous rebellion Mephibosheth neglected all care of his person, and showed every mark of excessive sorrow. Nor when David afterwards, lending a too credulous ear to the tongue of a mendacious and dishonest

servant, had withdrawn the gifts he had bestowed on him, does this gentle and noble-minded man complain—far less resent the wrong. Where in the page of history shall we find a finer example of a generous and unselfish heart? His own wrongs and griefs are forgotten in gratitude for the king's happy return; an event he hails with such exuberant joy that he "takes joyfully the spoiling of his goods," and is content that his own rights and property should all be lost. "Yea," said he, speaking of the miscreant by whose misrepresentations he had been



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wickedly defrauded, "Yea, let him take all, forasmuch as my lord the king is come again in peace unto his own house!"

The injustice which David, we may say unwittingly, inflicted on the son of Jonathan is all the more to be regretted, when we recall the tender relationships that existed between David and his father. Had not Jonathan, to use his own tender and strong expression, loved David as his own soul? Had he not in defence of him encountered and braved a father's wrath? Had not their friendship been ratified by a

solemn covenant—"Thou shalt not only while yet I live," said Jonathan, "show me the kindness of the Lord that I die not; but also, thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house for ever; no, not when the Lord hath cut off the enemies of David, every one from the face of the earth?" And had not the memory of this bond probably cheered the last hours of Jonathan, as he lay bleeding on the battle-field, and his last thoughts, like those of a soldier who falls on some distant shore, were turned to his home and the children that were to be cast orphans on

the world? If there was a man on earth David was bound tenderly to foster, and at all hazards and sacrifices to protect, it was this cripple, the son of Jonathan—the only living representative and descendant of one, whose friendship for himself, unparalleled in story, is, next to the Saviour's love for us, the most touching thing in Scripture—altogether worthy of this impassioned outburst, this wail of a breaking heart, "I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan; very pleasant hast thou been unto me; thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women."

We are happy to think that it was to a large extent unwittingly, in ignorance of the true circumstances of the case, that David is chargeable with the injustice of withdrawing from Mephibosheth the family property he had restored to him. The excuse we offer for him may, perhaps, to some extent be pleaded for us—for the long years during which the cripples of our own country were neglected and uncared for. As Paul says in excuse of himself, we "did it ignorantly." Still we shall not have recalled in vain this story of Jonathan's son, if it awaken attention to the case of our own cripples; and teach us, in respect of the neglect with which these poor sufferers have been long, and are still, treated, to turn our reproaches from David on ourselves. Considering that the number of cripples in our country is not less than 100,000, it is certainly scandalous, that London is the only city with Homes for Cripples; nor more of these there than two, or at the most three. "But what are they among so many?"

To that which receives girls we have already introduced our readers; and we now proceed to introduce them—with a few observations, in the first place, on one opened for infants—to the Cripple Boys' Home.

The Infant Home, or Cripple Nursery, as it is called, is situated at 14, Old Quebec Street, Oxford Street, Hyde Park. This is its head-quarters. There, according to the report of 1871, 30 little cripple creatures were housed. Through Lady Gainsborough's kindness 6 more were kept at her Invalid Home, Copped Hall Green, Essex; and besides these, 12 more still, sent there for the benefit of the bracing air and sea-bathing, were in a branch of the institution they have at Margate. Altogether there were 56 infant cripples under the care of the committee. Both boys and girls are received into this establishment, which is properly a nursery subsidiary to the Homes

for Boys and Girls. Sir Fowell Buxton and Mr. Hanbury form its gentleman's committee, and its secretary is Miss Shand, 53, Queen's Gardens, Hyde Park.

On going to hear the Bishop of Peterborough preach in Quebec Chapel on a Sunday, we arrived before the doors were opened and sought refuge from the inclemency of the weather in one of the houses of the neighbourhood. It happened to be the Cripples' Nursery. And what a collection of little sufferers was there, afflicted with all manner of deformities! One, more particular in his scrutiny than ourselves, found six of the children at dinner,—their table was only 2 feet in height,—and of these children three were possessed of only one leg each. Of the whole 33 little cripples then in the house 8 had but one leg, and 9 were bedridden.

These poor little creatures presented a very touching sight. As we have often observed in cases of spinal deformity, there were countenances there of much beauty and fine expression; and, though many had a delicate and pallid aspect, all looked happy. Good food, kind nursing, and religious influences had wrought as great a change on them as time had on their place; for where that blessed Home now stands stood some years ago the greatest curse of our towns and country—a publichouse, out of which drunkards reeled to stagger homeward, a terror to their children; and where pale, emaciated, ragged creatures were wont to resort with bottles for a supply of gin to cruel and brutal parents.

In this institution, which stands much in need of the liberality of kind-hearted men and women, the tiny cripples receive the best instruction. They are educated besides, so far as their abilities and years permit, in various departments of industry. But, as the committee say in their report, "it is their first wish to have these dear children taught that their heavenly Father, who has seen fit to afflict them so severely, that few can ever hope to be completely restored to health, has provided for them a better home above, where they may find rest and peace through the merits of their blessed Saviour."

We now request our readers to accompany us to the

CRIPPLE BOYS' HOME.

This is the complement to the Cripple Girls' Home, to which indeed we may say this one owes its existence; it being felt that there was no less need for that being done for cripple boys which had

been already done with such signal success for cripple girls. This institution, which has in the list of its committee the names of Lord Lawrence, Mr. Fuller Maitland, Dr. Stoughton, and many more well-known Christian philanthropists, and S. H. Bibby, Esq., 60, Green Street, Grosvenor Square, for its honorary and indefatigable secretary, stands in Wright's Lane, High Street, Kensington. The ground it stands on, like many a spot in London and its neighbourhood, is interesting for its associations with the great or good of by-gone days. Sir Isaac Newton lived close by this place, and the very ground it occupies was Sir Isaac's own property; and there is still standing there—the pride and ornament of its garden, and an object we regarded with feelings akin to veneration—a great old mulberry-tree, beneath whose umbrageous branches this devout Christian and greatest of philosophers had probably often reclined; working out in his mighty intellect those problems in science which have borne his name to the ends of the world, and earned for him and for his country the highest and most enduring fame.

This tree, interesting from its associations with a man as remarkable for his humility as for his piety, and for his piety as for his talents, one day offered an unexpected proof of the animal vigour and agility the poor cripples acquire through the good feeding and kindly treatment of this admirable institution. On a summer day, when the old mulberry was in full foliage, the superintendent was walking in the garden—as he supposed, all alone. He saw no one. There was no person, man or boy, within sight; yet, to his great surprise, he heard boys talking. Their merry voices seemed to be in the air; and for a while he was quite at fault. He could not imagine, or divine whence the sounds came. At length, however, he traced them to the mulberry-tree; and on drawing near it, what was his astonishment to see two of his boys perched up there like birds, and merry as they—one of these such a cripple that literally he had not a foot to stand on; both his feet and the lower part of his legs having been torn away by machinery.

Nor was this feat of athletics—not easy to explain, and still less easy to accomplish—without its parallel among boys who, to appearance, are as able to fly as to perform such exploits. Some short while before our visit they had been taken, as a reward for good behaviour, to see the wonders of the Crystal Palace. Some on crutches, some drawn in chairs, some stumping away on

one wooden leg, and some on two, they all luxuriated in its beautiful gardens and galleries. But there were those these did not content. Fired by the ambition which carried Dr. Chalmers, on every occasion when he visited an English cathedral, to the top of its highest tower, strange to say, some of these cripples were bent on climbing to the loftiest summit of the Palace; and did it.

But perhaps the most remarkable proof of the effect produced by good food and mental cultivation on those who, in most instances, arrive at that Home dull, low-spirited, apathetic, *feckless* both in mind and in body, stood before us in a stone wall, to which our attention was directed. It was 10 feet in height, and armed atop with splinters of glass. Outside this wall lies a vacant piece of ground belonging to a railway, over which some of the cripples, as they surveyed it from their windows—for “stolen waters are sweet” to them as to others—felt a strong desire to disport. It offered them a wider field than their own garden for cricket, and the other games in which, cripples though they be, they delight to engage. So, watching their opportunity, at this wall, with its 10 feet of height and formidable *chevaux de frise*, they set, wooden legs and crutches carrying the day. Over they went, and were found, to the amazement of the officers of the institution, careering over this forbidden, and what to most boys would have proved inaccessible ground. People may naturally ask, How can cripples play cricket? Yet they have a cricket club; and it would amaze and delight any one to see how, dwarfed and maimed as they are, they stand by the wickets; and pursuing the ball—some by help of one crutch, some of two, this one hopping on a wooden leg, that other dragging a paralysed limb behind him—they dash here and there, as keen at play as the best-built boys of any English school.

As has been already hinted, the ample supply of nutritious food goes far to explain the animal energy and remarkable physical improvement of these cripples. *It's the mou that maks the cou*, is a Scotch proverb which applies as well to other animals, rational or irrational, as to cows. According to the quantity of oats he gets, so is the strength and spirit of the horse; and the key to what puzzles many, the vigour and energy with which, though lazy and nerveless at home, a Highlander brought to the low country, or an Irishman transported to England, handles the spade is this—instead of inferior oatmeal

and waxy potatoes, and too little of both, with perhaps too much whiskey, he, acquiring in his new position the habits of his neighbours, fares daily now on a full supply of victuals, good for making red blood, bone, and muscle. At first we did wonder at the energy and spirit of these lads, at the marked improvement in their health, and the occasional restoration of power to their withered members, but our wonder ceased on entering the *salle à manger* and tasting the dinner they were about to sit down to. The soup would have satisfied an alderman. It was made of Australian preserved meat; and for the benefit of those not acquainted with its merits, we would recommend the use of this food, to a large extent, in hospitals, homes, ragged schools, and other such institutions. It is both highly nutritious and comparatively cheap. Need we add that we have no shares in any Australian Meat Company?

While on this subject we may venture to remark, that the children in some of the English benevolent institutions appear to be fed at a rate too costly; money being wasted in this way which might be employed in extending the benefits of the institution. Nor let us be deterred, by the fear of its being set down to Scotch prejudice, from recommending that once a day the children should have a diet of good oatmeal porridge with milk—not the meagre, tasteless, watery gruel that passes for porridge in England; but such as may be found in tables north the Border, and imparts to the Scotch peasant the physical power described by Burns in this graphic picture—

“Put in his waly nieve a blade
He'll make it whistle,
And legs, and arms, and heads he'll sneed
Like taps o' thristle.”

To say nothing of experience, Liebig, the great chemist, and greatest authority on such subjects, shows oatmeal to be almost as nutritious as the very best English beef; and that it contains a larger proportion than wheat bread of the elements that go to form bone and muscle. This was proved by a course of experiments carried on for a series of years by Forbes, an eminent philosopher and the discoverer of the Glacier Theory, at that time Professor of Natural Philosophy in the Edinburgh University, and afterwards Principal of the University of St. Andrews. For twenty years or so, he measured the breadth and height, and also tested the strength both of the arms and loins of his students; a very numerous class, consisting of different nation-

alities drawn to Edinburgh by his fame. These were the results—in respect of height, breadth of chest and shoulders, and strength both of the arms and loins, the bottom of the scale was occupied by Belgians; above them, and but a little higher, stood the French; very much above them, stood the English; while the top of the scale was occupied by the Scotch, and the Scoto-Irish, from Ulster, who, like the natives of Scotland, are fed in their early years with at least one meal a day of good milk and good porridge. Nations have their prejudices; but the rod which measured the height, and the tape that went round the chest of these students, and the machine whereby Forbes tested the power of arms and loins, had none. So one might be pardoned, when reading these results, for remembering the retort made to Dr. Johnson's sneer, when he defines oats in his dictionary as “food for horses in England and men in Scotland,” this, namely, And where will you find such horses as in England, or men as in Scotland? These remarks, for which we find high authority in Wellington's celebrated saying that battles are won by the Commissariat, no doubt, touch only material matters; but good food, comfortable clothing, and houses where the proprieties of life may be observed, are matters that affect too much the *morale* of a people to be overlooked by Christian philanthropists.

In the Cripple Boys' Home we found 40 inmates; most of them cripples indeed, and presenting a remarkable variety of deformities. One had legs, but had no use of them. Fixed to a low stool, when he is about to move out of his position, he takes his legs in his hands and crosses them so that they may be out of the way; then throwing his body forward, he keeps himself from falling—which he would otherwise do—by means of two short crutches, using these in fact as a horse does his fore-legs. It was curious to see with what speed he got over the ground, and still more so to be told that no boy there is more active, or enters with more spirit into many of their games. Perhaps the most remarkable malformation was presented by a boy, whose thighs were so misplaced that, instead of being in the same line with the trunk, they projected out at his sides; forming a right angle with them, and making his walking, such as it was, resemble that of a crab. Happily most of the boys are not very sensitive; but on the contrary occasionally make a joke or a nickname out of their peculiar deformities. This boy, however, was painfully sensible of his; though his mis-shapen

form lodged, we may observe, a jewel which more than compensated for the uncouthness and unsightliness of the casket. Singularly thoughtful, and of deep though unostentatious piety, it pleased and interested us to be told that, when the others were engaged in play, he would often be found engaged in prayer, or reading the Word of God, in some retired corner of the building. A circumstance occurred in connection with this cripple which deserves to be mentioned, as reflecting great credit on the training of the boys and the moral tone of the institution. A lady who takes a deep interest in its affairs offered a prize to the best behaved and most beloved of the cripples. This was left to be settled by themselves; and that no undue influences might come into play, the election was to be by ballot. The box was opened; and the result of the scrutiny was as honourable to the electors as to the elected—almost every slip of paper being inscribed with this cripple's name.

As showing how successfully the kindest and best feelings of our nature are cultivated in these youths, another circumstance may be mentioned. They entered into a plot, a secret conspiracy, which—though, it is said, nothing is a secret that is known to three persons—they kept so close that their superintendent remained in profound ignorance of it till the train was ready to be fired. One day it exploded to his astonishment, but most of all to that of the parties most nearly concerned. A zealous City Missionary, in addition to his regular labours and without any reward from man, was in the habit of coming once a week to tell these boys of Jesus, and address them on the great concerns of their souls and of eternity. A lady and gentleman also went there every Sunday evening for the same purpose. Nor do they appear, to use the words of Scripture, to have “run their horses on a rock and ploughed there with oxen.” Unprompted by any one outside the institution and unknown to any official within it, these cripple boys met in secret conclave to consider whether, and how, they should express their gratitude to such kind and considerate friends. Poor as they seem, and dependent on others as they really are, they have a little money at their command. That happens thus. Purchasers of the articles manufactured there, interested in the institution and moved with pity for its inmates, occasionally give a little more than the price of the article they purchase. For the encouragement of the boys, the rule of the house is, that this surplus belongs to the

cripple who made the article, whatever that may be. Suppose, for example, that a lady or gentleman charged with a payment of nine and sixpence is pleased to give half-a-sovereign, and seek no change, the sixpence does not go to the funds of the institution, but to the credit of the youth whose work has fallen into such kind and generous hands. These small gains are much valued by the cripples; yet all the more to their honour each offered this his little hoard to express his gratitude to these kind Christians. And thus the lady and gentleman were presented with a copy of “Keats's Poems,” the missionary with one of Bunyan's “Pilgrim's Progress.”

“Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness,” our Lord's injunction, is of universal application; and with an eye to that, this institution seeks first of all to train up every boy in the fear of God and knowledge of the Saviour. Beyond that, its object is not to support these cripples, but to teach them to support themselves by the arts of honest and remunerative industry. Ten pounds a-year has to be paid for each boy by the person, or persons, through whose influence he is received into the institution; and three years is the usual time during which they are allowed to remain within its walls. There a great variety of work is carried on, suited to the different capacities of the inmates; as we saw, and as is set forth in a business-like style in their trade circular. Accustomed to associate trade circulars with large manufacturing and mercantile houses, it rather at first amused us, we must confess, to find such an ambitious document issued by an institution where the meagre and mis-shapen objects around us seemed physically incapable of any useful work whatever. But we changed our minds before we had gone half-way through the home, and seen evidence in the many beautiful, as well as useful fruits of their skill and labour, that whatever deformity there might be in the workers, there was none in the work. We may remark here, that in the issue of a trade circular, many other benevolent and industrial institutions would find it of advantage to “do likewise.” Such an advertisement is a good stroke of policy. It keeps the subject before a public, who are apt to forget old schemes in the multitude of new ones; and it contributes materially to that important end which the directors of the Home set forth in the words that form the heading of their circular—these, namely, “The committee of the Home beg to request the attention of their friends to the

following list of charges for articles manufactured and work done there by the cripple boys. They would urge upon their friends and the public the importance of keeping the boys well employed by orders given to the respective departments, as by this means they are instructed and encouraged to aid in their own maintenance."

To give our readers some idea of what may be made of poor and, as many would say, useless cripples, to what a happy and good account their life may be turned by such institutions as this, here is a brief account, drawn from their trade circular, of the articles they make, and of their various prices. These are set forth under different departments as follows:—I. Stamping department—crests, monograms, addresses, &c., stamped and illuminated in gold, silver, and colours. II. Dye-sinking and engraving. III. Stationery. IV. Tailor's department—the articles of clothing ranging in prices from 6s. up to £4 4s. V. Carpentry department, presenting a large variety of objects, from knife-boxes at 2s. to French-polished wardrobes, valued at £7 10s. It is in short quite wonderful to see the work done by these cripples; and when, from the scene of activity which the different departments present, and where boys are seen learning trades by which, on their leaving this Home, they will become benefits, instead of burdens to society, we turn to the books of the institution, it is very satisfactory to find at how small a cost to the funds of the Home this valuable education is obtained. The value of the work done for the house itself, and the produce of the sales, are together nearly equal to the whole expenditure. This our readers can see for themselves in the following table:—

TRADE ACCOUNT FOR 1870.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
To wages of carpenter	104	17	2			
To materials	132	1	2			
				236	18	4
To wages of relief stamper	91	5	10			
To materials	82	1	10			
				173	7	8
To wages of tailor	91	5	10			
To materials	78	3	6			
				169	9	4
				579	15	4
By proceeds of carpentering work	165	7	2			
By materials and work done for the Home	29	7	9			
				194	14	11
By proceeds of relief stamping, &c.	162	0	8			
By stamping and stationery for the Home	25	15	0			
				187	15	8
By tailoring	120	6	9			
By materials and repairs for the Home	53	10	0			
				173	16	9
				21	8	0
Balance to cash account				579	15	4

How cheap is charity, some one has said. So it is when well and wisely applied; as the Scotch version of the psalm has it:—

"Blessed is he that wisely doth
The poor man's case consider."

And this institution, among many competing claims, presents such an illustration of that adage as may well recommend it to the generous support of a humane and Christian public. Here, in the space of three years, and at an annual expense of £23 for each, forty boys, who would otherwise have passed a miserable and dependent life—a burden to others, and in many instances their life a burden to themselves—are housed, are clothed, are fed, are instructed in the ordinary branches of knowledge, and while taught the way to a better world, are trained to earn their honest bread in this. So far as, strictly speaking, their industrial education is concerned, the expense, as appears by the above table, is quite trifling. At the small cost of 10s. annually, for a term of three years, the poor cripple, though he has not perhaps a foot to stand on, is, so to speak, set on his feet, and raised into a happy and useful member of society.

With its 100,000 cripples—man, woman, and child—why are there not many such institutions throughout the country, where the parochial authorities might send every cripple, young enough, and not so deformed as to be incapable of learning a trade? This were both economy and mercy. Our religion, if nothing else, forbids us following the Red Indian's practice—knocking deformed infants on the head. These cripples, if not taught to support themselves, must be supported. Teach them to earn their own bread, and the public would be relieved of heavy charges that now only end with their life; and, better still, many an unhappy object would be relieved of that sense of dependence and all those other evils that crush his spirit, and sour his temper, and cast a dark shadow over his whole existence. "We then that are strong," says the Apostle, "ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves"—words that in their most literal sense may be regarded as giving a divine sanction to such institutions as form the subject of this and a preceding article. Give him fair play, pity, nor "persecute him whom God has smitten;" stand humbly before him, as beholding in his deformity a picture of those hearts of ours which sin has still more deformed; be just to him as to one who suffers for no fault of his own, and holds in

that rude and uncouth casket a soul of infinite value, of immortal essence, purchased by the blood of Jesus, and destined to survive the stroke that turns the proudest beauty and fairest form into a heap of dust; and what may the despised cripple not become?

Cripples are found in the roll of the greatest or best men the world has seen. *Æsop* was deformed; so in a way was *Socrates*; so was *Philip of Macedon*, father of *Alexander the Great*, and himself the greater of the two; so was *François-Henri de Montmorency*, one of the greatest generals of his ages—historians telling us that his stature was diminutive, his features harsh, and his person deformed; so was *Byron*; so was *Walter Scott*; and so was probably a greater and better man than any of them, the great Apostle of the Gentiles.

It will gratify our Christian readers to

know that the religious interests of these poor cripples are assiduously and devoutly cared for. In all these homes they are taught that salvation, through the blood of a crucified Redeemer and the work of the Holy Spirit, is the one thing needful. Nor have they been taught this in vain. Not a few who, but for these Homes, had been left to grovel through life in a condition of hardship, misery, and neglect, degrading alike to body and soul, have found their "walls salvation and their gates peace." They have entered them to find Jesus there; and some, praising God with dying lips, have already left them for that better home, of which one, when she had taken a parting look of her poor, distorted, emaciated body, said, as she raised her eyes to heaven, "THERE ARE NO CRIPPLES THERE!"

THOMAS GUTHRIE.

ECHO.

I WANDER'D through the forest's gloom,

When Autumn winds were drear,
The glories of its summer-bloom
Lay round me dank and sear:
And oh is this man's fate, I cried,
From all that's bright to sever?
And a far-distant voice replied,
And answer'd—Ever!—ever!

I stood upon the sounding shore,
Beneath me in the bay,
To ride the booming waves no more,
A hopeless shipwreck lay:
And oh are these the ends, I cried,
Of hope and high endeavour?
And a far-distant voice replied,
And answer'd—Ever!—ever!

I sought the woods again, when Spring

Called forth my love and me,
And I was glad, and everything
Was glad as glad could be:
And oh can Love e'er fail, I cried,
Life's load to lighten ever?
And a far-distant voice replied,
And answer'd—Never!—never!

We wander'd by the glassy tide,
Our happy hearts at ease,
A gallant ship in all its pride
Swept past us in the breeze:
And oh shall man despair, I cried,
Shall sorrow sadden ever?
And a far-distant voice replied,
While some one whisper'd by my side,
And answer'd—Never!—never!

JOHN MONSELL.

OUR DISTRICT.

By A RIVER-SIDE VISITOR.

INTRODUCTORY.

FRIENDS of ours of a theorizing turn of mind sometimes ask us *why* waterside districts—meaning the below-bridge waterside districts of the Thames—should be what they are—should be so rough and dirty, and of such evil repute. The questioners fancy that with a tithé of our practical experience *we* ought to be able to account for the characteristics of such districts upon some grand general principle. But to our thinking, the characteristics of such districts are to be accounted for on simple grounds. All sorts of noisy and noisome trades are carried on

along the river-banks, and this and the knowledge that large numbers of the rough labourers engaged in such works *must* reside in the neighbourhood, make a waterside district a very undesirable place of residence. Being a waterside district, it "lies handy" for the "chance" labourers and lumpers who hang about docks and wharves on the chance of picking up a day's, or it may be an hour's, work; and who, living from hand to mouth, are constantly hovering between the pauper and criminal classes, and but too frequently being engulfed in one or other of them. Then, as sailors and other sea-going folks frequent it, the crimps, and hosts of other

harpies, who prey upon "poor Jack," take up their abodes in it, and publichouses, it is scarcely necessary to add, abound in it.

These, speaking broadly, are the class of inhabitants who go to make up the population of a waterside district. They are "a rough lot," and no small percentage of them would come under the head of having no visible means of support. The quarter they inhabit is avoided by others, and ranks as "queer" and dangerous. Yet there are characters among waterside inhabitants, that are well worthy of being known. Our own especial district, representative in most other respects, is representative in this respect also.

I.—CAPTAIN RUST.

At the time we made his acquaintance, "Captain Rust" was a 'long-shore ranger, and as such was much better known than respected—not without good cause. We first heard of him in connection with the unlawful disappearance of some chickens. We happened one morning to be passing a row of cottages, the back-yards of which went down to the river-bank; and, seeing a crowd round the door of one of them, we asked a person who had come from the spot what was the cause of the commotion.

"Well, it ain't anything very dreadful," answered the man; "it's Jim Burgess a-swearing vengeance agen everybody, because some one has been and collar'd a couple of his chickens. He thinks it's some of the neighbours, and he's a letten' out strong in hopes as the party may get raw, and put their head in the cap."

We knew Burgess in a general way, and observed:—

"We should hardly have thought any one in the Row would have been so unneighbourly as to rob him."

"Well, for my part, I don't think any of 'em has," said the man; "but *if* they have, there's nothing he can say as is too hard for 'em—he's a quiet cove, and one as wouldn't touch so much as a pin-head that wasn't his own."

Coming up to Burgess's house, we heard him fiercely exclaiming—

"If I on'y know'd for certain who it was, I'd twist their necks for 'em, as I suppose they've atwisted the chickens; I would as sure as my name's what it is; which I've lived hereabout all my life, and in this 'ere very house 'goin' on of twelve years, and I'm well bekknown, and my character will bear looking into. If they'd been common barn-

door birds, I wouldn't have cared; but they weren't, they were fancy 'un's as I bred myself: and now to think as they've been took for the pot, as of course they 'ave been—it makes my blood boil, it do, to think of it; if I could on'y lay hands on them as done it, wouldn't I be level with them, that's all!"

For a moment he paused to recover breath, and then, striking his fist on the door jamb, he concluded:—

"Look here! I'm a poor fellow, and the loss of two such chickens as them has made me a good five shillings poorer; but blest if I won't give another five to any one as 'll tell me who done it—not to law 'em, or anything of that sort; on'y to have the satisfaction of taking it out of their thieven' hides."

At this point a woman, who, to judge from the basket over her arm, and the house doorway carried loosely in her hand, had been out marketing, came along the Row, and on reaching the verge of the crowd asked—

"What's up?"

"Some one has stole two of Jim's best chickens," answered a dozen voices.

"Ah, I shouldn't wonder," she said coolly; "I was expecting to hear of something bein' a missing—I saw Captain Rust prowling about outside the back-doors when I was a getting up this morning, and I thought to myself at the time, 'Well, some one will suffer for it.'"

On hearing this there was a general exclamation of "O-o-o!" uttered in a tone that made it mean that there was no further occasion to ask to whom the disappearance of the fowls was attributable. This also seemed to be Burgess's opinion, for, looking greatly disconcerted, and muttering something about giving Mr. Rust a dustin' the first time he dropped on him, he hastily retreated indoors, and the crowd dispersed.

One of them was a shrewd, good-humoured tinker, with whom we had a nodding acquaintance, and following him up, we asked:—

"Who is Captain Rust?"

"What, don't you know Rust!" he exclaimed, in astonishment. "But, there, of course you don't," he went on, smiling, "or you wouldn't have asked, on'y I'd have thought as how no one could have been about here, if it was on'y for a week, without hearing about the gallant Rust."

"Well, but who is he?" we asked again.

"Well, as to *who* he is," answered the tinker sententiously, "I can't tell'ee; as likely as not he couldn't tell'ee himself. As to what he is, why he ain't anything in particular; he's on the loose. You see he's the

sort of gentleman for fowls to roost high from, and he ain't partic'lar to trifles in other ways. All the same, he's not what you may call an altogether bad sort of warment. At least not yet, though I suppose he will be all in good time, or as I should say, all in *bad* time. The law is sure to have him sooner or later; and, when he's been jailed two or three times, or done a turn of penal, he'll come out a finished blade and a keen 'un. When Rust has once got the jail polish, it'll be 'ware hawk' between him and them as has got anything to lose."

"But why do they call him Captain Rust?" we persisted, as our discursive acquaintance came to a pause.

"Why, because he's a ruster. Leastwise, he sets up as rusting bein' his reg'lar game, and I suppose it is to a certain extent; but he ain't partic'lar in sticking to one line;—bits of sails, or rope, timber, or any such live stock as pigeons, fowls, or rabbits, anything in fact as aint too hot, or too heavy, or too well watched—it's all the sâme to him, all's fish that comes to his net."

"Still you haven't told us what rusting is," we said.

"Beg yer pardon, no more I ain't," answered the tinker good humouredly; "well, it is pickin' up old iron 'long shore—they call it rust, because it mostly is rusty, I suppose."

"But the river is not generally supposed to wash *iron* to bank," we said, smiling.

"Well, no," retorted our companion, smiling in turn, "but there are shipbuildin' yards and engine factories, and places of that kind on the banks, and there is generally a bit of rust to be picked up. The captain's reg'lar 'lurk' is among the yards down the river, and bein' pretty well known, and—though you mightn't have thought it—pretty well liked, by the men in the yards, he often gets extra bits of old iron chucked out to him."

"And he turns the rust into money," we said.

"Yes, in course he sells it, and his other pickin's, every evening."

We had now reached the point where our roads separated, and, my curiosity having been satisfied, the tinker and I parted.

For some months after this, it was not our hap either to come into contact with Captain Rust, or to hear anything further of him. We had almost forgotten that there was such a person, when his name again cropped up in connection with a matter in which we were personally interested.

We had been assisting to establish a Ragged School in a part of our district

standing sorely in need of such an institution, and just as the school was about to be opened, we, in common with our fellow-workers, were portentously informed by some of the inhabitants who had taken a friendly interest in our labours, that we might look out for squalls; that the redoubtable Captain Rust had taken up his parable against the school, and avowed his intention of "making it hot" for all concerned in the affair.

Whether or not Captain Rust was at the bottom of it, certain it is that the night school on its opening had an evil time of it. Bands of young roughs besieged it. The younger scholars were pelted and hooted at as they went in and out. A constant whooping and howling was kept up, the doors were battered till at times they seemed about to give way, and occasionally windows were broken. At such times as we could get a policeman actually upon the spot, there was a lull in the storm; but as an officer could not be told off every night for that especial duty, the teachers had to depend chiefly upon their own efforts, which were of but little avail against the perseverance and adroitness of the assailants. One night when we were taking a class the annoyance had been particularly great; and, on the close of the school, we were leaving in anything but an amiable frame of mind, when one of the pupils who had left a few minutes previously, came running up to us breathlessly exclaiming—

"They've got him, sir, they've catch'd him, old Ben Tyler has,—and ain't he just a servin' on him out, sir, that's all!"

As he spoke he pointed to a group a little way down the street, and walking up to it we found in the midst a boy tied up to the wall by the thumbs in such a manner that the tips of his toes barely touched the ground; while, standing beside him, flourishing a stout rope's-end was Ben Tyler, an old navy pensioner, who added to his scanty pension by fish-hawking.

"Punishment parade, you see, yer honour," said Ben, touching his hat, as we came up and evidently expecting our approval.

"He's got to have ten minutes more of this, and I've give him a round and sound dozen with Timothy Tickle-Toby here"—he went on brandishing the rope's-end as he spoke—"and though—as is only fair to say—he's game to the backbone, and wouldn't give mouth, I'll pound it that every stroke went home, and won't want no rubbin' in. If he ever comes here agen after this, he must have a strong stomach, though it shan't be stronger than my arm; I'll double the dose

every time I ketch him, and I'll warrant to tire him of being licked, before I tire of licking of him. I'll make him remember coming clouting of orderly children, and a disturbing schools as his betters has started."

The culprit was a boy of apparently nine or ten years of age. We had often seen him about the streets and about the river-bank, and, without knowing who he was, or ever having spoken to him, we had come to entertain a liking for him. He was a thorough "city arab," and the leader of a band of street boys who were generally engaged in mischief;

and sometimes perhaps in something worse. Still, to our eyes there had seemed a something lovable about him. He was a well-grown, fine-limbed boy, with a jaunty, rollicking gait that spoke him full of spirits. He had a fair, chubby, smiling face, bright blue eyes, and crisply curling brown hair; and, well washed and dressed, would have been pronounced a handsome boy anywhere.

Though he now kept his teeth firmly clenched, and tried to appear carelessly defiant, it was evident that he suffered severely. Seeing this we said to old Tyler—



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"Well, perhaps, it's only from thoughtlessness that he has annoyed us, and, at any rate, he has been sufficiently punished, and you had better let him down now."

"Beggin' pardon, yer honour, I don't think I had," answered Tyler; "it's not often you can catch a customer of his stamp, and when you do you should stick to 'em. I've been arter him for some time, but he has always managed to run the blockade up till now. To-night, howm-sum-ever, I captur'd him fair, and me and some of them round as have boys at the school court-martialed

him, and the sentence was a dozen with the rope and a quarter of an hour's stringing up. The dozen he has had," he concluded, pulling out a large old-fashioned watch as he spoke, "but there's eight minutes of the time to run."

"Oh, but you must let us beg him off that," we said; "he will promise us not to disturb the school again, I know—won't you now?"

We paused for an answer, but he would make none, and Tyler exclaimed,—

"There, you see the sort he is! Let him go, eh? Give him another dozen more like."

"Well, it seems he is a stubborn boy," we said; "still we cannot stand by and see him tormented;" and without further parley we cut the string. We had laid hold of his collar intending to administer a few words of admonition ere letting him go; but before we could speak he had deftly twisted himself loose and dashed away.

"You'd a better let him had the dose out, sir," said Tyler, somewhat sulkily; "I wouldn't go to be cruel to any youngster, but with such as Captain Rust you must be hard if you mean to do any good with 'em."

"Captain Rust!" we exclaimed, "do you mean to say that was Captain Rust?"

"Why, yes," said the pensioner; "who did you think it was? There ain't another Captain Rust, I expects; or, if there is, that 'un's the original character; and a beauty he is, without paint."

We didn't know exactly why, we said, but we had been under the impression that the notorious captain was at least a young man.

"Well, anybody as only heer'd of his precious performances might easily think that," said Tyler; "there ain't many young men as would come up to him, for a more owdacious young willain was never born to be hanged."

"Oh! come, Ben, we mustn't be too hard on him," put in a costermonger, who, as we afterwards understood, had been one of the court martial, "he ain't had much chance of being anythink but what he is; he's had to scratch for himself since ever he could walk almost, and a pretty hard scratch he's had of it, for all as plucky and sharp as he is. When you come to think of what a job thousands of us men have to knock out a bare livin' for ourselves, you may guess how hard it is for a child, with, as you may say, not a soul to care for him, and all the world agen him."

There was a murmur of "Hear, hear," and then the "coster" resumed—

"I don't say but what he's a bad young rip, and a going on in a way as is sure to bring him into trouble in the long-run; but, at the same time, if he has his bad points he has his good 'uns too. Badly off as he is, there's others like him, but as hasn't his pluck in 'em, as is wuss off still; and I know as a fact that he always shares his crust with them even at times when all of it wouldn't be enough for hisself. And a chap of his years as'll do that," he concluded, laying his hand on the pensioner's shoulder, "isn't altogether a bad 'un; is he now, Ben?"

"Well, no," answered Ben, whose passing

ill-humour had by this time vanished, "I quite believe the young rapsallion is a good-hearted 'un at bottom; all the same, you know, he did lead the attack agen the school, and deserved a bit of correction, and a rope's-end breaks no bones. What I give him will do him no harm."

Ben spoke at us, and we answered, that we hoped the correction would do the captain good—sufficient good to keep him away from the school. To this we added an apology for having interfered to prevent the full carrying out of the sentence of the court martial; and, then, bidding good night to the members of the court and the spectators generally, we went on our way. The feeling of astonishment we had experienced on discovering that Captain Rust was so young a boy was still uppermost in our mind.

The following morning we were going along a street from which side streets branched on either side, when we became conscious that we were being dogged. We could hear a pattering of bare feet behind us; but whenever there was any indication of stopping or turning on our part, we could tell by the sound that the person following us rushed down the nearest side street. At length, feeling more irritated than alarmed, we determined to ascertain by whom we were being followed; and, striding hastily back to the top of a narrow street, whom should we behold but Captain Rust, trying to so flatten himself into a doorway as to be screened from sight. He now darted out, but, having retreated well out of reach, he came to a standstill as if undecided what to do. Presently he began to come cautiously forward, and, on getting within earshot, opened parley:—

"May I speak to you, guv—sir?" he called out stammeringly.

"Of course he could," we answered.

"And you won't go a collarin' of me, or a giving me into charge for making a row at the school?"

"No, we would do nothing against him for what was past," we answered.

"Honour bright?" he questioned dubiously.

"Honour bright," we answered, and then he came confidently up to us.

"And now what do you want to say?" we asked.

"Well, you see," he began slowly and with a rather puzzled air, "it ain't esackly as I've got anythink to tell you like; on'y I see you goen along, and I thinks to myself, I ought to say 'Thank you,' to him, and I was a comin' right up, when I thinks as well, perhaps he'll lumber me, and that was what put me fol-

loren you up in sich an in-and-out style—so thank you, sir."

"You mean for cutting you loose last night?" we said.

"Yes, sir," he answered. "I wouldn't knuckle down to old Ben and that lot; but it did hurt me orfle, and wasn't I glad to get away! and I'll never get on with any games at the school again,—I wouldn't be such a bad 'un as that 'ud come to, arter you cutting of me down; and if any of the rest on 'em gets a molestin' of you it'll be them and me for it."

"We should like you to come to school as a scholar," we said, "only in the evening; now, will you come?"

He paused in evident embarrassment, but at length he said:—

"I can't, sir; I scrats for myself, and I'm on lays as takes me pretty well all my time."

We felt drawn towards the sturdy little fellow, and, seeing some of his arab companions approaching, and desiring to have a little quiet talk with him, we asked:—

"Have you had any breakfast this morning?"

"No," he answered, in a tone of indifference.

"Well, will you come and have some with us?"

"Where?" he asked, with quick suspicion.

"Oh, only round at B—s," we said, naming a coffee-house, just outside a neighbouring shipyard's gates.

"But I didn't speak to you to get you to stand anything," said the captain sturdily.

"Of course not," we said; no such idea had ever entered our mind, we just wanted him to come and have a cup of coffee, because it would be easier to talk over that than standing there in the street.

His mind set at ease upon this point, the captain accompanied us with cheerful alacrity, and a few minutes later was seated at a breakfast, which, though plain, we took care was substantial and plentiful. Sipping at a cup of coffee, and appearing to be absorbingly interested in a week-old paper, we let the captain finish his meal without interrupting him by talk, or embarrassing him by any notice; and a very hearty meal he made.

He was the first to break silence. Twitching us by the sleeve, he whispered—

"Does yer have to pay for the lot?"

A glance at the table showed us the captain's drift, and we briefly answered—

"Yes."

"Well, that 'un," he whispered, indicating a slice of bread and butter still left upon the

plate, "is one too many for me now—can I plant it?"

We nodded assent, and the next instant he had stowed it away in the pocket of his ragged jacket, and then with a sigh of pleasure he exclaimed—

"Wouldn't it be jolly to have a blow-out like this every day! But there," he added in a slightly disappointed tone, "you does have as much as you likes every day."

"And don't you?" we asked by way of drawing him out.

"Why, no!" he said, "plenty o' days I don't. I don't more days than I do, and nows and thens there's days when I don't get any at all. Not as I'm grumblin' or carneying, mind you. For one thing," he went on with the precocious manliness and self-reliance of air and tone characteristic of street children who "scratch for themselves," "you see it takes a goodish bit to be enough for me. Knockin' about 'long shore makes yer rare and peckish, and where there's plenty to perform on, and I'm free to eat till further orders, I can put a lot out o' sight for my share. Getting yer grub's an in-and-out bisness with the likes o' me; but, taking it through and through, I come off pretty well,—some days I has as much as ever I can tuck into me, and most days I gets a bit."

"Well, captain," we began, adding in a laughing, apologetical way, "we must call you Captain Rust, you know, as we don't know your proper name."

"Which everybody does call me Captain Rust, and I don't mind," he put in; "on'y if you want to know my proper name it's Bill White."

"Well, then, Bill," we said, "about your coming to the school, you may take our word as a friend that it would be the best thing you could do for yourself; a boy or man that can't read or write has very little chance of getting on in the world nowadays. Come, now," we urged, on seeing that he remained silent, "there is nothing to pay, and it's only at night, you know, you could manage that; you can't rust in the dark."

"But it ain't dark till late now," he said; "all the same I don't rust at night, but now as it's the summer I'm on another lay as I do go arter at night."

"What lay is it?" we asked.

"Chuck-out-yer-mouldy-coppers, you know," he answered.

Our looks intimated that we did not know, for he went on in an explanatory tone—

"Mud-larkin' and cart-wheelin'. I meets

the wans coming back from the bean-feasts and the like, and turns cart wheels along the road beside 'em, and sings out to those on 'em, 'Chuck-out-yer-mouldy-coppers,' and there's mostly some good-natured uns among 'em. Then other times I works up 'long shore to the Trafalgar, where the swells as come down to the whitebait feeds are out in the what-do-calls—in front of the winders, you know, and I does a bit of tumblin' afore 'em, and then sings for them to chuck out their coppers."

"And do they?" we asked, as at this point he came to a full stop.

"Well, on'y sometimes," he answered. "You see," he went on, with a philosophizing air, "them as comes to the Trafalgar is mostly toppin' swells, and there's a difference 'tween them and bean-feasters. The feasters is mostly workin' people just out for their day's holiday, as they've perhaps been a saving up for ever so long, and they're that pleased at being out, that they ain't pertic'lar to a copper or two, and don't mind doin' a bit of chaff with you; and sometimes, if they've been taking their own grub with 'em, they'll chuck you a paper of sandwiches or summat o' that sort, as well as the coppers. But it ain't that way with the swells. They're used to doin' the grand, and bein' out for the day ain't such a pertic'lar treat for 'em as to put 'em in extra good humour, and then besides it's stand orf when it comes to swells. The police has orders to drive the mud-larkers off the bank before the Trafalgar; but, bless you, sir," he concluded with a laugh, "that's jest what gives us the pull."

"In what way?" we asked.

"Well, for all the police is put on to us for sake of the swells, there's nothink pleases most of 'em better than to see a policeman taken orf, and that's just how a mud-lark can do—if he's got any game in him. He ain't got no shoes or stockings on, and no clothes as he's afeard o' spilin', and the bobby *has*; so if it comes to a close shave you can allays dodge him by runnin' into the water a bit, and if, instead of lettin' him drive you away, you dodge him round about under the winders till he's tired, or goes off in the 'huff' at being laughed at, the swells is sure to chuck you coppers then, and sometimes a bit o' silver."

"That may be all very fine now, Bill," we said when he had finished; "but you should remember that, after a while, you'll be getting too big for those sort of games, and if you are not a little bit of a scholar, you won't have much chance of making a man of yourself. You had better give up the mouldy-copper lay, and attend the night-school."

"I must knock out a living how I can," he muttered.

"Have you no one to help you?" we asked; "no parents, no father or mother?"

"I aint got no mother," he answered, and his voice grew low and trembling, and a look of sadness came over his face. "It 'ud be different with me if I had. I dessay I should 'a been at school afore now if she'd 'a been left; she stuck to me through thick and thin. I only wish I did have her now. But I dunno neither," he added quickly, "she had an orful time of it, and a good deal through a takin' of my part. He used to wollup us dreadful, partic'larly poor mother; he killed her orf by inches."

"Your father you mean?" we said.

"I does, and no one else," he said, his eyes flashing angrily.

"And is he dead, too?" we asked.

"No; wuss luck," he answered promptly. "I'd 'a been a lot better off if he had been. He worn't content with kicking me out, if ever he thought I had a few ha'pence he'd come arter me and shake 'um out o' me, and gie me a hidin' if I said anything agen it. Howsumever," he went on, his face brightening again as he spoke, "he's pretty nigh as good as dead to me; he's doen time—ten years' penal, and he had a back scratchin' into the bargain. A woman as know'd my mother read it all out of a noosepaper to me, and didn't I larf when it said how he 'owled when they were givin' him the cat. I know'd he was chicken-arted. Though he used to knock us about so, I've heard men put him down like old boots, and he hadn't a word to say for hisself. Agen he's out next time, I'll be man enough for him myself, an' if he comes near me then I'll smash like that," and he brought his fist down fiercely on the coffee-room table.

"Oh, come, Bill," we said, laying a hand upon his shoulder, "you must not have such thoughts as that, they are wicked."

"You may think so," he answered somewhat doggedly; "but you don't know how I've been knocked about; and mother, poor mother!" he added, his voice dropping to a murmur.

"But there!" he resumed, suddenly, as if wishing to shake off some train of thought, "I must be goin'."

"You have given us no answer about the school, though," we said, as he rose to his feet.

"I told you the lay I was on," he answered.

"Well, but if we can find you something to do in the day-time to make up for that lay, will you come to school then?"

He paused for a few seconds, debating the matter in his mind, and our impression was, that the thought of the "chaff" to which he would be subjected by his associates if he accepted our offer, decided him against it.

"I wouldn't like to say anythink to you, sir, that I mightn't stick to," he answered at length, "and so I'd rather not promise; leastwise not now, perhaps I'll come in the winter."

This was the utmost we could get out of him, and we tried to make the most of it.

"Well, then, we shall expect to see you at school in the winter," we said, as he was leaving us.

"I on'y said perhaps, you know," he answered.

"Oh yes," we said; "we wouldn't try to trap him, still we would like him to come, and we would look him up again in the winter to speak to him about it. Was he agreeable?"

"Yes, sir," he answered; "and thank you for the breakfast, and you'll see there won't be no more goings on up at the school."

Though we had failed in our chief object of it, our interview with Captain Rust had increased our liking for him; our desire to snatch him if we could from the life of criminality and misery towards which he was but too probably gravitating; to which, if they live to become men, most of the children—and their number is legion—who are kicked out in the world to "scratch for themselves," ultimately do come. He was a sturdy, fearless, self-reliant little fellow, with the seeds of much that was good in him; a boy that, under favourable circumstances, would, in all probability, make a bright man, and a useful member of society. But he was not under favourable circumstances; he was under very unfavourable circumstances, was in a way to become an enemy to society—one of the "dangerous" classes.

Something like these were the thoughts that flitted through our mind as the captain walked away; his usual elastic jaunty gait, and free-and-easy bearing, coming back to him when he had gone a few paces.

His promise that there should be no more disturbances at the school was faithfully kept, and that, as we were told, at the cost of several fights with some of those who were desirous of continuing the sport, as they considered it. At the same time, however, the captain very characteristically began—as our informant upon this point put it—to make poor old Ben Tyler's life a burden to him. Occasionally, when moving about our district,

we caught sight of the boy, but only at a distance; and we had an idea that he designedly kept out of our reach in order to avoid being pressed upon the subject of the school. As most of the younger boys who attended the night classes were in the habit of going into the country with their parents harvesting and hopping, it was, on that and other grounds, decided to discontinue the evening classes at the school from the beginning of August till the middle of October.

When they were resumed we were away from the district on leave of absence, and did not return till November, when, however, we immediately bethought us of Captain Rust. We began to look out for him when taking our walks abroad, but having at the end of a week seen nothing of him, we began to make inquiries as to where we would be likely to "drop on him."

Well, they couldn't exactly tell us, was the answer given by those to whom we put the question. Somewhere about his old "lurk," they should think; but he hadn't shown up much lately, and seemed to be dreadfully down on his luck. At length, we fell in with an old man, the keeper of a moored barge, which served as landing stage for a waterman's ferry, who was a little more definite.

"I see him a few days back," he said, "and precious ill he was too, poor little feller, with his head in a sling, and looking like a walking skeleton a'most."

"With his head in a sling!" we echoed.

"Well, bandaged up. He got his cheek badly gashed awhile ago, and with no one to see to him it went bad, and some good-natured soul of a woman had tied it up for him that morning. He asked me for some old sacking as was lying about on the barge here, and I give him that and the last twopence of my week's dinner-beer money; for I thinks to myself, well, it's only a matter of going without my half-pint for a couple of days, while it'll get the captain a bit o' summat to eat. But if you believe me, sir, I had a job to get him to take the coppers; he's a spirited 'un, is Rust, and no mistake."

"But can you tell us where we can find him?" we asked.

"I can't now," he answered; "but I'll try and find out. I would like to see summat done for him. He ain't come out much lately," he went on. "You see he's like the wild beastes, as you maysay, and like them he'd try to creep into some quiet hole to die."

"But he can't be dead," we said hastily, "or it would be known in the neighbourhood."

"Well, I don't say as he is dead, sir," an-

swered the old man, "and I hope he ain't; but as to saying he can't be, that's another affair. I ain't saying it in a hard-hearted way, but a dozen such as him might be dead and no one know, and—God help 'em, poor little creeters—no one care about it either. Just you put it to yourself, sir—here's the captain, poor knocked about little wasteral, who's to miss him if he was gone?"

The old man spoke with a depth of feeling that was catching, and for the moment we had no words to answer him. After a brief pause he went on in a somewhat calmer tone.

"It's pretty certain, sir, that he's kenneling out, most likely in some out-of-the-way corner of a shut-up wharf or yard, and he might die there and not be a case of body found for long enough after."

What the landing-stage keeper had told us made us feel very anxious and uncomfortable, and throughout the remainder of the day we were actively engaged making inquiries among the policemen on the beat, common lodging-house keepers, and others; but all in vain, none of them could tell us the whereabouts of Captain Rust. The next morning, however, the desired information was brought to us, thanks to the instrumentality of the old ferry keeper. We had just got down-stairs, when we were told that a man wished to speak to us. He was a tall, burly fellow, and, with a hairy cap tied down over his ears, a large red woollen "comforter" wrapped thickly round his throat, and a much be-patched great coat coming down to his heels, he looked a formidable customer.

"Beg yer pardon for calling so early," he began, the instant he was shown into the room in which we were; "but you see, sir, I'm night watchman at Miller's yard, and I thought if I didn't call before I turned in, I mightn't catch you."

"That was all right," we said, signing to him to take a chair, "but what might he want with us?"

"Well, it's this way, sir," he began, in a half-confidential sort of tone; "as I was a coming home this morning, I meets old Dan Davies down at the Ferry there, and says he to me, 'Charley'—Charley Johnson bein' my name, you know—'do you happen to know anything as to where Captain Rust hangs out now?' So says I, 'Why?' 'Well, cos,' says he, 'Mr. — was a inquirin' of me about him, and I think he'd give him a lift if he could find him.' 'Well, if that's it,' says I, 'I do know something about him. I know where he sleeps, only I'm not supposed to. I'm supposed *not* to, more

than anybody else.' 'Well,' says he, 'if you'd give Mr. — a call, I'm sure he'd be obliged to you,' and so I said I would, and here I am, sir, and I 'ope you won't think me for'ard in coming."

"We thought him a good-hearted fellow," we answered, and were very much obliged to him for taking the trouble to come.

"Oh, don't let us say anything about that, sir," he answered, colouring. "It *would* be a poor heart that wouldn't go a step out of its way to help another. This is how it is, sir; Dingley's yard, which is next to ours, has been standing idle this year past, and it's in a shed there that the captain sleeps, though I have to make believe not to know it. I'm supposed to keep a bit of an eye on that yard as well as our own; so, if I was to let on that I was aware of his coming there o' nights, I'd be expected to drive him away; but, bless you, sir, I couldn't do it. So as I tell you I take on as if I didn't know it. I try not to see him, and he tries not to let me; he's a sharp little chap, and we understand each other. When I'm having my supper, I leaves a bit at a spot where it's handy for him to fetch it, and then I goes for a walk in another part of the yard, and when I come back the grub's gone; but of course I ain't seen any one take it; it might ha' been a dog for anything I know; and if I throws a bit of sacking or a few pieces of coke over the wall, I ain't supposed to know as anybody walks them off and turns 'em to account. Drive him away! No! I couldn't have the heart to do it, if I was to lose fifty jobs over it! I'm a roughish sort o' chap, sir, but it almost brings the water into my eyes to think o' that poor little feller, he's so broke down and ill, and so brave-hearted with it all. I've six on 'em, three boys and three girls, and there's only two-and-twenty shillings a week to keep the lot of us, so you may know there ain't much chance for saving; and when I see little Rust—for between you and me and the post, sir, I do see him sometimes—I think to myself what would become of my own youngsters if they were left as poor Rust has been? If you can do anything for him, sir, it'll be a real charity; and if I can do anything to help you in it, there's my hand on it."

Heartily we grasped the brawny hand he proffered us, and then in a few brief words it was arranged that he should that night conduct us to the spot where Captain Rust "kenneled."

It was a rainy, raw November night, and the disused ship-yard seemed to us an espe-

cially dismal place as we stood in it at the point close to the water's edge, at which we had clambered into it in company with our kind-hearted guide. The bare poles and scaffolding stood up gaunt and skeleton-like against the leaden sky, and the slimy lap-lapping of the slowly rising tide had something dirge-like in its sound. There was a faint moonlight, and by this we began to make our way up the timber-strewn yard, our watchman friend not wishing to turn on the dark lantern he carried, unless it should become absolutely necessary to do so. In about five minutes we got up to the brick-built parts of the yard, the forges, stores, offices, and there things seemed more cheerful.

Coming to a stand for a moment, our guide whispered—

"We're close to him now; the shed's just behind that second forge there; should I speak to him first? he'll know my voice."

"Yes," we whispered; and then the pair of us advanced as directly as we could. As we came up to the shed, we heard its occupant creep to the door to listen; and so, hastening forward, our companion, putting his mouth to a chink, said, in an undertone—

"Don't you be afeard, Rust, it's only me, Charley Johnson, you know. I've brought Mr. — with me; he wants to see you; open the door, that's my hearty."

There was a sound as of a piece of wood being struck out of a staple; and then the door swung open and we entered.

Having pulled the door to after him, Johnson turned on his lamp, by the light of which we saw poor little Rust crouching in a corner beside the pile of old sacking which served him as bed. He looked a wofully different boy from what he had done when we first met him. Wasted, haggard, emaciated, with face deadly pale, lack-lustre eyes, the old buoyancy of bearing gone, and his clothes not only dreadfully ragged, but hanging about him "a world too wide." It was a piteous spectacle, so piteous, that we were for the moment unable to speak, and the boy himself was the first to break the painful silence.

Slowly rising to his feet, he dragged himself towards us, and in a weak, hollow voice, said:—

"I 'spose you've come about the school; but I couldn't come in such togs as these; and, besides, I've been very bad, sir, I have indeed, there ain't no sham about it; is there, Charley?"

"Goodness knows, there ain't," answered Charley emphatically.

"No, we can see that but too plainly," we

said; and then, with an assumed heartiness of tone, we went on:—"Never mind about the school now; we must get you better first, and then we can talk about other things. I've only come to take you away from here at present."

"Where to?" he asked quickly, and shrinking back as he spoke.

"Well, we hardly know yet," we said; "however, it will be some place where you'll be well done by, and where we don't think you'll want to leave, but where you'll be free to leave if you do want."

"There now, what could be kinder or fairer than that!" exclaimed Johnson admiringly; "so come along, little matey;" and without more ado he took Rust up in his arms as lightly and as tenderly as though he had been an infant, and led the way out of the yard. He carried him thus till he came to the front gate of the premises of which he was watchman, then standing him gently down on the pavement, said—

"May it be the turn of the tide for you, old chap, as summat seems to tell me it will; but if it shouldn't be, and you ever do want the shed again—which, of course, I 'ope you won't—there it is for you, and no questions ast and no notice took. And now, good-bye, little Rust—good-bye, and God bless yer." As he finished speaking he stooped and kissed the desolate boy upon the forehead, and then, with a brief good night to us, he went off.

Calling a passing boy, we sent him to a neighbouring stand for a cab; and, while waiting for it, we resolved to convey Captain Rust, in the first instance at any rate, to a local home for destitute boys, with the manager of which we were acquainted.

It was nearly ten o'clock when we reached the home, and the boys being gone to bed, we found the matron in her own room, darning stockings. It was a cosy little room, and, with a clear fire burning, it looked and *felt* decidedly cheerful by contrast with the dark, wet streets, and we could see Rust's eyes brighten the instant he came into it.

A glance at our companion was sufficient to give the matron a general understanding of the position; and, before we could enter into any explanation, she had put the already singing kettle on the fire, and was bringing out a little jar of extract of beef wherewith to make beef-tea.

"Ah, poor little fellow, he looks sadly wasted," was her comment, in an undertone, when we had briefly told her Captain Rust's

story; "but it's more a case for meat than medicine."

The beef-tea was soon ready, and while the boy was sipping it the active matron prepared a warm bath for him in an adjoining room, and looked out a suit of the Home uniform. Somewhat refreshed by the beef-tea, the warmth, and his brief rest, the captain went readily enough to the bath when requested to do so, and came back looking decidedly improved. In the meantime the matron had got ready a cup of coffee, with an egg and some thin bread-and-butter. To this the captain sat down with something of his old alacrity of movement, but he had scarcely tasted the food when, covering his face with his hands, he burst out sobbing, as though his heart would break.

"I can't help it! I can't stand it no longer! It chokes me a'most!" he gasped out between the great sobs that shook his poor little frame.

"What is it, Bill?" we said soothingly. "You can't stand what?"

"This," he sobbed out brokenly—"yer all bein' so kind to me. I know it's babyish, but I can't help it."

The matron probably divined that we were going to tell him that he must not cry, for with a quick shake of the head at us, she advanced, and patting him on the head, said—

"There, dear, you are weak now, but you will be better soon. I'll keep your coffee hot for you; it will do you good presently."

Her voice and touch seemed to calm him, for his sobbing immediately became less violent. Seeing this, the matron left his side and resumed the conversation with us, which had been interrupted by the captain's outbreak of grief. It was about him that we were talking; the matron sorrowfully explaining to us that she feared it would be impos-

sible for the boy to be sheltered there for more than a day or two, as what beds they had were full, and the state of their funds did not admit of their keeping another bed.

We had spoken in whispers, but the event proved that the captain's sharp ears had caught at least the general purport of our talk. Suddenly rising, he staggered to where the matron was seated, and falling on his knees at her feet, and burying his face in her lap, broke out—

"O lady! don't send me away. I'll sleep anywheres, and do anything, only let me stay. I could be good where you wos, I know I could. Take pity on me, I'm quite broke down. I'm on'y a little chap, and I've no mother."

There was an earnestness in his brokenly uttered appeal, an air of forlorn helplessness about his attitude and wasted figure that would have touched even a hard-hearted person—and the matron was *not* hard-hearted.

Bowing her own head over his to conceal her rising tears, she murmured, "No, you shall not be sent away, poor motherless wanderer. I'll have room made for you somehow. With God's help, I'll be as a mother to you, so far as in me lies."

Timidly he kissed her hand, and, so well as his choking sobs would let him, fervently murmured some incoherent expression of thanks. Balm had been poured upon his wounded spirit; gradually the tempest of grief in his breast subsided; his sobs grew softer and softer, till at length they died away in sighs; and, finally, he fell into a light and gentle sleep.

And so, still resting his weary little head on the lap of her who had promised to be a mother to him, we left him—a brand snatched from the burning.

PRAY WITHOUT CEASING.

I THESS. v. 17.

"PRAY without ceasing," says the zealous Paul;
 But what means this? Must we not work, nor eat,
 Nor take our rest? Is prayer to swallow all?
 Are knees to serve in lieu of hands and feet?
 Nay—I will show thee what is ceaseless prayer.
 First, 'tis a heart to prayer for aye inclined;
 Next, that it be of all our choicest care;
 Next, that we ask the Counsellor to share
 Each sorrow of the body and the mind;
 Next, that we cease not till our good we find,
 Like him who said, "I will not let Thee part
 Until Thou bless;" next, that our spirits dart
 Their pious glances, when they can, on high;
 Last, that we bound each day with morn and evening cry.

GEORGE S. OUTRAM.

THE EDITORS' ROOM.

I.—NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE COMING WINTER.

WITH the shortening day and the approach of winter, we feel ourselves forced to contemplate some elements of discomfort of another kind. Food is dear, fuel is dearer, the potato crop is diseased; struggles of labour and capital become more intense; the English labourer, slowest and most immovable of men, has begun to agitate; the whole understratum of society appears to be heaving. What is to be the result? Or to look only to what is immediate, how is the winter to pass over? If the upper and middle classes will feel a difference, and if the working classes will find that nearly all that they have gained in higher wages is taken back in higher prices, what will become of that class whose incomes, fixed and unelastic, can undergo no improvement? What will become of the clergyman and the teacher, the clerk, and the annuitant, the widow and the invalid, who find it so hard to make ends meet even when the times are favourable, and who cannot but be check-mated when prices suddenly rise? It is a strange experience to come upon us in the heart of a spell of such unwonted prosperity. It will at least serve to give scope to the thoughtful benevolence of those who are not satisfied with appeasing the outcry of the noisy, but would fain contribute to the adjustment of more honourable claims. We do not hesitate to say, and to say decidedly, that it is the duty of all who have anything in their power to consider well the case of the classes which we have mentioned, and, if possible, not to suffer them, and them alone, to sustain the pinch of a change which has brought increase of comfort to most of their neighbours. In what manner this is to be done, it is not for us to say; the proverb will probably settle that point—where there's a will there's a way. And as to the generally troubled state of our social horizon, we believe that it is a call in Providence to all classes to exercise more of that submission to the will of God, and of that patience, forbearance, and love to one another that are so eminently Christian graces. It is singular that God should have given the nation a new lesson of dependence in the midst of its prosperity, and rising, as it were, out of its very prosperity. The lesson will not be lost if it tends to chasten our vaunting spirit, and to spread the conviction that nothing but the favour of God can ever make our mountain to stand strong.

THE LABOURERS AND THEIR PENNY.

Conspicuous among the classes whose present attitude is fitted to create anxiety, are the agricultural labourers. The condition of this class has long been a reproach to England, and the only wonder is that they have been so long of making any effort to improve their circumstances. Is there to be war between them and their employers? Are they to succeed in raising their wages, and if they succeed in this, is it to

be balanced by the loss of perquisites that have generally come to them? And are all bonds of sympathy between them and their employers to be broken, and is a relation which used to have something of the paternal and the filial in it, to degenerate into a mere matter of work and wages?

It is not our province to answer these questions, or to mingle directly in this fray. We observe, however, that a very interesting question has been raised in relation to it. Supposing it to be true that the English agricultural labourer has been held down, and that he is now struggling in an honest cause, what is the duty of the Christian Church in relation to the struggle? The question has been keenly debated chiefly in some Church of England newspapers, in which many influential clergymen have freely expressed their opinions. On the one hand, it is maintained by some that the Bible always gives its support to the poor and needy when borne down by a superior social power, and that it would not only be in itself fair and manly, but eminently Christian, for clergymen to take openly the side of those who have hitherto had such a miserable lot. On the other hand, it is maintained by others that it is with the spiritual interests of men alone that the Church has to do; that the early Church was very careful not to intermeddle with political questions, or questions that had a political side; that even slavery was not openly denounced, but rather the endeavour was made to destroy the spirit out of which slavery arose, and thus to make provision for its ultimate extinction. Hence it is maintained that the duty of the Church is not to interfere directly in the present conflict, but to endeavour to instil principles of justice and generosity on the one side, and patience and contentment on the other, with a view to a satisfactory adjustment of the strife. To this it is answered that in point of fact it is true that the early Church abstained from open interference with matters that had a political side, even when they bore closely on moral and spiritual interests. But while this was true of a Church struggling hard to obtain bare toleration at the hands of a most alien world, it does not follow that the same course is incumbent on a Church which has obtained not only toleration, but a commanding position and influence. Christian men, in these circumstances, are called to declare for the right. Our blessed Lord would never have shrunk from doing so through fear of offending those in whose hands the power and influence of this world lay. Such are pretty nearly the views of the different sides. The matter has an importance not only on its own account, but also for its bearing on higher interests. It is an undoubted fact that the Christian Church generally has suffered in our country in the estimation of the working classes, from its having been held by them to show a spirit of indifference to their burdens, and to stand aloof when they have been trying to get them lightened. Hitherto this has prevailed only in

towns, and the agricultural labourer has continued outwardly, at least, loyal to his Church; but whether his loyalty will endure in future generations will, humanly speaking, depend in some degree on the present attitude of the Church. We speak of secondary causes, and of the masses, not individuals; knowing well that no working man will turn his back on any Church which has been to him the channel of salvation.

SCIENCE AND PRAYER.

Most of our readers have, of course, observed the singular controversy which has been going on during the last two or three months on the efficacy of prayer. Objections to the efficacy of prayer have unfortunately of late years been too much the order of the day on the part of an enthusiastic class of "scientists" (as they are now beginning to be called); but the peculiar aspect of this last discussion arose from the nature of the test to which it was proposed to bring the matter. In a letter communicated through Professor Tyndall to a leading Review, and understood to have been written with a *bonâ-fide* intention, by an eminent London physician, it was proposed that in order to test the efficacy of prayer, there should be something like a prayer union throughout Christendom on behalf of a particular ward of some hospital, and that the question should be determined by the fact whether or not the rate of mortality was lessened in consequence. We believe that the proposal was an honest one, and that its ingenious author had no idea of the shock which it would give to the feelings of Christian men. At the very first blush, it looked like the old demand of a sign from heaven, or like the presumptuous condition of Thomas—"Except I see in his hands the print of the nails and thrust my finger into his side, I will not believe." Looked at more carefully, it revealed much ignorance of the conditions on which answers are promised to prayer—such as the faith of the party asking,—the fitness of the thing asked to promote the highest good of the sick person,—and the regard had in the whole circumstances of the case not merely to what is for the good of man, but also to what is for the honour and glory of God. But the most repulsive feature of the matter was its being, on the very face of it, a cool proposal to experiment on God's ways, merely for the satisfaction of man, to subject the divine procedure to human tests—to constrain the Holy One to manifest Himself precisely after the fashion that his creatures should choose. In this point of view, the very statement of the proposal caused a shudder of pain.

In a paper contributed by Mr. Galton to another Review it was affirmed that to put the matter to a new test of this kind was quite unnecessary, inasmuch as we had already sufficient proof from many quarters that prayer made no difference. Mr. Galton affirms in this article that he never knew a medical man ascribe any cure that took place within his practice to prayer; that the members of the Royal Family, much though they are prayed for, do not live longer than other people; that missionary ships, and churches and chapels, are not more secure than other

ships or than other churches and chapels that are not prayed for; that the deaths advertised in the *Record*, which probably have been much prayed about, are not at a more advanced age than those advertised in the *Times*, which probably have not enjoyed that privilege. Here is another sample of the misapprehensions which such men show in dealing with these matters. No believer in prayer affirms that cures vouchsafed in answer to prayer take place (ordinarily) *without the intervention of some natural cause*, brought to operate on the diseased frame through the unseen power of God, either (according to one view) by a special interposition on the occasion, or (according to another) by a series of pre-established arrangements, adjusted to the foreseen fact of prayer. The cure may have all the appearance of a natural one, yet it may really be in answer to prayer. The physician may be induced to change his treatment, the state of the atmosphere may improve, or something else may occur to strengthen the patient's system, appearing quite accidental to most persons, but not so to him who has prayed in secret, and obtained the blessing that he sought. In regard to the Royal Family, it is unfortunately true that the prayers offered for them, though sincere enough at bottom, are often offered quite formally, not possessing that quality of *importunity* which we are led to connect with effectual prayer. As to missionary ships, &c., the statement of Mr. Galton is a random one; the *data* are few; nor would the fact be conclusive, because such calamities as he refers to are often, in the case of missionary and other public bodies, real benefits in the end. And as to the duration of lives that are prayed for in comparison of those that are not prayed for, we rather apprehend that the case will turn out favourable to the former; partly, it may be, owing to direct answers, but mainly and most commonly, because the divine blessing given in answer to prayer has led the persons prayed for to practise that self-control and careful living, and to enjoy that serenity of mind and radiance of heart with which long life is usually connected.

In the August number of the *Contemporary Review* there appeared a very able paper, by Dr. Littledale, on the efficacy of prayer. The question is discussed thoroughly from the scientific point of view, and the doctrine of prayer is shown to involve no violation of the order of nature. At the same time stress is laid on the universal prevalence of prayer wherever there has been a religion of any kind, and its far more abundant prevalence under Christianity than under any other. If it be admitted that Christianity is the purest religion, then how comes it that prayer has been so much more common under it?

There is something very melancholy in this endeavour, in the name of science, to deprive us of one of our highest privileges. If the views of Tyndall and Galton should be established, the awful dream of John Paul Richter would become nearly a reality:—"I wandered to the farthest verge of creation, and there I saw a Socket where an Eye should have been, and I heard the shriek of a Fatherless world."

II.—OUR LETTER-DRAWER.

A few months ago, while expressing in these columns disapproval of Mr. Ward Beecher's plan of opening picture-galleries and reading-rooms on the evening of the Lord's-day, in order to draw off young men from haunts of debauchery, we invited suggestions from correspondents as to what provisions of a more unexceptionable kind might in their judgment be made for the Sabbath evening. We now return to that subject.

YOUNG MEN'S SABBATH-EVENINGS.

Our correspondents have shown a tendency rather to dwell on the wide subject of Sabbath desecration and its evils than on the particular phase of the question to which we wished to draw attention. This is true of the elaborate communication of "C." He writes with much feeling on the growing tendency of a large section of the population of large towns to turn the first day of the week into a mere day of pleasure-seeking, and strongly urges the Churches to use all the means in their power—not excepting their discipline—to correct the growing evil. He longs for a powerful confederation whose object shall be to maintain the sanctity of the day, and rouse public opinion in regard to it. After specifying various forms of labour for such an association, he adds:—

"In order to make its work complete, it might do much in carrying out the suggestions made in the SUNDAY MAGAZINE for June last, by providing reading-rooms where nothing but religious reading should be supplied, and in connection with which short services might be held. These doubtless would be attended by many who now never attend the house of God, and thus be brought under the influences which they have never before experienced. So would the work be at once destructive and constructive (and such is the work of all reformation), inasmuch as it would tend to prevent Sabbath-breaking in the case of unlawful trading, and would provide 'some better thing' than pleasure-seeking for those who transgress in that direction."

Writing from the north of Ireland, M.K.S.B. "views with dismay the growing facilities put in the way of the working classes for the desecration of the Lord's-day: trains running to and fro at single fares, steamboat excursions at reduced rates—temptations hard to be resisted by artisans, and, above all, by mill-workers pent up all the week in a close, stifling atmosphere, and to whom a day in the country, breathing air uncontaminated by smoke, must be like a glimpse of heaven." Looking at the visible result of the Sunday train experiment, our correspondent thinks that it must be deemed a failure. "Children tired and cross, women distracted between watching them and looking after their half-drunk husbands, suspicions, quarrelling, and recriminations, are no fit preparation for entering on the toils of the Monday. Contrast this with a day spent in the public and private exercises of God's worship, the Sabbath quiet, and the Sabbath rest, the strength derived from communion with the Eternal, and what a difference!"

A telling passage is quoted from Hugh Miller, which we are glad to reproduce:—

"There is a variety of the genus philanthropist who would fain send out our working classes to the country on the Sabbath to become happy and innocent in smelling primroses, and stringing daisies. An excellent scheme theirs for sinking a people into ignorance and brutality, for filling a country with gloomy workhouses, and the workhouses with unhappy paupers. The mere animal that has to pass six days of the week in hard labour, benefits greatly by a seventh day of mere animal rest and enjoyment. The repose according to its nature proves of signal use to it, because it is according to its nature. But man is not a mere animal; what is best for the ox and the ass is not best for him; and in order to degrade him into a poor unintellectual slave, over whom tyranny, in its caprice, may trample roughshod, it is but necessary to tie him down, animal-like, during six working days to hard engrossing labour, and to convert the seventh into a day of frivolous, unthinking relaxation. The merry, unthinking serfs who, early in the reign of Charles I., danced on Sabbaths round the maypole, were afterwards the ready tools of despotism, and fought that England might be enslaved. The Ironsides who, in the cause of civil and religious freedom, bore them down, were staunch Sabbatarians."

Our correspondent thus concludes:—

"Your suggestion that halls should be opened in large towns on Sabbath evenings with books and periodicals suitable for Sunday reading, would, I feel assured, if carried into execution, be productive of much good, and be the saving of many young men, especially lads from the country, who drop away gradually from the church, and fall into the ways of sin from having nowhere to go to, and nothing to interest them on that evening. Ah! if the children of the light were only as wise in their generation as the children of darkness. Meanwhile, we who love Zion and Zion's King, must cry mightily to Him 'who maketh the wrath of man to praise Him,' who 'with good still overcometh evil,' to guide our leaders in this matter, to endow them with a spirit of wisdom and of understanding; and to teach us how to make the Lord's-day 'a delight, the holy of the Lord, and honourable,' the pearl of days, the dew and blessing of the weak, the foretaste of that 'rest that remaineth for the people of God.'"

THE BIBLE AND SCIENCE.

The following is an extract from a letter of inquiry which we have received on this subject:—

"Will you oblige me by informing me what book is best calculated to reconcile science with religion, more especially geology with the history of creation in Genesis?"

We are afraid that we must give a somewhat indirect answer to this question. Many books and a still larger number of brochures have been written for the purpose of effecting the desired reconciliation, but that any of them have proved satisfactory we cannot undertake to say, for this simple reason, that we do not think that the time has come when any book can be written thoroughly adapted to the purpose. Most of the books that have been written—by Dr. Chalmers, Dr. Buckland, Hugh Miller, Dr. Pye Smith, and many others—are rather calculated to show that a reconcilia-

tion is *possible* than to indicate the one true reconciliation.

Suppose a man has suddenly disappeared, and that a surmise arises that he has been murdered. Many hypotheses will be started to show that his disappearance may be accounted for without the supposition of murder; and different minds will cling to different hypotheses, until the mystery is at last cleared up. It is useful to have these hypotheses, but it would be foolish to pronounce prematurely that one was right and all the rest wrong.

Now the various suppositions as to the way of reconciling Genesis and geology on the time and order of creation are as yet little more than suggestions of possible solutions. And what makes it all but impossible to go much further is, that geology as yet has not succeeded in reaching definite and comprehensive results. Dr. Carpenter, in his introductory lecture at Brighton, at the meeting of the British Association, spoke of geology as the most speculative of all the natural sciences, and used it to illustrate the manner in which the facts of nature are liable to receive a colour from the mind of the person observing them. That address of Dr. Carpenter's was certainly a very important testimony as to the net value of scientific discoveries. The "arrogance of science" was smartly rebuked for maintaining that absolute certainty characterizes its so-called conclusions,—these conclusions consisting really of a certain amount of fact, modified and coloured by the views of the person making use of it. Dr. Carpenter maintained that the conclusions of science have to pass through an alembic of "common sense," there to be tested and verified by the common sentiment of mankind, before they can be accepted as certain.

Undoubtedly, if this be true, many of the so-called conclusions of modern science are as yet on the wrong side of this test—only in the outer court of the Gentiles. The doctrine of evolution, the origin of the human family, the antiquity of man, the doctrine of natural selection, spontaneous generation, and sundry other theories for which the certainty of science has been confidently claimed, must, according to Dr. Carpenter, forego their claim.

It is impossible to reconcile Genesis and geology satisfactorily until we know better what geology really teaches. But the other day geologists had to give up their old doctrine that the different stratified rocks must have been formed at separate times—it is now known that they may be in the course of formation simultaneously. It is quite reasonable, therefore, that we should point to *possible* ways of reconciling the Bible and science, until the conclusions of the latter become more certain. Till geology has passed through the common-sense test of Dr. Carpenter, it is not reasonable to expect the permanent reconciliation.

Meanwhile it may be well to note some books on the subject, in addition to those already adverted to. Probably the most thorough is one noticed some time ago in these columns, the late Archdeacon Pratt's "Scripture and Science not at Variance." Mr. Pratt

takes every case of alleged contradiction between them, case by case, and brings forward his reasons for believing that these contradictions do not really take place. In some instances he is remarkably successful. "Moses and Modern Science," by Professor Elliot of Liverpool, is an extension of Hugh Miller's "Geological Theory," by the introduction of the nebular theory of Laplace. "The Beginning," by Mungo Ponton, very carefully investigates the primitive condition of matter, and finds a strong argument in favour of the Mosaic record in the fact that light is said to have been created before the sun. The author thinks that it never would have entered into any ancient brain to represent light as existing before the sun, had the fact not been supernaturally revealed. But modern investigations have shown that light is caused by vibrations of the luminiferous substance, which vibrations may have been given to it by the Spirit of God brooding over the waters.

This note is already too long—it would be easy to add to it. It seems impossible for any thoughtful and candid mind not to see the presence of something supernatural in the Mosaic account of creation. Scripture and Science are like the two glasses of a stereoscope—we have not yet got their focus, and the combined image is somewhat blurred; but we see enough of coincidence to assure us that, *when the proper focus is got*, the convergence will be complete and the image clear.

III.—GLANCES AT WHAT IS DOING.

CHRISTIAN CONFERENCES.

Among the new institutions of the age, greatly encouraged and promoted by facilities of travelling, are conferences of friends interested in Christian objects. Some of them are partly ecclesiastical, others wholly devotional and practical. Of Church "CONGRESSES" we have given some account on previous occasions; our present glance is at the "CONFERENCES." The Mildmay Conference in England, and the Perth Conference in Scotland, may be taken as samples of the gatherings we refer to. There is something both interesting and refreshing in the spectacle of many earnest men of different Churches assembled together under the common bond of love to the Saviour and interest in his work. At Perth one short meeting a day was devoted to the hearing of addresses, on subjects that come home to all earnest Christians, by brethren selected for the purpose; another to free conversation on similar points; and another to evangelistic addresses to the public. At one afternoon meeting accounts were given of interesting work going on in different countries. A gentleman from Portugal told of the progress of the Gospel there; another, settled at Pau, spoke of the state of France, and the progress and difficulties of the truth; a third, Dr. Moon, described his work among the blind; a fourth gave a chapter of the evangelistic work in the East-end of London, and showed what men of business might do after business hours in teaching and influencing the young Arabs of

that desert. At another meeting the brethren present joined together in commemorating the death of the Lord at his table. The combination of a puritan intensity with a catholic spirit is perhaps the most remarkable characteristic of these meetings. Full of fervour, and burdened with a sense of the overwhelming importance of divine things, and the critical state of souls, the leaders of these meetings pour out their hearts to God and to their fellow-men with an urgency seldom equalled. As the result of such meetings, many a lamp, we trust, will burn brighter, many a heart warmer, and many a life be more thoroughly consecrated to the varied enterprises of Christian love.

THE ATHANASIAN CREED.

The excitement connected with this subject continues unabated. It is a sign of the singular state of tension in which men's minds are at the present time—the marvellous contrast between the prevalent tone now and the easy-going indifference of a previous generation, that the desire of some to be relieved from what they feel to be a galling fetter is met by others with the most solemn declaration that if any such relief be granted, it will be regarded by them as a fundamental change on the constitution of the Church, and a justification of separation from her pale. Such is the position of Dr. Pusey. In a letter to the *Times*, published in August, he challenged the Archbishop of Canterbury's statement that it was but a handful that shared his convictions. He repudiated with warmth the notion that that handful might retire into lay communion. To tamper with the Church's testimony in the Athanasian Creed would be a fundamental change. If the Church of England agreed to it, it would no longer be the old Church of England, and the proper course for him and his friends would be to remain in the old. Archdeacon Denison writes to say that if Parliament shall in any way interfere with the sacraments or the creeds, he will apply for admission into the Liberation Society.

It is a singular case of extremes meeting that the ground of Dr. Pusey is identical, *mutatis mutandis*, with that occupied in Scotland by the more vehement opponents of the proposed union between the Free Church and the United Presbyterians. It is alleged by them that any change which would impair the testimony of the Free Church as to the duty of political rulers to support and extend the Church of Christ would be a vital change, and would so alter the constitution of the Church as to make it different from that to which they had vowed their allegiance. They would remain where they were and constitute the true Free Church.

One difference there is between the position of the Scotch and the English protesters. The Scotch claim that if the crisis should occur the whole property of the Free Church would be legally theirs. Dr. Pusey does not seem to have considered whether he and his friends might not claim all the cathedrals, churches, schools, parsonages, and other buildings, along with some twelve or fourteen millions annually, as the reward of their faithful adherence to principle.

THE HUGUENOT COMMEMORATION.

Three centuries have run on since the infamous massacre of St. Bartholomew's-day, when so many thousands of the best men and women of France perished in one hideous massacre. Considerable attention has been drawn to the subject, though from its horrible details and the difficulty of drawing any lesson from it that by its brightness would form a contrast to it, many persons have been repelled rather than attracted. Dean Stanley made it the text of a sermon against intolerance, indicating a leaning to the view that at that time all Churches were pretty much alike in this respect, and that in our time all Churches have advanced pretty equally in their tolerance. Some excellent, but not very original, truth was spoken by Dean Stanley on the bitterness of spirit so characteristic of religious controversy, and the terrible loss which Christendom and the world at large had incurred, in consequence of so much energy that might have been devoted to the labour of love finding so different a channel. Even the Church of Rome, he said, was now thoroughly ashamed of the massacre of St. Bartholomew, and instead of regarding it with the pride of former times, could not but feel remorse and horror at the contemplation of it. These remarks on the feeling of the Church of Rome, however, have not passed unchallenged. Dr. Wylie of Edinburgh, in a letter to the *Times*, has affirmed that no authoritative or formal expression of any such change of feeling has ever been given to the world, that the Church of Rome therefore is not entitled to the credit of the repentance ascribed to her, and Dean Stanley has in effect admitted that his apology does not rest on any public documents, but only on what has been said or done by individuals.

Meanwhile attention is again turned to the truth, so conspicuous in history—the inevitable tendency of such outrageous events to avenge themselves. The martyrs of the St. Bartholomew massacre, and of the other persecuting deeds of France against the Huguenots, can hardly have been represented by the souls seen in the Apocalypse under the altar that cried, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" If ever blood has been avenged, it is surely Huguenot blood. What a difference it would make to the Paris of the present day to have twenty thousand such God-fearing men and women as those whose blood crimsoned the waters of the Seine on St. Bartholomew's-day! For our own part, when we think of the great increase of industrious and God-fearing men whom these persecutions gave to our country—of the Fletchers, the Lefroys, and multitudes more who brought among us so much piety, industry, and refinement—we may well praise the name of Him who brings good out of evil. But it is sad to think of France, tossed from one political disaster and trouble to another, finding her only consolation in that lurid idea of military glory which covers with its deceitful glare so much of what is unjust and horrible, seeking in vain for that moral solidity which would give something like fixity to her

institutions—haunted by a ghost which she cannot lay. Yet one day we doubt not the dove with the olive-branch will come to her, mercy will once more rejoice over judgment, and the dead past will bury its dead.

THE ROMAN THEATRE ON THE DEEDS OF THE CHURCH.

Dean Stanley would have been nearer the mark if, instead of the Roman Church, he had named the Roman people as regarding the massacre of St. Bartholomew with shame and horror. A curious evidence of the feeling of the people with reference to the misdeeds of the Church has been furnished recently by the Roman theatres. It appears from a letter by an occasional correspondent of the *Times*, that the theatres have on a sudden become intensely popular in consequence of their having such plays as "The Mysteries of the Spanish Inquisition, or Torquemada Sixtus the Fifth," "Barbara Ubryk, or the Nun of Cracow Buried Alive," "The Hebrew Family, or the Mysteries of the Old Police." The writer gives a sketch of a play which he witnessed—the "Maladetto." It represents a Jesuit plot. The Jesuits are in need of money to finish some edifice, and at a council of war they form a scheme for getting certain old ladies to leave their money to them. The working out of this scheme in the case of an old lady is detailed. Letters are intercepted; a young lady is assured that her lover is dead, and is persuaded to enter a convent; the old lady is induced to sign the will prepared. The indignation of the natural heirs is intense, and one of them confiding his views of the future to a friend thus declares himself:—

"Tired humanity feels the necessity of being freed from the nets of superstition, and from that mysticism through which men conceal their worldly appetites under the white veil of the faith. This beautiful and holy religion, born in the lap of poverty on the shores of the Sea of Tiberias and among the olives of Gethsemane, will then return to its limpid source. Then the minister of Christ will appear great in his poverty, magnanimous in his mission. The good Jesus drove out the Pharisees from the Temple, we will drive out the modern professors from our churches."

An eloquent denunciation is poured out against the Jesuit robbers:—

"Enemies of all progress and of every noble aspiration, you have reigned for long, but your reign is nearly over! Buttresses of despotism, you will fall with it! Spreaders of darkness, the light of liberty will dispel your night, and that divine faith which you have profaned will raise the immortal standard of the Cross upon your ruins. For that Cross I fight, through it I defy you, and as long as God gives me life and strength will I make by my words and with my pen implacable and eternal war against you!"

These performances are of little use save as indications how the wind of public opinion blows. The applause of the audience at such sentiments is said to be unbounded. If, however, public confidence in the old religious institutions of Italy is undergoing these fierce assaults, and if the people are responding in so great numbers and with such intense enthusiasm to the denunciation of them, it becomes all the more

urgent a duty to endeavour, with all diligence and with all prayer to God, to bring to their ears the true Gospel of heaven.

THE BIBLE IN INDIA.

Under the auspices of the British and Foreign Bible Society a new method of evangelistic effort has been begun, or rather, we ought to say, an old method has been raised to a more conspicuous place. Copies of the Scriptures and of portions of them in English and vernacular tongues are furnished to missionaries willing to undertake the work, the missionaries endeavouring as they itinerate to interest the people in the Scriptures, and induce them to become readers for themselves. In the Bible Society Monthly Reporter for August we find a most interesting record of this work, a brief portion of which, from a letter by the Rev. E. Lewis of Madras, is all that our space enables us to give:—

"After visiting the English school, we went in order to the market-place, the principal streets of the town, the purely vernacular schools, and many shops and private dwellings, in all of which we read select passages from the Bible, striving in every instance to choose such passages to read as were best adapted to the circumstances of the people, and oftentimes succeeded by previous conversation to create such circumstances before reading. For example, we found that marriage feasts were being celebrated in several places; in such cases we endeavour to get amongst a large number of guests and read to them passages such as the following:—'The Marriage of the King's Son,' and 'The Parable of the Ten Virgins.' To groups of Ryots we read the parable of the Sower, the Vineyard, and the Barren Fig-tree. To rich men resting at ease by their own houses, the story of the rich man and Lazarus; the account of the young man who was rich whom Jesus loved, but who loved his riches more than he loved his Lord; and of the rich fool whose soul was required of him whilst he contemplated pulling down his barns and building greater. To numbers of shepherds whom we met with we read of the Good Shepherd who gave his life for his sheep, and the parable of the Lost Sheep. To many men learned in native lore, and proud of their learning, we read of the Pharisees and Scribes, and several passages from the Epistles of Paul. Other topics such as the creator of the world; the histories of Abraham, Moses, David; portions from the Psalms and the Book of Proverbs; the Sermon on the Mount, and the parable of the Prodigal Son—we read in almost every place and invariably found an attentive and appreciative audience.

"One of the most interesting and important of the plans adopted by us for commending the Bible was that of seeking admission into the house of several wealthy men in various towns, when we had a good opportunity of reading carefully and fully many passages from the Bible to the members of the family and friends assembled. As far as we could see, the effect of this course upon the family was most telling, and in every instance we either sold a copy of the entire Bible or of the New Testament, and explained how the Bible may be read with profit every day."

ANOTHER MARTYR OF ERROMANGA.

The question was asked last winter in Edinburgh by an eminent scholar and divine, Who would now die for his religion? Within a few weeks of th

question being asked, a practical answer was furnished at the antipodes, the Rev. James D. Gordon, a Presbyterian missionary, having been murdered at Erromanga. Our readers must be aware that it was there that the great modern apostle of the South Seas, the late John Williams, was put to death in 1839. Twenty-two years after, other two missionaries, the Rev. G. D. Gordon and his wife, were murdered almost at the same spot. And now, eleven years after the murder of Mr. G. D. Gordon, his brother James, who stepped forward to take the colours as they dropped from his hand, shares the same fate, and joins the martyr band. He had come all the way from his home in New Brunswick to speak of the Saviour's love to the murderers of his brother and sister, and his reward is the martyr's crown. There can be little doubt that the abominable kidnapping traffic in which Englishmen have been involved, has embittered the spirit of the natives, and it is possible that the murder of Mr. Gordon, like that of Bishop Patteson, is to be traced to this cause. A Sydney newspaper has given the following particulars of Mr. Gordon:—

"Mr. James Gordon was a man of singular piety, somewhat eccentric in his way, self-denying to an extreme, and always ready, even with some foreboding, to be offered as a martyr in the cause he had so nobly espoused. He has laboured in Erromanga for eight years, and translated the Gospel of St. Matthew, the Book of Genesis, and other portions into the language of the people, besides preparing primers and hymns for their use. He also acquired a knowledge of the language of the island of Esparito Santo, and spent a winter there teaching the people. He prepared a phonetic primer in that language. Mr. Gordon has been alone on the island since the death of the Rev. James M'Nair in 1870. He was unmarried, and trusted himself unreservedly among the natives. He had a very enterprising missionary spirit, and had always a longing to proceed 'to regions beyond.' He even thought he might lay his bones in New Guinea."

IV.—OUR LIBRARY TABLE.

We will not say that the writings of Canon Liddon always yield us undiluted pleasure; but in his new work, "Some Elements of Religion," we find so much to be thankful for that even if we differed in some points we could not make them a ground of disparagement. The title is certainly unfortunate; one could not gather from it that the six discourses it contains are a most valuable and powerful vindication of divine truth in reference to the difficulties and objections of the educated and thinking classes of the present day. Canon Liddon is one of the few powerful expositors of the old truth who have the power of setting it forth, not in mere abstract forms equally suited or unsuited to any of the fifty generations that have come and gone during the Christian era, but in a way specially adapted to this thinking, doubting, wondering, searching age in which our lot is cast. What religion really is—what God is—what the soul is—what sin is—what prayer is—what Christ is—are the subjects of the several chapters, and they are handled with much intellectual clearness, scholarlike

precision, and moral earnestness. We should desiderate more explicit teaching on the death of Christ, as the source of pardon and life eternal, and a more constant allusion throughout to that very vital theme.

The literature of the Beatitudes would itself suffice to verify Solomon's remark about "many books;" nevertheless, we welcome the Rev. J. O. Dykes's "Beatitudes of the Kingdom" as cordially as if they were the first of the series. We seem to be getting in these times to understand better the personal character of Christ—"the man Christ Jesus"—and the light reflected from the person on the teaching makes the latter wonderfully fresh and interesting. This seems to us a great feature of Mr. Dykes's exposition. What we have here is the Blessings in the light of the Blessor, instinct with his own spirit, fragrant with his own aroma. There is not only instruction, therefore, in these expositions, but refreshment, feasting, benediction.

Father Taylor of Boston, whose life is recorded in a most attractive volume by the Rev. Gilbert Haven and the Hon. Thomas Russell, was in every way a remarkable man and did a great work. He was born in Richmond in 1793, spent a rough boyhood, became a sailor, and was taken prisoner of war by the English and carried to Dartmoor. The light had visited him shortly before, and he began to speak to his fellow-prisoners of their souls and to preach to them, and was chosen their chaplain. When he returned to America he became a pedlar, but never ceased to be a preacher of the truth; and at length he was admitted a minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He at once devoted himself chiefly to the sailors, and drew crowds of them, as well as many distinguished and intellectual people; for he has been described and praised by Dickens, Emerson, Miss Martineau, Miss Bremer, and many others. His preaching was wonderful. It was full of simile, and direct conversational appeal, and was made vivid by dramatic paraphrase and movement. He was distinctly an original and earnest man; much to be admired as fitted for his own work, but not to be copied. He visited the rough women in parts where no one else could have gone; and his work among them was much blessed. The calls on him of this kind were such that he had never time for study; but perhaps this was in his favour, as study might have given the "set" character to his preaching that would have spoiled it. His discourses seem to have been a mixture of all styles—now pathetic, drawing tears from rough, sun-browned sailor faces; now sarcastic, and now richly humorous—apothegms trooping on each other's heels; and sometimes he was truly poetic. On one occasion he was preaching a funeral sermon for a pastor who had died young, of consumption, and whose people were sincerely mourning their loss, when he wound up with—"God did not wish the dear little man to preach, He wanted him in heaven; but he was anxious to do some service for his Lord, and his request was granted. When his first year closed, he would have been taken at once to heaven, but you were so im-

portunate to have him back, that God indulged you for a little while. You had no right to expect he would remain with you; he preached every sermon, as you saw, with his winding sheet on his arms." But Father Taylor was not always tender; his sarcasm was often searching in its honest directness. Once at a meeting a rich gentleman from the city was telling the sailors self-complacently what he had done for them. When he sat down Taylor rose and said, "Is there any other old sinner from up in town who would like to say a word before we go on." When he was building his new chapel, and was preaching in a wealthy church in Boston for a collection, he said, "I do not want your arches, and columns, and draperies for my house, only give the shavings that fall from your Corinthian pillars." He sometimes reached almost scriptural simplicity and grandeur. When referring to the folly of expecting great results all at once, he said, "Carry not the seed basket and the sickle into the field together." Though his sympathies with fellow Christians was broad, he was decidedly evangelical; and, while he was inclined to be brotherly with all, he would not cease speaking his home truths—many telling instances of which are given. Thus Father Taylor went on from year to year, sometimes preaching four times a day, and walking and visiting a great part of his time. He was thrown aside ten years before his death in helpless passivity; but he was always cheerful, and he died in 1871 much mourned.

In the Rev. William Williams' "History of Welsh Calvinistic Methodism" (Nisbet & Co.), we have another stirring record of the wonderful way in which the grace of God sometimes works upon multitudes. While Wesley was producing his great impressions in England, a similar movement, though quite distinct, began in Wales, through the earnest preaching of a clergyman. The fire caught the hearts of Howell Harris and a young curate, Rowlands, at the same time; and their preaching founded Welsh Methodism, which flourished in face of much opposition. So enthusiastic were the people that companies would walk forty miles to worship on the Saturday, and back again on the Monday, refreshing themselves on the way by reciting the preacher's words. It is good to read such a record of self-denying faithfulness.

"Eight Months on Duty" (Strahan), which is worthily introduced to us by our respected contributor, Dr. Vaughan, is the diary of a young officer, who went through the campaign with Chanzy's army in the late war. It gives us a very good idea of certain of the operations; but is more valuable still as showing that amid the dissolute and godless crowd there were earnest souls, who must have proved a healthful savour. There is hope for a nation that produces men such as this young officer. For its high tone and true religious feeling, we can cordially recommend the little volume.

We rejoice to see from the appearance of "The Annals of English Presbytery," which Messrs. Nisbet & Co. have just published, that Dr. M'Crie, who

some time since resigned his office of Professor at the Theological College of the Presbyterian Church of England, has still strength to pursue his old and well-loved studies in Church History. This volume consists of careful gatherings; and is the result of much patient investigation and thought. That we may the more readily draw our readers to the book, let us say, however, that it is not so much the "Annals of Presbytery," in any strict sense, as a graphic sketch of Church History in Great Britain from the early centuries of the Christian Era. It is historical rather than polemical, and abounds in eloquent pictures of the leading characters—Columba and St. Aidan, Wycliffe and Sir John Oldcastle, Knox and Melville, the Westminster divines, and many later personages. Everything which Dr. M'Crie touches he makes attractive. His sympathies are lively, his style, though full, is vivid; and here and there he shows a breadth of sentiment and a generous catholicity which are very admirable, kept in association as they are with views in no way loose or latitudinarian. Two passages there are of especial interest in the work. One is where he shows how Calvin's followers have often found it difficult to justify his practical liberality, and the other where he heartily praises the old Scotch Confession of Faith, and ventures a word in favour of a somewhat more adorned worship than that common among the Scotch Presbyterian Churches. We have read Dr. M'Crie's volume with peculiar pleasure.

Lord Shaftesbury said some time ago that he believed the most effectual means of dealing with the growing carelessness and scepticism of the working classes was to get members of their own class to go among them and preach the truth to them. From Mr. Thomas Cooper's "Plain Pulpit Talk" (Hodder and Stoughton) we find that he has been for years carrying out this idea. And, judging from these sermons, he must be a powerful influence. They are colloquial, yet full of matter, soundly evangelical, yet most strikingly illustrated; and he is not afraid to venture on familiar phrases. The first sermon, on "The Horrible Pit," with its divisions of "Jolly Corner," "Gambler's Corner," "Drunkard's Corner," and "Socinian Corner," is certainly fitted to arouse—the better fitted perhaps for its special audience that there is nothing of the conventionality of the pulpit in it. That the sermon has been much preached among colliers and miners gives it a special significance. The whole volume is singularly direct and rousing.

We are glad of the opportunity of calling attention to a most useful series of tracts—"Kind Words for all Classes," by the Rev. Robert Holmes. They are specially adapted to the working classes, particularly to those who do not aspire to profounder reading. As full of friendly and very telling warning against the temptations that assail them, encouraging counsels towards the higher paths of life, and cordial recognitions of that power of godliness which alone can really achieve the desired end, these papers are most excellent. They are issued in monthly numbers, and have now been going on for two or three years.

CROOKED PLACES:

A Story of Struggles and Hopes.

BY EDWARD GARRETT, AUTHOR OF "OCCUPATIONS OF A RETIRED LIFE," ETC.

CHAPTER IV.—A CONTRAST.



DESPITE the manifold trials of her hard-working, poverty-stricken widowhood, Mrs. Harvey might have been almost as happy as she had

ever been in her life, but for her children. They were good children, and she had faith that God could preserve them in the path where He had placed them. But, just as we often feel that we may trust His providence that our bread and water shall be sure, yet trouble sorely whether He will always grant us milk and butter, so Mrs. Harvey grieved lest they should lose the dainty, delicate ways of her own youth, and of their former position. They were different now from those around them, although they were no richer. But would they be as different ten or twenty years hence? She could bear it for George. He was older than the girls, and more formed already, and, with his present fund of information, and his thirst for more, she had little reason to fear his falling into the coarse pleasures that degraded too many about him. The mother had a curiously boundless faith in her boy. It had been the habit of her life, as well as the instinct of her nature, to look up to the stronger sex. There might not have been very much in either her father or husband to justify it, but the ease and happiness with which some of the strongest and noblest women reverence and obey very ordinary men, is one of the sweetest and most touching hints of woman's

true place. Elizabeth was one of those women who see in men not only all they are, but all they ought to be. It may be fairly discussed whether such reverence is not more honourable and wholesome to her who gives, and him who takes, than the modern feminine consciousness of "purifying and elevating influence."

It was about her daughters that Mrs. Harvey pondered. She taught them and lived with them, but not all her maternal anxieties had worried her into any unnatural shutting up. Among the visions of her own youth, she remembered several "come-down" genteel people, friendless and antedated, with bloodless faces and ghostly tones. To her sensible judgment this horror was greater than any other. Better that Hatty and Milly should grow up red-handed, bouncing, and cockneyfied! And yet it seemed such a pity!

To tell the truth it was Hatty that troubled her most—Hatty, who was always spoken of up and down the lowly street as "the young lady." Unless Hatty belied her promise, she would be a beauty. The rough, outspoken neighbours said so to her face. It was a comfort to poor Mrs. Harvey that Hatty did not seem to care much either way.

Little brown Milly was in no danger of flattery here. Her angular figure and white face were mere foils to her sister's lithe form, sweet-pea complexion, and blue eyes. Hatty's charms were those which appealed readily to uninstructed eyes, while it required deeper physiognomists than those poor neighbours to appreciate Milly's noble head, and grave dark eyes. It was the same with their characters. There were times when Mrs. Harvey, in her vexation, was almost ready to say within herself that her eldest daughter's very beauty and graces, physical and moral, must have something innately vulgar in them, they were of such a sort to command popular notice and applause. She was an universal baby lover. Had crèches been the fashion in that day, she might have been said to be as good as a crèche in the locality. She was always leading home some lost child, or volunteering the charge of some infant. Whenever Hatty was missing, she was to be found in the local dairy, where there were twins. She could keep a dozen children

amused, for she had an endless fund of "stories," such being mere recapitulations of the ways of life in her old home, which Hatty grew to regard as the fairy-land which it seemed to her auditors. Milly Harvey was of quite another disposition. She made few friends among the neighbours, shrank from children, and rarely entered a stranger's room, however invited, and spoke so seldom to anybody but her mother and George, that she was in little danger of catching the colloquialisms which infected Hatty's speech, and shocked her mother.

Hatty was also what is called "clever at her needle." Yet it was not she, but Milly, who went down the patient stitches of the family darning and sewing, and was oftener and oftener trusted with a straight seam in what they called "mamma's pay-work." But Hatty could put a ribbon across a bonnet, and a flower upon the ribbon, in the right way. She became an authority and a benefactress at Whitsuntide and Boxing-day. Hatty's idea of beauty was gaiety of colour and fulness of form. And for either of these she was ready to despise soundness of material or neatness of workmanship. Mrs. Harvey's own quiet taste had descended to Milly, after whom the boys in the street would sometimes call "Quaker." But Mrs. Harvey's prim purchases always grew smart the moment Hatty put them on. And horror of horrors, the dairy wife, out of gratitude for her kindness to the twins, presented Hatty with a pinchbeck brooch, which Hatty herself had admired in a shop window!

"Never you mind," said sage Miss Brook, on some occasion which had brought out an expression of the mother's anxiety; "God made gay cockatoos, as well as sweet nightingales and useful hens. You've not got to fuss yourself about what isn't in Hatty, but to find out what is, and make the best of that. God has got a use for the very ways that puzzle you, so long as the devil doesn't get 'em first. And mark me, Mrs. Harvey, your wise-like Milly, who is safe from most of Hatty's dangers, will have other hard passes of her own, of the sort that's too narrow for any hand to help her in, except an angel's."

The truth was Hatty was lonely in her own home. There is a great deal of that loneliness even in the most united and loving families. And, while we have always much sympathy for the genius who goes ahead of his fellows, too many of us simply slight and condemn the simple lowly nature that is left farthest behind. Could Mrs. Harvey but

have known it, she had conferred a priceless boon on Hatty by the act of unconscious heroism, which had changed the level of her children's lives. Hatty was not a girl to be improved by what is called "education." She was far too sweet-natured to have become pedantic, which is the revenge that some shallow minds take for being sown with too heavy a crop. But she would have been disheartened. Only her beauty and grace would have saved her from constantly filling the demoralising place of universal inferior, and these would naturally have assumed undue proportions in her eyes. In cultivated society her companions would, too frequently not have been of the highest type. In a word, unless her mother had possessed the uncommon judiciousness to see and counteract these temptations, Hatty would probably have become an idle, gossiping, sentimental fine lady. And Mrs. Harvey had no claim to uncommon judiciousness; except, perchance, that greatest claim of all, the will and the power to do the plain right thing, which is, after all, the imperial sword that can cut through all Gordian knots of social difficulty. In the present instance it had placed Hatty where her powers of lowly kindness and helpfulness came to the front, and given her friends whose roughness and ignorance were not necessarily connected with any moral taint, and who honestly respected and admired her.

Naturally enough, as time passed on, the household means increased. The day of sickness and adversity, carefully provided for, did not come. George rose rapidly in his printing-office, and expressed no wish to leave it. Often his mother almost hinted that he might procure some kind of counting-house work with shorter hours and a healthier atmosphere. For, though he was certainly far stronger than he had ever seemed likely to be in his earlier boyhood, he was still a slender, delicate lad, who grew very fast, had a slight appetite, and a strange inclination for abnormally long and rapid walks. As for Milly, she had proved such a apt pupil, under her mother's sole tuition, that she was presently in constant work as a designer to a small manufactory near, and only needed to fill up her short leisure with the less remunerative stitching. "It was no trouble to teach her, except that she soon got beyond me," Mrs. Harvey would say fondly, "and that's always the way with the good scholars."

So they were able to leave their old rickety lodgings, and take a quaint, ancient fo

roomed cottage down a quiet "Providence Place" hard by. This removal was not so easy as the last one had been, for of late they had had odd shillings to invest from time to time, and the product of these, joined to the invention and ingenuity that they had all learned when there was no money to spend, made the new home look a very bright, snug place. Hatty filled the two tiny parlour windows with flowers, mostly raised from seeds or sickly shoots bestowed upon her by some of her friends.

"If you wouldn't buy the red carpet that I chose, and look grave when I put on my red ribbons, you can't object to the red in my flowers!" she said. "Twasn't me that made the geraniums!"

There was real housekeeping for Hatty now, and Hatty did it. She scrubbed down the whole house once a week. She went down on her knees at six o'clock in the morning and whitened the tiny courtyard in front of the door. She kept the windows so clean that you couldn't see there was glass in them. And yet, in her own homely phrase, "she was not above" keeping friends with people who were content to live in a constant "muddle."

"You may be as particular as you like with your own ways," she said, "but you needn't be so over-particular with other people's. And there's no use in disliking dirt so much that you can't even clean it up."

One thing Mrs. Harvey fervently desired, for all her children, that they might be God's children as well as hers. They had been brought up in a very different atmosphere to that of her own youth. They had lived under the warm shelter of a life to whom God, and Saviour, and eternity, and duty, were much more real than any material realities. And yet Mrs. Harvey's keen maternal sympathies could feel that they were all just what she had once been. She could bring them up in the courts of the Lord, but her hand could not raise for them the veil of the holy of holies. Only God himself could do that. And the mother prayed and hoped. Her noble-minded, right-feeling George, her patient thoughtful Milly, often seemed so near, so near. Theirs was the nature that can of itself appreciate so much of religion, from its side of moral and spiritual beauty. Milly was one of those who delight to clothe themselves in bands of strictest discipline. She had her morning and evening portions, her regular times, when her mother noticed that she sought solitude. Her favourite religious reading lay among

books which were not then so popular as they have since become—writings of old Anglican divines, whose solemn precepts, clothed in stately English, had an echo as of a Gregorian chant pealing down the tinted sunlight of an old cathedral. Mrs. Harvey sometimes found scraps of her daughter's writing, such as sets of "Resolutions for the New Year," or "Rules for daily Devotion." It was actually these which damped her hopes. They were of "the letter which killeth," rather than "the spirit which maketh alive." They were full of self-education and self-mortification, but they never once reached the true Christian idea of self-sacrifice. Their very asceticism and discipline were the mere self-indulgence of such a nature as Milly's. Mrs. Harvey sorrowfully owned that her darling was still on the wrong side of that mysterious line which divides the natural from the spiritual man—that she had not yet passed through Leviticus to the glorious Gospel of Christ.

And still Hatty seemed so much farther off. She read her Bible—the historical books and the Revelation. She seldom read anything else on Sundays. Hatty was no great reader at any time. On Sundays, she would go about singing "Oh, that will be joyful," or "There is a land of pure delight," instead of the "Poor Mary Anne," and the "No, we never mention her," which she was given to lilt on week-days. It was a peculiarity of Hatty that she always sang sad songs and joyful hymns. Hymns had always been easy lessons to Hatty, while catechism had only represented tears and failure. She had been first tried with Watts's "Mother's Catechism," and had got on well through the simple facts at the beginning, and there stuck. She had been tried with the "Shorter Catechism," and the Church Catechism afterwards, for Mrs. Harvey's creed was truly catholic in its breadth. In the first Hatty knew the first answer. "Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever;" and in the second she could reply to two questions, "What is your name?" and "What is your duty towards your neighbour?" That last subject she learned like magic in one Sunday afternoon, and never forgot it, and became greatly addicted to quote it in conversation. Mrs. Harvey was sorely afraid that her Hatty would be one of those good-natured, utterly careless people, whose status for time and for eternity is one of the sorest problems with many thoughtful people.

But He who brings the last to be first, and

perfects His wisdom in the mouths of babes and sucklings, had ruled otherwise. Among these Harvey children, the first plain active decision for God was destined to come from this perplexing Hatty.

CHAPTER V.—HATTY DECIDES.

It was a bright, dancing June morning; George was at his office—Millicent was out, taking home some of her patterns. Mrs. Harvey was at her needlework, and Hatty was sitting at a side table, shelling peas from a wooden bowl into a willow-pattern vegetable dish. She wore a piece of washed red ribbon in her hair, and a house-apron of bright green print, with a frill at the bottom.

"Mother," she said, rather suddenly, "you wouldn't mind me being a member at Zion chapel, would you?—I want to."

It must be explained that Mrs. Harvey and Milly attended church and then kept house together. As George chose to go all across London to hear a celebrated preacher, Hatty was obliged to go alone, and had got into the habit of attending Zion chapel, where most of the neighbours went, who attended divine worship at all.

Mrs. Harvey stuck her needle in her work. "You know I regard all Christian sects as aisles in the same house of God, my dear," she said. "And I shall thank our Father very much if He has given you the right to call yourself a follower of Him. I feared you didn't think very seriously of these solemn matters, Hatty."

"I don't see there's much to think about, mother," said the girl simply. "It's just does one mean to be good, or wicked; and if one means to be good, how is one to be it? I couldn't make a goodness worth anything if I tried ever so. Of course, nobody can, but then one like me is in no danger of fancying I can. So I should have to go without being good at all, unless somebody else would give me his goodness, and that's just what Christ does. But I haven't taken it, unless I make up my mind to keep in His way and do what He says."

"Yes, my dear," said her mother, "that is the root of the matter."

"And I should like to belong to Zion chapel, not because I see any difference between it and the church,—I'm too stupid to notice the sort of things that George talks about, schism and apostolic succession, and such like,—but because I got to care for these things through people that go there. They are not clever people, mother. They are mostly like me. I'm not far forward

enough to understand the things that puzzle and interest George and Milly. The parts of the Bible that I can understand at all, are plain and straightforward enough, and have more in them than will last my lifetime. But old uncle George at the dairy, and Mary Smith, the sempstress, knew the sort of feelings that I had. They knew how one is likely to shuffle on, from day to day, just doing one's work, as if it were nothing for God to notice, and meaning to think some day, but never thinking, and dropping off at last, like the beasts that perish. Old George at the dairy used to tell me that he believed I thought religion was a plaster to be stuck on when one was sick. And he was right. At least I thought religion was separate bits to be pricked into one's life, and that some people, like ministers, should have a great many, but that such as me couldn't have more than one or two, a prayer at night and morning, and a sermon on Sunday. I remember when Mary Smith was converted. It's near two years ago. She always had sat at her work all day long before, and been a steady girl that went to church, and didn't gallivant. And there she was, just the same. And said I to her, 'Mary, what does being converted mean? What difference does it make to you? Ain't you doing just the same as you did before?' And she said, 'No, indeed, Miss Hatty, there's many a time when I've been pressed, that I've sent home seams scarcely fastened, so that they'd be sure to rip; but please God, my seams will never rip again.' And that made me see how religion could come into such a common life as mine, cleaning and cooking, and just making things as pleasant as I can. And from that day, all these two years, I've seen a difference. I've noticed myself in ways of work,—getting off it, or getting over it, that have showed me what I wasn't, and what I ought to be. And so," said Hatty simply, "I want to join Zion chapel because it began there."

Now the minister of Zion chapel was an old devout man, who did not spare himself in his Master's service. He was doing a work of which no one took any heed, and which to his humility, seemed to himself, but poor and insignificant. In those days, the East-end of London had not become a focus for the zeal, philanthropy, and sentiment of the West. Foreign visitors were not taken to Ratcliff Highway as to a disgusting peep-show. This old minister would have shrunk from the very mention of scenes which are now drawn with Fuseli-exaggeration to make



"CROOKED PLACES."



effective background for the supposed sweetness and light of the other end of the town. His gentle, tremulous hands were far too weak to let down the cup of salvation into that black dungeon of spirits in darkness. But he could stand and plead, and hold others back from going near its perilous archways. He had been a widower for nearly forty years, —a childless widower. No dream of promotion would have taken him from the humble, common people, whose welfare, temporal and eternal, had happily and usefully re-filled his emptied heart. But he took no thought of self-sacrifice therefore, for no promotion was ever likely to come to him. He could only say very plain things in a very plain way, and superficial sharp people would have pronounced him an "unpractical man." But his poor flock could have told such, that somehow, obedience to their pastor's unworldly advice always led them farther and farther from the workhouse, the mad-house, and the prison.

Such was the man, under whose direct personal ministrations Hatty Harvey sat, week after week, with about half-a-dozen other young people, for nearly two months before their admission to church-membership. Was it any marvel that, at the end of that time, Hatty had grown much more subdued and womanly? The hoyden was reined. The fine animal spirits, the indomitable lightness of heart were not destroyed, they were rather fenced about from the destroyer, and taught to preserve their powers, sweet and fresh, to lighten the labours of a humanity which left half its laughter in an empty Eden.

Hatty became a Sabbath-school teacher, and soon had the largest class. Mr. Webber, the superintendent and chief man of Zion chapel, said she was "an invaluable young person." She found no difficulty in keeping up the "home visitation" of her pupils. It was the most natural thing in the world to her. The parents used to ask her to take tea with them. One enthusiastic dustman engaged her for a whole hour hearing about the secrets of his profession. The folks at home couldn't help laughing when she told them.

"Never mind," said Hatty, "one thing is pretty near as good as another, only we could get along easiest without those that think themselves finest."

But next Sunday, the dustman was sitting with oiled hair, on a back seat in Zion chapel.

And so Mrs. Harvey was greatly set at

rest about Hatty. For Mrs. Harvey had the wisdom which is thankful for every good thing, even though it may not be the good thing that exactly fits our own taste.

"Mother likes pears best, but she don't think apples have no right to grow," said Hatty.

It was no wonder that Hatty was a very attractive woman. She grew up even lovelier than her childhood had promised. She was sometimes taken for a little above her age, on account of her tall full figure, and even the stately outline of her features might have contributed to the mistake. More than that, she had a quaint, homely wit, essentially womanly—the precise sort of wit that used to be the pleasant fashion among great ladies, before female education was carried on in the dangerous style of "high farming," the kind of wit that a queen can enjoy, and a servant maid understand. Hatty dressed very neatly now, rejecting flimsiness and flauntiness as "not becoming or consistent." (She had once seen the old minister glance, while speaking of the adornment of "a meek and quiet spirit," at a flounced barege that she was wearing.) At the same time she vindicated her natural tastes by a single bright ribbon, and delightfully fresh white ruffles. But how surprised Hatty would have been to be told she was witty! As for her good looks she heard enough of "that nonsense," as she called it. The only compliment that ever moved her was to be told she was "like her mother about the face." Then she blushed, asked "Do you really think so?" and shook her head.

CHAPTER VI.—HARRY WESTBROOK.

As a matter of course, Hatty had lovers. It took Mrs. Harvey another inward struggle to accept the plain facts of this epoch of her children's lives. Seeing what they were and where they were, whom would they be likely to marry? Ordinary working men and an ordinary working woman? No, not Milly at least, Mrs. Harvey felt almost sure. As for the other two, she was not a fool to think that in their present circumstances, they had any claim to aught higher. If George was fit, in mind and even manner, for any lady, the mother could impartially own that his surroundings were not. His wife must be prepared to wash, and scrub, and cook, without any thought of wrong done to her. His soul and his life had different claims, and one or the other must miss something in the future.

Hatty took everything quite equably, and

did not feel in the least shamed or angered that her first offer of marriage came from a working shoemaker.

"Only I'm sorry when a decent man makes a fool of himself," she said; "I'm sure I'd put him off plain enough for him to understand, if he hadn't made up his mind not to."

Mrs. Harvey, accustomed to the cautious advances and careful distinction of grades of a more reticent part of society, was somewhat scandalized by the frankness and courage around her. She herself, married at three-and-twenty, had refused but one previous offer, and could only plead guilty to one or two silent lovers, one at least of whom, she felt sure, had kept from declaration from his just sense of certain rejection. But Hatty's admirers seemed to take for their motto, "Nothing venture, nothing have." Hatty's own characteristic report of the matter was true enough.

"You can't be civil to a man but he thinks you're willing to marry him, and if you're not civil he thinks it all the more."

Mrs. Harvey could only silently wonder what it would end in. Hatty herself seemed perfectly heart-whole. Nor could all her mother's watchful affection detect anything amiss in her conduct which could explain her troubles. She was only impartially cordial and open, which was so ingrained in her nature that when she sincerely endeavoured to be austere and repellent, it only resulted in a spasmodic, over-done shyness, which might easily be mistaken for arch coquetry.

Presently there came a lover of a very different kind to the honest shoemaker, the sharp saddler, and the earnest, blundering corn-chandler's "young man" who had already presented themselves.

When this one began to "drop in" of an evening, he did not make all the family uncomfortable by sitting on the edge of his chair and blushing and stammering. He had a bit of news for Mrs. Harvey, a fitting pleasant word for Millicent, and an argument for George.

His name was Harry Westbrook, and though he lived in the same lowly street with the Harveys, he had "gentle blood" in his veins. Once, in the course of some appropriate conversation, he took from his pocket an old signet ring with the family crest engraved thereon, and showed it to Mrs. Harvey. The well-bred, dignified woman liked him all the better for having it, and for not wearing it.

He was tall and fine-looking, with a something in mien and manner that set him apart

from the handsomest of the working men around him. And he had also that greatest charm of all, a sad history.

His spendthrift gentleman-father, born to "hunters" and "meets," had fallen to die from the effects of a ducking he had received as a "welsher" on a fifth-rate race-course. This ne'er-do-weel's wife had been a simple decent woman of lower birth, who had been dazzled into marrying him while he was still handsome and fascinating. Poor thing! Even from her own son's account, one could hear she had paid very dear for her folly. His childhood had been spent in furnished lodgings, each more squalid and disorderly than the last. The scapegrace father, passing with circumstances from cruel penuriousness to mocking prodigality, had often clothed his half-fed child in rich velvets, and hidden his wife's bruised arms in Lyons silk. But the poor woman had done her best for her boy. She had taught him all she knew, and then starved herself that he might be taught more. She had striven to screen his father from blame, even while training him to loathe his father's courses. She died first, mercifully spared the last cruel pang of such a death as her husband's.

All this was indicated rather than related by Harry Westbrook, and it touched Mrs. Harvey's motherly heart. She felt that she could not be surprised if Hatty listened to his wooing.

Hatty was a riddle not easy to read. As the young man's attentions advanced her cordiality retreated, but not in the old laughing, skittish way. During his visits she would stay more than half the time in her own room, and then come down grave and silent.

As the family acquaintance with Harry increased, Mrs. Harvey, though she grew to like him more and more, began to have her doubts and fears. It was hard to say that he was not a religious man. He had attended church regularly since they had known him. (He now went to Zion chapel.) He stayed quietly in his dismal lodging during the intervals of service, in spite of all temptations to seek fresh air and change. He kept a sort of humble, pathetic silence whenever sacred topics crept into conversation, or if he spoke it was just with one or two half-yearning words. And yet—

Still, even if he were not yet "altogether a Christian," how few holy influences he had enjoyed hitherto, poor fellow! There was a good deal of poetry left in Mrs. Harvey, elderly widow as she was, and not all her sharper experiences of life had destroyed the

old humble simplicity that had always preferred others to herself. Like an unsuspected skeleton at the bottom of a calm, sunny river, the pain of her own half-sympathetic marriage lay unspoken in her heart. She would pray, and she would exhort, that her daughters might never know what that was. But if Hatty only saw the difference which she could see between this lover and all her other lovers, if her warm young heart caught the love-version of her own calm, motherly liking for the youth, then it seemed to Mrs. Harvey that her daughter was caught in the mesh of a terrible temptation from whose intricacy she could see no way of escape. Hatty seemed just the sort of woman to refuse to see the entanglement, and to walk straight into it, blindfold, and singing.

It seemed to Mrs. Harvey a much harder pass than that agonized decision of hers which had made them all into poor working people. And yet Hatty had always said, "She could never have done that."

There was one thing which Mrs. Harvey forgot. Something which we are all prone to forget. Not that God shows a way of escape along with every temptation. Mrs. Harvey remembered that full well, and reiterated it in her prayers, and tried to take comfort from it; but failed because she could not see the way herself. But she forgot that this was not her temptation, and that there was no need, and, therefore, no promise, that she should see the outlet.

Hatty grew much graver and gentler. She would take her work off to her own room, and sit there alone for hours even when no Harry was haunting the family apartment. A responsibility had fallen on the girl. She had a question to answer to God and to her own soul.

She was such a young thing—scarcely nineteen yet—and still it was two months since Harry had said to her—

"Miss Harvey, you must know what you are to me. Do you think you can like me?"

They were walking in the twilight, for he had waylaid her on some household errand. And Hatty had found that the easiest answer was the truth.

"Of course I like you, Mr. Westbrook."

"Don't say it so," he had answered hotly.

"I mean can you love me better than anybody else, and for ever and for ever? Don't say a word now, it would be too hasty either way. Think it over, and tell me when I ask you again. You must be everything to me or nothing."

None of her other simple lovers had ever

spoken so. And it was those last words of his that haunted her—"everything or nothing." Could he be everything? Would it be a very praiseworthy or happy life that had him for its highest point? And yet would not his utter withdrawal make a very unbearable blank?

Hatty did not put it so. She had never talked metaphysics with George and Milly; but she said to herself—

"I wonder if all my ways are his ways; and if not, I wonder if I could give up mine for his. I don't quite know what his ways are, I'm not even sure that he has any yet, and if so, then who knows what they will be? He's lived a sad, unsettled life, poor boy—always 'in tents,' as our minister would say. One never hears him talk about things near at hand and likely. It would be better to think about a rise in his salary than of what he'd do if he had five hundred a-year. That only seems a worry to me, and enough to hinder one getting on at all. But religion is nothing unless it makes us charitable to the ways of those who have had disadvantages. And I'm sure if I'd been in Harry's place, I'd not been near as good as he is. I don't think that I am really as good now, if only he could see a few things a little differently. I wish he had not told me that he never cared to go to church till he saw me. Mother does not know that, and have I any right to tell her what poor Harry said in strict confidence, only to show me what a good influence I had over him?"

And so there was rather a bewildering complication that night when Harry Westbrook announced to Mrs. Harvey that "he had received hopes that he himself might some day call her mother."

"What, are you and Hatty really engaged?" Mrs. Harvey asked.

"It's no use saying engaged," Hatty had spoken up, rather decisively for a young lady in her interesting position, and with a swift flush passing over her face; "it's no use saying engaged till one knows when one expects to be married. And we don't want to be married for a long while yet."

"I shall have to be rude enough to bid you speak for yourself," said the lover gallantly.

"I can't understand you one bit," Milly said to Hatty that evening when they were both shut up in their bedroom. "You were never angry with the ridiculous people who made you offers, and now, although you are going to accept Harry's, you seem half as if you resented it."

"I don't understand myself, and I don't try much, because I ain't worth the trouble," Hatty answered.

"I do hope you will take care what you do," Milly went on; "don't play false in your thoughtlessness. Harry is just the man who could be terribly injured by want of heart in the woman he loves."

Hatty gave a low whistle. It was a shocking habit of hers, generally indulged in,

when, in her own phraseology, she had something to say, which she could not "bring out."

"Yes, indeed, Hatty," Milly urged, in her young enthusiasm, "you may have his welfare for this world and the next in your own hands."

"Mayn't he have mine, in his turn?" Hatty inquired humbly.

"Men are different to women," Milly answered loftily.



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"I think I'm a very old woman to you," Hatty observed, as it seemed inconsequently. "I ain't got any romance in me; at least, not your sort."

"You shouldn't give Harry hopes unless you love him," said Milly.

Hatty said not a word, and did not whistle. Milly's advice, like most advice in love

affairs, was given in the dark. There was much in Harry's history and character, over which the motherliness of Hatty's nature yearned with an infinite dumb tenderness, and which gave an agony of strength to his appeals for her love. And she must be "everything or nothing," and she really loved him far too well for that dread alter-

native. Indeed, Hatty had such a clinging kindness for every human being with whom she had ever come in contact, that she had rejected the shoemaker and the saddler with all the less pain, because she would still see them, day after day, in their old places, and she had never felt quite comforted concerning them until they had resumed their former habits of neighbourly greeting and chat, and had, in fact, quite settled it in their own minds, that they had never had more than "a foolish fancy" for her.

But, in her own heart, Hatty had long laid down laws concerning the marriage state, to which she clung with that narrow persistency which is the weakness of an uncultivated mind, and yet so often its best stronghold. Very few need to open a grammar, if it were no use to learn a rule, unless one could remember all its exceptions. And it is better to forget a real exception, than to make a false one.

One of her rules was of the headship of the husband over the wife; in her own words, "that no woman should marry a man she could not look up to." She made no philosophic distinctions about mental and moral powers, laws of compensation, &c., all of which are not without their wisdom and justice, but which often sacrifice clearness to effect, like "Old English" letters on a sign-post.

She had often said, half playfully, half seriously, "If my husband wanted coffee, and I wanted tea, I'd like him to be the sort of man to whom I give his own way directly, without even letting him know it wasn't mine."

Now, ninety-nine people out of a hundred, Hatty herself and her sister Milly included, would have decided that Harry Westbrook was altogether the superior of the couple. He was better read, and, in every conventional sense, he was better bred; for he made no mispronunciations, nor indulged in the rough and ready phrases with which Hatty liked "to cut her way straight into a truth." And yet Hatty felt herself noways inclined to give up her own ways to his, and was actually beginning to doubt whether her old admiration of such dutiful surrender was not a mere girlish folly.

Mrs. Harvey did not grow better satisfied with her future son-in-law. He was as well-behaved as ever, but in the quicker current of their more familiar acquaintance, little straws began to show which way the wind blew.

"My hair has fallen out a great deal lately," Hatty chanced to say.

"Oh, we must stop that," Harry replied with solicitude. "You have such lovely hair, and I admire beautiful hair so much. Indeed, I think everybody does. A woman is nothing without her pretty hair."

"Then what is she to do if it all falls off?" Hatty asked, only half archly.

"Wear a wig," said he.

"Well, yes, if she was a disagreeable sight without one," Hatty answered; "but I wouldn't wear one without telling everybody that it was a wig. I hate deceptions."

"But you need say nothing about it," said Harry.

"There's sure to be something to make one mention one's 'hair,'" Hatty retorted, "and whenever that happened I should say 'my wig' instead."

"Is not that straining truth too far?" Harry asked.

"You can't strain truth," said Hatty; "truth is truth, and everything else is lies."

"Well, if you were wearing a wig, I myself would rather not know it," Harry observed.

"I fear you set too much value on perishable externals, Harry," said Mrs. Harvey very gravely; and her heart grew sore to feel how soon the hard work and many cares of young, needy married life, would wear away the physical bloom and beauty which even the mother was half afraid were Hatty's chief charms in the eyes of her lover.

"I hope you pray to God to guide you, dear," she would often say to her daughter. "I think only God can guide us in these matters, for our dearest friends do not know what will really be best for us. Ask Him to lead you to what will keep you nearest Himself, dear, and pray Him to keep out of your heart anything that can come between you and your love for Him. Better give up anything than Him."

And then the mother would sigh within herself, feeling that this daughter of hers was cast in no heroic mould. Not that she feared Hatty would wilfully hold everything cheap in purchase of a brief day of false, passionate love. A woman must have gone far downward, before Satan tempts her to try that turning. But had Hatty the determination which can tear up what has taken root deep in the soul? Besides, what was to urge her to such decision? The young man could not be said to have deteriorated. At least, Mrs. Harvey could not feel sure that he had, though she sometimes thought he seemed a little changed—less serious, more trifling. The fact was, their early acquaintance with him had been like one of those fair shimmer-

ing spring mornings which promise such a glorious day, and yet sometimes die away into a grey, dull noon—so imperceptibly that you could not say when the last sunbeam finally faded out.

There was only one person in the little social circle who had never given Harry more praise than a dubious "Humph," and who now spoke out plainly. This was Miss Brook.

"I never liked him," she declared stoutly. "Hatty had better have married the saddler, for he is a honest, well-doing young fellow. I'm glad he's got somebody to take him. I looked in upon him and his new wife yesterday, and their pretty parlour does him credit. It's quite a picture."

"But one does not marry for a pretty parlour," Mrs. Harvey remarked laughing, half sadly.

"No, but one marries for what gets one," said Miss Brook fiercely. "It's eighteen months since this young spark first saw our Hatty, and a whole year since he first had the impudence to speak about her to you, and what the nearer is he to being married? Wasn't it only our Hatty's own good sense that saved her from parading a trumpery ring on her finger, and looking like a fool to the whole parish?"

"What can he do?" asked Mrs. Harvey forlornly.

"Do! Work all night, and live on bread and water by day! Do! Anything!"

"He would only break down his constitution."

"Fiddlesticks! Constitutions are made to be broken down one way or another, and you must take your choice between. Don't a long, lingering, diddle-daddling engagement break down a woman's constitution?"

"I'm afraid it often does," Mrs. Harvey said, with a sigh.

"More than often. And wastes her life as well, for it's an awful strain working with one's hands in one place and one's heart in another. And yet I'd bid a true woman wait for her lover twenty years if there was any God's reason why he should not marry her out of hand. But if he's only sparing and saving his own precious constitution, I'd leave him free to do the same to the end. A man can no more take his constitution with him to heaven than he can take his silver and gold. He's only got to make the best use of it in this life, and it's generally as true with it as with money, that there is which scattereth and yet increaseth."

"It was my plea, remember, not Harry's," said Mrs. Harvey.

"If I was a young man, with a girl waiting to marry me when I could afford to take her, would I go and buy fine new satin stocks at four and sixpence?" asked Miss Brook, with withering sarcasm, "would I have a single pair of gloves in my possession, let alone three pairs, one lemon coloured? These wouldn't be my ways, Mrs. Harvey; and I'm double sure they would not be your own."

"For Hatty's sake and his own, we must hope he will grow wiser," said Mrs. Harvey. "But the poor lad has had but little enjoyment in his life, and is likely to feel it hard to be called to so much self-sacrifice."

"So much self-sacrifice!" echoed Miss Brook, with a snort which meant more than a dozen dictionaries could convey. "But it's the way with human nature. Whenever there's one, like yourself, that's lifted an hundredweight, you are always so fearful that another may be crushed beneath an ounce!"

"What can I do?" sighed Mrs. Harvey. "Certainly I am not satisfied about Harry. With all his moral conduct and correct outward observances, I fear he is not a thoroughly Christian man. But how can I expect an affectionate girl, seeing everything through the first light of love, to believe this? There seems too much in his favour. It would be different did he go into gaieties and dissipation."

"Go! There is no go in him!" said Miss Brook. "He won't even go to the dogs—he'll wait till they come to him. He wants a good moral electric shock—something that will go right across the torpid grain of him."

In truth, though Hatty did not own it to herself, she was not happy in her love-affair. The sunshine seemed gone off the world; faith and energy lay tranced in her heart. How was she to know that this was actually the consequence of the evening visits, and chats, which, indeed, were assuming an undue position, as the only charms of her life? She still taught in the Sunday-school, but her class was not as attractive as it used to be, and she had lost two or three of her best scholars, and really sometimes gave a serious consideration to Harry Westbrook's frequent hints that she should resign her post. Not that she showed any falling off in zeal or diligence that was perceptible to the old minister or to Mr. Webber, the superintendent. Hatty's conscience was still in her work, though her enthusiasm had faded. There was no comfort in sermons nowadays, and no relief in prayer. Hatty's sole safety lay in the misery that she felt because this was so. It was the one imperishable

seal of her redemption. She was inside the Father's house, though she had left her sheltered seat by the hearth, to stand shivering on the threshold.

And then Harry Westbrook lost his situation. He had applied for an increase of salary, and his application not being immediately granted, it had seemed to him a right and prudent course to menace his employer by unpunctuality and negligence.

"I thought I would show him what I was worth," said Harry.

And perhaps he did—only the employer showed him the door.

"But I have not quarrelled with him—Oh, dear, no," Harry explained. "I have been in to see him, and had quite a pleasant chat only this morning. And I've quite talked him over to understand that he did not really dismiss me, but that I grew dissatisfied, and left to better myself."

And open truthful Hatty said not a word. She had learned that it was no use. Remonstrance only led to a war of words, in which his subtler wit always bore off the victory, and left the pain with her.

"Harry Westbrook is a fool and worse," was the comment of her brother George. "Give him up, Hatty, and don't waste another thought upon him."

"Give him up, in his hour of trial and adversity!" said Milly. "Hatty is no true woman if she can do that. Only let her be faithful, and she will be sure to win her reward."

True words indeed! But with a truth beyond Milly's romance.

Harry did not find it easy to obtain a new appointment better than that he had lost. One or two worse ones offered themselves, but he rebelled against "going backwards." Yet presently he would have been very glad of another chance of these. He had saved but little, and was soon deep in debt at his lodgings. Hatty heard all the details of the misery: how he was bullied and insulted—how once he walked the streets the whole night rather than confront his landlord, who became so alarmed, that he came out to look for his lodger, and, glad to find him safe and sound, led him home without one angry word for that time.

Any one who knows a woman's nature can guess how blindly and devotedly Hatty clung to him now. When nobody knows what of bitter change and agony any day may bring forth, every trifling endearment or petty act of good nature, assumes such a cruel, wringing pathos!

Everybody openly blamed him now. "They had all turned against him in his trouble," she cried in desperation, only wishing in her inmost heart that she could really feel it was so.

"It often seems so," her mother said, with sad gravity. "His troubles have shown what he is. But if, after what has passed, he became heir to a million, you would find that my censures would only become doubly as strong."

And yet, while Mrs. Harvey did not spare her daughter from hearing the severest judgments on her lover, and repeatedly expressed her decided opinion as to Hatty's proper course, she never personally urged her to give him up. She felt it too sacred a matter for the pressure of even a mother's authority. Such giving up must be voluntary to be effectual. A bitter life is better than a blighted one, and it is useless to break off an engagement, if a heart breaks with it.

CHAPTER VII.—MATED FOR LIFE.

It was an unusually damp and trying November. The house was dull and dreary as it had never been before; for Hatty was benumbed and depressed, and everybody else was silent and sad for her sake. Not that she neglected her domestic work. There were days when she "tidied," with doubled, desperate energy; but the little touches of gaiety were gone—the pink jug was no longer artfully put in front of the green plate. "It did not matter" now with Hatty; while to her mother, for the first time fully comprehending of what lightness and ease of heart these little things had been symbolic, it did matter very much indeed.

There came a single heavy knock upon the door. Hatty started. She started at every knock now. Then she went to open it. Though she had seen Harry the evening before, she had all sorts of vague fears about people with news of a dead body discovered, with a letter from her upon it. Instead of this tragedy, she found only a rough errand lad who she knew to be in the service of Mr. Webber, the Sunday-school superintendent.

"Our housekeeper is taken sudden bad with the erysipelas, miss," he said, "and I daresay you knows, miss, the three children has the hooping-cough. Says our housekeeper, says she, 'I'd be easy in my mind, if Miss Harvey would come round for the day, for she's a fine hand with sick children;' and I wish you would, miss, for the master has been up and down with them all night, and

now he's up and down out of the shop, and he looks like a ghost, miss. Ain't you well yourself, miss?"

"Oh yes, I'm quite well," Hatty answered, a little inclined to feel it "a bother" that her own afflictions were not of that ostensible kind which entitles the sufferer to the luxury of strict retirement. She actually hesitated a whole minute before she said—

"Tell the housekeeper I'll come."

She went back into the house to finish something she was about. As she was putting on her bonnet, she said—

"One can't refuse when one's asked; but I wish people would let one alone."

"No, you don't, Hatty," said her mother gently. "You only fancy so. I know better." She was glad of an outer world interest for the girl.

Hatty turned and kissed her. She was usually very undemonstrative among her nearest and dearest.

"It's nice to hear you say so," she sighed, "but I'm getting sick of myself."

And so she went away. Turning into the Mile-end Road, she met Harry Westbrook.

He walked on a few yards with her. He had no hopeful word to say. There was no luck for him in the world, and he wished he was out of it. He was only a burden to her, he knew that. And she did not need any burdens, it seemed to him her life was hard enough already. He only wished he was a rich man, that he might take care of her. For himself, perhaps the grave was the best inheritance. Then he said good-bye; it was an unpleasant, foggy morning, to be out in. He should have liked to see her again in the evening, but he begged her not to hasten home a moment earlier on his account—only he should like to see her, for there was no knowing how little longer he might see her at all. Good-bye again.

The clouds, through which her mother's words had let a little sunshine, closed again over Hatty. But she went patiently on her way.

Mr. Webber kept a large shop, and described himself as "a bookseller and stationer, wholesale and retail," but his literary stock seldom got beyond spelling-books, ready-reckoners, and elegant letter-writers, and his best profits were on grocers' stationery, packing paper, and cardboard for fancy boxes. He was a widower, and his three motherless children had, till lately, been "boarded out" in the country, whence they had now returned, sadly unruly—a sore trial to their patient, pious father, and the

prim old woman who managed his household.

Hatty went up to the great first-floor sitting-room, over the shop. The three children were there by themselves. Little Ellen, the youngest, perched uncomfortably on a sofa, coughing and fretful. Dick, the eldest boy, hunting the younger, James, about the room. There was a chorus of delight at Hatty's arrival.

But she went away for a moment to see the invalided housekeeper. She was an ancient spinster, as kind and good as she could possibly be, but one of those women who are positively terrified with the management of children. It had been bad enough while they were well. Their sickness had driven her almost frantic, and Hatty felt quite sure that her conscientious terrors had been the active cause of her utter disablement.

"It's all very fine to say it's only a common child's disease," said the good woman, gasping in her darkened room, "but what's the doctor been examining Dick's chest for, and saying we must take great care of him for as strong as he seems? I should just like to let the doctor himself try to take care of Dick Webber, that I should! And then he says, they must do this, and they mustn't do that; but yet I must be considerate, and not cross 'em—the cough makes children so nervous. I'd like to see the doctor make little Ellen drink mutton-broth without crossing of her! But it will be all right to-day, now you've come, Miss Harvey, for you've a genius for it."

Not at all nonplussed, Hatty went to her task, and found it sufficiently engrossing to make her own anxieties grow very far off. She knew all sorts of lively games, which yet did not knock the children's sorely needed breath out of their bodies. When Mr. Webber came up to dinner, he blessed her in his heart. He looked pale and worried, poor man, for it was a busy time in the shop, and he had all a father's feelings and a man's helplessness. Bad as was the day, he had not hesitated to run out that he might himself choose a toy for his little white-faced Ellen, who looked so dreadfully like her mother in her last illness. His kindness was its own reward, for Hatty, with her quick woman's wit, made it a stringent condition "that now papa had been so good as to buy such a pretty doll, Ellen must take her broth without saying a word to fidget him, or else surely she would be ashamed to look at his nice present."

It was the most peaceful meal that Mr. Webber had enjoyed for a long time, and he

felt quite loth to leave the snug, bright room, for the cold, damp shop. He actually indulged himself in ten minutes' chat before the fire.

"But I must be off at last," he said cheerily. "Dear me, but the shop I half shrink from to-day, would have seemed a paradise to me, compared with the cold, damp outhouse I worked in, in my young days. But nobody need complain when their hard lines comes early. And as for fun and excitement, it comes natural in those rough ways. And there's worse mental exercise than pulling hard at the two ends to make them meet."

Mr. Webber was a little plain man, who did not talk immaculate grammar, and whose education was solely made of the strange odds and ends of religious magazines, mutual improvement societies, and the like. Yet the world was the better for Mr. Webber by one godly home, and one honest Christian example. "I only wish Harry was a little like him," sighed Hatty. "Every hardship would grow easy then."

Mr. Webber saw a pretty picture when he came up after tea, to release Hatty from her labours. The two younger children, weak and easily wearied, had fallen asleep on the sofa, and for their sake Hatty had put the candle behind the screen. She was seated in the firelight, with Dick beside her in the great arm-chair, which was quite roomy enough for them both. Her arm was round the boy, whose head rested on her shoulder. Mr. Webber could hear their low voices as he came softly up-stairs. Dick used to sit just so in the twilight, giving childish confidences to the mother who had been dead nearly five years already. Dick had never sat so since. His father was often sorely troubled about him. He had to be strict and severe to his boisterous lawlessness. He had to be law and justice; but it was with a forlorn sorrow that there was nobody to be restraining mercy. As the good father saw his rebel subdued for once, happy and earnest, his heart grew so full that he could trust himself to eavesdrop no longer, but dashed into the room and broke up the pretty picture.

"I wish Miss Harvey would come and live here always, instead of old Mrs. Gamm!" said the boy that night.

Hatty found Harry Westbrook awaiting her in her own home. George was out. Mrs. Harvey and Milly were both seated at needle-work with their heads bent very low. They both rose up as she entered, and

left the room. As Mrs. Harvey passed out, she took Hatty's face between her hands and kissed it fervently.

Astonished, Hatty turned to Harry. His face was bright and eager, and he stretched out his hand and drew her fondly towards him.

"All the terror is over, darling," he said. "I have the offer of a good appointment. I got it through my old employer. I shall be able to marry you directly, and we shall live in such ease and luxury, for the climate is healthy and native service is cheap in the hill-country of India."

Hatty put her hand to her forehead, and her heart felt cold and dead.

"It may seem hard to you to go at first," Harry went on blithely; "but you will have me, darling. Surely you will be quite satisfied with having me, all to yourself. For my part, I am glad to go; I shall like the change, and a change for so much the better. We shall be waited on like princes, over there, Hatty. No common people always treating my beauty as an equal, and worrying her to help them out of their troubles."

Hatty drew herself away from him. Her mother or her neighbours would scarcely have known the handsome girl as she gazed at her lover then. The outlines of her face looked strong and hard. Her voice was deep and harsh.

"I cannot go with you, Harry. I cannot leave everything else. Oh, Harry, I dare say you will call me false and fickle. But I cannot—cannot—cannot leave everything else to go away with you."

He might have thought that her words could be presently combated, but there was in them a cry of agony—a tortured rending in two—which he could not mistake.

"Have not I heard you preach that man or woman should leave father and mother and cleave only to wife or husband?" he asked with a passionate bitterness.

"Yes, yes," she cried, "the Book says so, and it is so. Unless it is so there is no true marriage. Unless a woman would cheerfully follow a man to the ends of the earth, she ought not to marry him. She has not the true wife's love for him. I have loved you—yes, Harry, I have, I have—among other things. But all by yourself, I don't love you enough. I can't tell how it is, Harry, you know I'm not clever. But I'm thankful you asked me to go to India, because as I can't say 'Yes,' it shows me I'm not meant to be your wife anywhere. I hope I haven't done you any harm already, Harry, but it wouldn't

undo that to do you the greatest harm of all, and go on to be your wife now I know I oughtn't to be."

"It is quite natural that you should feel leaving your mother and sister, Hatty," he pleaded, "but if you would only be patient and think of me you would be able to bear it."

"No, no," she wailed. "Perhaps I might for some people—I don't know, maybe I haven't got enough heart for such deep love. But I can't do it for you. I'd be a happier and a better woman, living here, an old maid, just going wherever she was wanted, and doing whatever nobody else cared to do. I'd have more satisfaction in that, Harry. Oh, forgive me, forgive me!"

"Shall I stay at home?" he asked mournfully. "Or shall I go away there till I have earned some money, and then come home again and try to settle down?"

"Not for me!" she said. "This has come like a flash of lightning, and shown us what a dangerous way we are in. Because the lightning goes out the way doesn't get safer, Harry. If this had not come to test us, Harry, I might have married you, and lived to grow what you wouldn't like, nor God either."

"And you don't think you'll miss me when I'm gone?" he pleaded.

"I shall! I know I shall," she owned with a burst of tears. "But I don't know that I shall miss you more than I should what I should leave if I went with you."

"I think you are putting too much stress upon very natural feelings," Harry observed, more hopefully. "I dare say most women who have gone with their husbands to foreign lands heartily wish themselves at home again, and wonder how they could have come away. Yet it is but simple home-sickness, and wears away in time."

"Yes, yes, Harry," she interrupted; "I know it is so. I have heard mother say that one may often wonder how one had strength for this or that, and feel that one couldn't have it again. But then one had it at the time it was wanted, and one thanks God for that. I haven't it, Harry. I've felt for a long time that this was coming somehow."

"What! that you meant to give me up?" he said, stepping back, stung.

"No," she said; "but I've felt something was wrong. Life didn't fit me, and I don't think it really fitted you either."

They sat silent. Both their heads were buried in their hands, and great tears kept falling on the table between Hatty's fingers.

She looked up at last.

"When do you go?" she asked.

"In five weeks' time," he answered heavily. "I am required to leave for Southampton the day after to-morrow. I meant to return here to be married last thing before I sailed."

Another silence.

"You'll want a great outfit," she said.

"Yes," he replied; "it will be easily bought. My new master makes an allowance for that. He would have made an allowance for you too."

"Harry," said Hatty eagerly, "don't buy everything. Let me do some sewing for you—it will show me that you forgive me."

He looked at her earnestly.

"You shall have some, Hatty," he said. "That shows me you mean all you're saying. I believe that—you do love me—but not in the wife's way. Make me up anything you like, and send it to my lodgings. I'll say good-bye now. Don't speak another word. And don't come out to the door. I can't stand it."

She sat still where she was, till she heard the street door close, and his heavy footsteps pass the little courtyard. She still sat motionless, till her mother and Milly came creeping back with eyes full of tearful interrogations.

"Harry is gone," she said quietly. "It is all over. I could not go away with him. Don't talk to me about it."

And she rose and went away to her own dark chamber, and did not come in again to supper.

But next morning she prepared breakfast as usual, and then went out and bought some fine linen, and set herself diligently to make it up into the most elaborate shirts. It was the dainty shroud of a still-born love.

She did not see Harry Westbrook again before he sailed. A little note from him acknowledged the receipt of her farewell gift. Mrs. Harvey, Milly, and even George, all read it. Anybody might have done so.

"MY DEAR HARRIET,—Thank you for your token of remembrance. You have always been very good to me, as you are to everybody, and I shall owe you much of my pleasantest recollection of England. As for what is bitter, you would not have given it me but in kindness, and I hope it will do me good, that you need never feel that you did anything but what was right. My best love to all, and

"I remain, always yours gratefully,

"HARRY WESTBROOK."

"There must be a great deal of good in him, after all," said Mrs. Harvey wistfully.

"Yes, very likely, if you stirred him well up," commented vigorous Miss Brook. "The worst of the people with a great deal of good in them is, that few are ready to tell 'em there's more evil! Our Hatty has been a true friend to Henry Westbrook."

Good Miss Brook's active interest in the Harvey household was rewarded by a sweet sense of property therein. Between Mrs. Harvey and her the children were always "ours."

The mother had no more reason to fear any flights or vagaries in Hatty. Her life had had that priceless touch of responsibility and sorrow, which gave her ripening beauty a sweet, womanly sedateness, and shamed away the light, shallow love which had before haunted her footsteps. As months and months went by, and she still remained so serenely sober, so solitary among her old associations, Mrs. Harvey actually began to think that after all Hatty might become an old maid.

To be sure, George and Milly had got into such a habit of laughing over Hatty's lovers, that they could not leave it off, but must sometimes twit her about Mr. Webber, and the regularity with which he kept her supplied with a loan of Sunday books. Hatty bore it with her old patience for a long while, but at last she flushed tearfully, and sobbed—

"That she had let them laugh about a good many, and they might, as long as they liked; but they had no right to make game of a good, serious man, like Mr. Webber."

"Certainly not," chimed in Mrs. Harvey, quite innocently. "It is natural that Hatty should not like to hear any foolery, about an old friend, for whom she has such a deserved respect."

She was still as profoundly innocent, when one evening, Mr. Webber called and inquired pointedly for Mrs. Harvey.

"Something about that delicate little daughter of his," said the good lady, as she adjusted her cap and bustled to receive him, only to be confounded by such incoherent speech as this.

"Your daughter Harriet—have long seen her inestimable value—am not young—nor at all worthy. But she says she can look over that. My dear children's best interests safe in her kind hands. Home like home

again. My boy Dick worships her. So good, she would not make a fuss about anything, but shall have new carpets and papers, and everything right. May suit her better than a younger man. She says she can honour me—I don't know what for. Hope you will pardon what must seem like impudence in a widower and middle-aged, but we both want your blessing, and I'll do my duty to your child, as I know she'll do the same by mine."

"And can you really love him better than poor Harry?" Milly asked in another chamber conference.

"I know I'd go to Van Dieman's Land with James Webber if he asked me," said Hatty bravely, with a strong light in her beautiful eyes, and a tender quiver round her mouth. "James Webber carries God in his heart, and that would make it home wherever he went."

There was a quiet wedding, with Milly and little Nelly Webber for bridesmaids, and then the wedded pair took the three step-children with them on their week's honeymoon at Richmond. There was no such long difference between the ages of the husband and wife as to make a romance or a scandal. She was twenty-two and he was thirty-eight.

Miss Brook officiated at the marriage, terrible in an old brocade that had done service in the days of her youth. She went through the ceremony so diligently that she even echoed the portions set apart for the bride and bridegroom.

She drove home in the same fly with Mrs. Harvey, and could not resist making a few personal observations.

"Ain't you sorry now that Hatty put such a many stakes down in her own place, that she couldn't strike tents and off at any word like a marching soldier? Can't you see now, that them God doesn't give much romanticalness to are just those that haven't got what is necessary to keep romanticalness from being sheer rubbish? Can't you see now that from every temptation God makes the way of escape suitable to the nature He offers it to? Is He a mocker that He should bid a rabbit save its life by running up a tree, and a cat by burrowing in the ground?"

And so Hatty settled down to the homely, loving life that was fittest to bring out the best of her, and to make her of most service to God in this world.

HENRY LAWRENCE.

FIRST PAPER.

IN the year 1855 Sir Henry Lawrence paid the last of his rare visits to Calcutta. Emphatically a man of action, whether as a soldier, a "political" in the Anglo-Indian sense, or an administrator, he had spent the thirty years of his brilliant career in the swamps of Arakan, the villages of the north-western provinces, the passes and forts of Afghanistan, the solitude of the valleys of Nepal, the court and camps of the Punjab, and the arid wastes of Rajpootana, relieved only by a few weeks rest in the cool heights of Mount Aboo. He was known personally to few of those in the great cities who, whether Englishmen or natives, form the public opinion of India. But his name had for some time been in every mouth. Keen interest was felt in the man who, having helped Lord Hardinge to win the first Punjab War, and having prevented the second from being attended by disaster at Chillianwala, had converted the turbulent brotherhood of Sikh prætorians into sturdy peasants or contented landlords, and yet had given way to his younger brother, John, as ruler of our new frontier province. The Marquis of Dalhousie was at the height of his well-deserved fame as Governor-General. But all the circumstances which a year before had led him to transfer Sir Henry Lawrence from Lahore to the inferior appointment of Agent for the states of Rajpootana, were not known, and especially throughout the Indian Army keen sympathy was felt with the officer who had been thus superseded. Not only they who thus sympathized, but all officials who had long admired Sir Henry for his own sake, united to do him honour in a banquet, public enough to be thoroughly representative, but not so public as to chill the flow of private friendship, or check the expression of frank admiration.

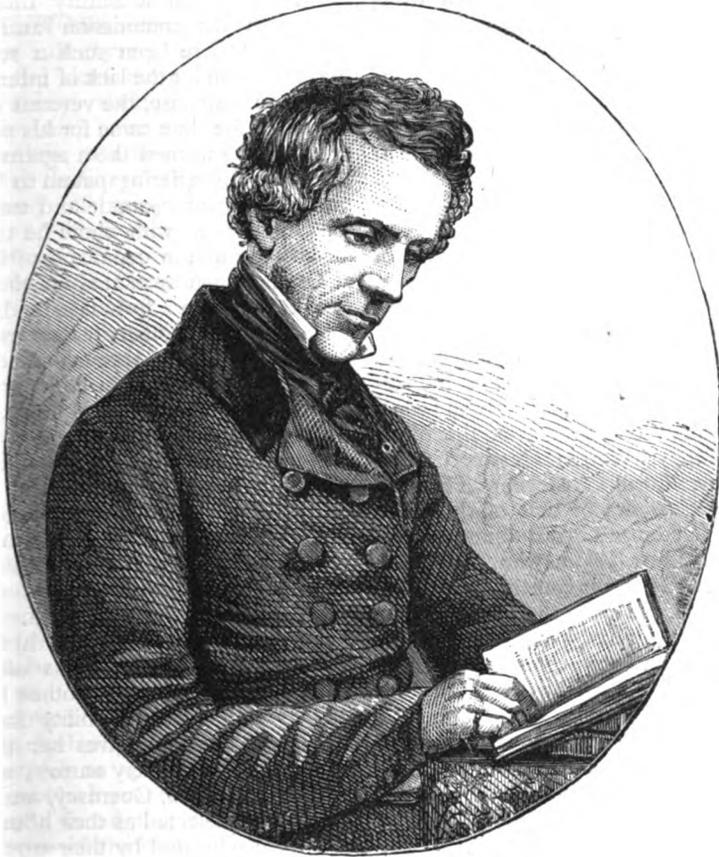
But Sir Henry Lawrence was something more and higher than a great soldier and administrator. He was remarkable in both capacities, because the root of his nature lay deep in Christ. While his brother officers and civilians crowded to recognise in him their professional ideal, there were some who knew his inner life and the true secret of that influence which radiated from him; there were many who saw in him chiefly the beneficent philanthropist, the friend of the poor, the helper of the needy, the pattern of self-denial. The day of the banquet given in his honour by the "Services" he spent with me

in visiting the various charities and schools of Calcutta, happily abundant in both, to which he had been long a subscriber. He knew well that there is a wise as well as a foolish way of spending money in seeking to do good, and in all the cases on which he spent the bulk of his income he sought by personal knowledge, or by means of those friends whom he employed as his almoners, to secure the wise way. On this occasion he was chiefly interested in the children of poor European parents, and in that class of East Indians, the descendants of English fathers and native mothers, who are often neglected. The same spirit which led him to establish for soldiers' children the noble Asylums that bear his name, prompted him all through his career to care for the class of adventurers, the runaway sons who used to enlist in the East India Company's armies before the colonies offered a healthier outlet to adventurous spirits. Of this class, and of individuals whom he had secretly assisted ever since he had been a Revenue Surveyor, we talked much, and he expressed to me his intention to follow up his earliest production, "The Adventurer in the Punjab," by a work on European blackguards in India. He used the term humorously and kindly, including in it the soldiers of fortune, French as well as English, who had fought in the service of native chiefs, as well as those poor "loafers," vagabond sailors, soldiers, and Australian grooms, whose increasing numbers have since caused so much political difficulty and moral scandal as to necessitate the interference of the legislature.

I had corresponded with Sir Henry Lawrence for some time, and had formed my own idea of the *personnel* of the man whose impetuous but shrewd benevolence, whose literary enthusiasm tempered by the grace of his noble wife, and whose eagerness as an Indian political reformer, I had good reason to know. But I was not prepared for the tall form, the gaunt features, the almost wasted face, and grizzly hair, which gave him the ascetic stamp of the old Puritan till the soul within spiritualised his expression. What the fever of Arakan began in the young lieutenant, marring his features and to some extent his form, was intensified by hard work and occasional disappointment in a tropical climate. A few months before this his wife had been taken from him. The time had even now

come for that sick leave to England which the doctors had often pressed upon him, and which his appointment as Chief Commissioner of Oudh the year after prevented him from taking. The photograph taken of him when he first went to Oudh, and engraved in Rees' "Narrative of the Siege of Lucknow," unfortunately remains the only published portrait of one who has justly been termed the greatest man England has ever sent to India. His recently published "Life," by his friend and disciple, Sir Herbert Edwardes, completed

by Mr. Herman Merivale, for which the public has so long waited, does not contain a portrait such as we trust the publishers will yet supply. If a biography is valuable in proportion as it represents what its subject was, as well as what he did, then it is deeply to be regretted that Sir Herbert Edwardes did not live to complete his labour of love. Rarely has so valuable an addition been made to religious or to Anglo-Indian biography as the first volume of this work. It is unfortunate that the tale of Sir Henry



Lawrence's administration of the Punjab and removal to Rajpootana, and the story of the Mutiny in Oudh crowned by that death-bed in the Baillie Guard of the Lucknow Residency, has not been told by the man who was, next to the brothers Lawrence, *facile princeps* among the statesmen of the Punjab, who kept the gate of India at Peshawur against all odds in '57, and who belonged to the same school of catholic-evangelicals as his great master. As it is, when the unaccountable errors which disfigure the

second volume have been removed, the book will be worthy to rank with Sir John Kaye's "Lives of Indian Officers." It should be studied, especially by young men, along with such biographies as Mr. Marshman's "Life of Havelock," and the memoir of the good and the wise Bishop Cotton, by his widow.

Henry Lawrence was an Irishman, but of the Scotch-Protestant type. Those who are curious in such matters will observe that the three countries divide very fairly among them the distinguished men who have won

and built up our Indian empire. Clive and Warren Hastings were purely English, while Lord William Bentinck—like the present Governor-General, Lord Northbrook—was of Anglo-Dutch descent. Lord Minto, who has never received justice; the Marquis of Hastings, whose long administration was so brilliant; and the Marquis of Dalhousie, who excelled even that nobleman in his services to the empire and to humanity, are claimed by Scotland. But it is to Ireland that we must give the honour of having sent to India the Marquis Wellesley, who, though overshadowed in the eyes of Europe by his younger brother, the Duke of Wellington, was the "glorious little man" of Indian contemporaries like Metcalfe and Malcolm. To Ireland also we owe the Lawrences—George, Henry, and John. The first, less known in this country than his younger brothers, has won a solid reputation alike as a soldier, a "political," and a captive in the Afghan War, and as Henry's successor in the control of the eighteen principalities of Rajpootana. He is still spared to enjoy retirement in England, where he proves himself worthy of his name by assisting in movements for the spiritual and moral good of the soldier. The story of Henry and of John seems even more romantic than that of the Westminster schoolboys, Warren Hastings, Chief Justice Impey, Lord Chancellor Thurlow, and the poet Cowper; or that of the three Christ Church students, Lord Dalhousie, Lord Canning, and Lord Elgin, who succeeded each other as Governor-General of India. Henry Lawrence, the artillery officer, fevered by the swamps of Arakan, came home to find his younger brother, John, eager to go out to India as a soldier. Dissuaded from this by his brother, John landed in Calcutta in the civil service, and, other things being equal, by that one fact gained the start and distanced his elder brother in the honours of life. So important was it, so valuable is it still, to be a "covenanted" civilian rather than a soldier in the East. Henry found himself ousted from the Punjab by the brother whom he had as his colleague in the Board of Administration, and honourably enough so far as that brother was concerned. When the supreme crisis of the Mutiny came John was Chief Commissioner of the Punjab, and Henry had at last been appointed by Lord Canning Chief Commissioner of Oudh. Henry was the one man in India to whom England looked as the successor of Lord Canning, and Lord Palmerston nominated him Provisional Governor-General. But death carried

off the elder brother before he could fill the highest position, for good or evil, that a subject of the British Crown can hold; and on Lord Elgin's death the same Premier appointed John, who after a few years' term as Viceroy was raised to the peerage, and still enjoys his well-won rewards.

Alexander, the father of the Lawrences, was the youngest son of a mill-owner in Coleraine. He was worthy of such sons. When just seventeen he went off to India as a military volunteer. There he so served for a quarter of a century that he would have won his commission and a Victoria Cross, had there been such a reward, many times over but for the lack of interest. Forced at last to purchase, the veteran was soured, and when the time came for his sons to enter the army he warned them against the Royal Service. From Seringapatam to Waterloo he proved a worthy comrade and subordinate of the Great Duke, with whom he remonstrated for keeping him in command of his regiment at Ostend when he panted for the front. Nor were the boys less fortunate in their mother, a Knox, and a collateral descendant of the Scottish Reformer, through Andrew Knox, Bishop of the Isles. In their long roamings over India and Ceylon, and during occasional visits to England, this couple were blessed with twelve children, of whom the three boys and their eldest sister, Letitia, concern us most. Henry Montgomery Lawrence was his mother's jewel, being described by her as her Matura diamond, in allusion to his birthplace, which is known for its precious stones. He was born on 28th June, 1806. What with their father's grievance and his sometimes thoughtless generosity to his old comrades and their families, their mother had need of all that administrative ability for which her son Henry so fondly gives her credit. The family income was very narrow, and, on their return to England, Guernsey, and afterwards Clifton, was selected as their home. But the boys were educated by their uncle, the Rev. James Knox, who was head-master of the Foyle College, at Derry, a town ever since associated with the Lawrences, and justly proud of their reputation. There Henry was remarkable for his love of truth-telling even to his own hurt, and for the thoughtfulness of his character. Mrs. Lawrence was fortunate not only as a manager, but in her relation as cousin to Mr. Huddleston, who was both an East India director and a member of Parliament. This good man, who had been the intimate friend of the missionary Schwartz, in Tanjore, liberally provided cadetships and

a writership for the Lawrence boys, the last falling to John. Henry chivalrously refused any appointment which did not involve an examination, and hence he passed for the Artillery, lest it should be said that no Lawrence could face an examination. He left behind him at Addiscombe the reputation of being "backward and slow." Both he and John were wont to confess that they were dull at scholarly studies, and that their education had been neglected. But Henry came out the first of his year. His so-called slowness seems to have been due to that habit which was the secret of his success. He was what the Germans call "grundlich," refusing to advance till he had thoroughly mastered every step, always seeking the causes of things. It is true, however, that competitive examinations, as now conducted, would have deprived India of Henry and John Lawrence, and of many of their great predecessors. There was at least one man who foresaw Henry's future. When Letitia, the beloved elder sister and companion, was so bemoaning her brother's approaching departure that he proposed to take her with him, and set up a school or a shop in the Himalayas, Mr. Huddleston said, "You foolish thing, Henry will distinguish himself. All your brothers will do well, I think; but Henry has such steadiness and resolution that you'll see him come back a general. He will be Sir Henry Lawrence before he dies." So away from Clifton one September morning, leaving the young ones in bed, and parting with his sister on Brandon Hill! His mother's counsel is characteristic of both, and tells of a life of struggling, not unmingled with happiness. "I know you don't like advice, so I will not give you much. But, pray, recollect two things. Don't marry a woman who had not a *good* mother; and don't be too ready to speak your mind. It was the rock on which your father shipwrecked his prospects." In all this we have as yet hardly a glimpse of the higher life. But Sir Herbert Edwardes tells us that the mother had inherited no small share of John Knox's "strong, God-fearing character," and we know that Letitia, the sister, prayed much for her favourite brother, that he might be led into all truth. We learn afterwards, too, that the scarred old Colonel, the victim of many wrongs, and oft grumbling over his grievances, found before his death their true remedy in the love of Him who bears every burden, a fact which Henry joyfully records.

It was in 1823, towards the close of the cold season in February, that Henry Lawrence

joined the head-quarters of the Bengal Artillery at Dum Dum, now almost a suburb of Calcutta. Two or three months later there landed with his regiment at the same place a young officer of the Royal Service, who, on the soldier side of his character, so resembled Lawrence—Henry Havelock. Both saw their first campaign in the Burmese War, which was already brewing. Both came under spiritual influences at once, Havelock in the saintly circle of Baptists at Serampore, Lawrence among the Church of England evangelicals at Dum Dum and Calcutta. Both took part in the Afghan conflicts. And both, by very different paths, found a soldier's grave in '57, Lawrence in the hallowed ground of the beleaguered Residency of Lucknow, Havelock in the then fortified garden of Dilkooshah, from which he had advanced to the relief of that Residency. When Henry Lawrence had time to look from professional details to the society around him, he found that some of his most intimate companions at Addiscombe, who had landed a few weeks before him, had undergone a change. One especially, named Lewin, was a new man altogether. We find Henry writing again and again of this change to his sister. In a letter dated eight months after his arrival he recurs to it as something at once marvellous and worthy of his own imitation, but yet hardly attainable by himself. "Lewin has turned an excellent religious young fellow," writes the lieutenant of seventeen. And again: "There is a play here to-night, but as I did not feel inclined to go, I took tea with Lewin, and am just returned home. It is really wonderful to me the conversion of Lewin, having known him as a worldly-minded lad. His whole thoughts seem now to be of what good he can do. I only wish I was like him." The occasion of the change was this. The Rev. George Craufurd, who still lives, and now holds the family baronetcy as Sir George Craufurd, had gone out in the same ship with Lewin and the other cadets, as assistant chaplain to the Rev. Thomas Thomason. With the cadets was Lawrence's friend, James Thomason, afterwards the great Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces, whose admiring disciple in all things, Sir William Muir, still rules in his spirit over the thirty millions of Hindostan proper. Sir George Craufurd's name is one henceforth to be remembered with those of the Simeonites, Brown, Corrie, Henry Martyn, Bishop Wilson, and Bishop Dealtry, who, with the Serampore and the Scotch missionaries, have made India spiritually what it is, and what it promises to be.

Not only as the father in Christ of Henry Lawrence and others, but as the man who first asserted religious liberty for the Sepoys, ought the name of Sir George Craufurd to be recorded. The story has a sad interest since the Mutiny, and we may tell it in passing.

When chaplain at Allahabad in 1830, Sir George Craufurd was visited in his own house by Sepoys curious about the Christian religion. Assisted by a Mirza, his catechist, Sir George finally accepted their written invitation to teach the Church Catechism in the lines. The Major commanding, excited by the dread of insubordination, interfered. The General, much better disposed, laughingly permitted the chaplain to teach only such Sepoys as chose to visit him privately. The result was the application of several for baptism. Lord William Bentinck, the Governor-General, overborne by his advisers, it was thought, had ordered Archdeacon Corrie to forbid the visiting of the native soldiers in their lines. But when the question of baptism arose the matter seemed more serious. It is deeply to be lamented that two such men as Lord William Bentinck and Archdeacon Corrie went so far as to prevent the baptism of Sepoys; and the former issued that order prohibiting all chaplains from speaking to native soldiers on the subject of religion, which did so much to foster the ignorance that ended in the Mutiny. Even after the abolition of the East India Company, Lord Canning rebuked a civilian for attending the baptism of a Sepoy, and forbade Colonel Wheeler to preach. Since that time, however, missionaries like Mr. Clark and his wife have been allowed to evangelize the Muzzbee regiment of Sikhs, low caste men. But the disgraceful and inexpedient order of Lord William Bentinck's government still remains in force, so far as I know.

The prayers of Lewin, his companion, and the labours of Craufurd were blessed in time to the conversion of Henry Lawrence. Very slowly does Lawrence seem to have opened his reserved and questioning heart to the influences of that circle. At last we find him reaching this point in his intercourse with the chaplain: "What I want to be assured of is that this Book is God's. Because when I know that, I have nothing left but to obey it." On the Christmas-day of 1823 we find this joyous entry in Lewin's journal: "Lawrence took the sacrament; God bless him now and for evermore." On the subsequent 17th of April the words occur, "I have been greatly pleased to-day to see dear

Lawrence reading his Bible considerably." The good seed was then sown.

The cold season of 1823-24 was passed amid preparations for a war with Burma. The first half of the eighteenth century, or from the death of Aurungzebe, about the time of the union of Scotland and England, to Clive's victory of Plassey, was the period of anarchy in India. All, Mussulman and Hindoo, Mahratta and Rajpoot, English and French, sought to keep what they had got, and more or less consciously, on our part at least, to obtain supremacy. The Mussulman was effete. The Hindoo had no power of recuperation, and sought only, as in Rajpootana, to be protected from his enemies. The Mahrattas, themselves Hindoos, were the most formidable—a veritable scourge of God. Of the European powers then trading in India the Portuguese were as hopeless as the Mussulman, while the Dutch had only sought gain in the paradise of the Eastern Archipelago, which their culture system still oppresses. The peninsula lay open to the English and French. But the latter, in spite of great names like La Bourdonnais and Dupleix, were not supported, save by Colbert for a time, at home; and their designs were of the purely selfish military class. Whether deserving it or not, England was used to save society, and all who, like the princes of Rajpootana and the Nizam of Hyderabad, clung to the English were preserved, and have been fossilised to this hour. While India proper was thus seething, what the ancients called India beyond the Ganges was undergoing a similar revolution. The robber-chief Alompra founded in the valley of the Irrawaddy that house whose ambassadors have lately come from the Viceroy's to the foot of the Queen's throne. For years the dynasty of Alompra had, from Ava, their capital, insulted the English Governor-General, who had sent envoys to the Golden Foot, but had otherwise been too busy to think of Burma. In an evil moment the Burmese not only claimed, but invaded Assam and Cachar. The empire had enjoyed five years peace, the treasury was full, and Lord Amherst, the weakest of Governors next to Lord Auckland, was in power. So a two years' war was waged and brought to a successful issue; thanks to Sir Thomas Munro, the great Governor of Madras. Henry Lawrence and his guns formed part of the Chittagong column which, under General Morrison, crossed the jungles and hills of Arakan and took its capital. What Henry Lawrence did with a volume of Scott's

Bible, given him by the chaplain as his companion, we have not space to tell. Havelock, with the main army, seeing that there was no chaplain at all with the force, converted a cloister of the great Shoay Dagon pagoda of Rangoon into a church, and there, by the light of a lamp placed in the lap of the images of Gautama that lined the walls, he ministered to the soldiers of H.M.'s 13th. The hot weather of 1825 came, and even by May of that year the early rainy season of Burma was upon our troops. As Havelock, the historian of the war, records, "In a month General Morrison had no longer an army." Of all the artillery officers, only Henry Lawrence and his colonel were fit for duty, and the former received his first promotion as adjutant. But there he too was struck down, and after being nursed in Calcutta by Mr. Craufurd, he was ordered to England. In May, 1827, we find this noble testimony from a mother in her journal:—"Returned from Arracan after the Burmese war, my dearest beloved, Henry Montgomery, not twenty-one years old, but reduced by sickness and suffering to more than double that age. Self-denial and affection to his whole family were ever the prominent features of his character."

Who shall describe the joys of the first visit home of the Indian exile? Yet that is an easier task than the attempt to picture the other side of the poetry of Anglo-Indian life—the separation of husband and wife, of parents and children, of the friends of youth and of manhood, often for long years. That, and nothing else, is the price we pay for India, for death is less bitter. That Henry Lawrence was changed in other respects than in form was soon apparent. His first act was to consult his sister Letitia about family prayers. After some surprise on the part of the household, he brought out his Scott's Bible, and from that day there was an altar in the house. This holiday of two years and a half was memorable for some things. Notably, with his sister's companionship and the spiritual privileges, which he enjoyed alike at Clifton and when he visited the north of Ireland, he grew in grace. Hard by his father's house, Robert Hall's preaching was sounding forth, and drawing good men of all sects to listen. His younger brother John was grumbling that Mr. Huddleston had presented him with an appointment to the Bengal Civil Service, instead of giving him the chance of becoming a soldier, like his seniors. He admired the young hero of the Burmese War, and could not understand why that

somewhat stern person should side with his father in the advice—"If you want to be independent, be a civilian." So to Haileybury the future viceroy went, but not before he had often helped Henry to carry the delicate Letitia up the hills from Clifton, to be in time for the preaching of Robert Hall. A picture worthy of a place in the Anglo-Indian historical gallery—the embryo soldier-statesman, one to have the viceroy's throne in his gift, the other to fill it for five years, and both to save an empire, while acknowledging in all humility Him who had called them.

When, in one of those fits of home-sickness which so often recur in India, Henry had pined for the society of those he loved, he thought only of mother and sister. But now he had his wish fulfilled in an even higher form. He met his cousin, his sister's friend, Honoria Marshall, a fair Irish girl, once, twice, and again; and he made many inquiries as to her training, her tastes, the books she liked to read. The result was such an exalted opinion of her, and so humble an idea of himself in relation to her, that he returned to India without opening his heart to her. Aunt Angel, who figures much and lovingly in the early part of Sir Herbert Edwards's volume, pronounced marriage at that time most imprudent—"they were little better than children." There was another reason for his silence: his dream was to create a pious fund for his father and mother. The old colonel had steadily refused all assistance, even from his sons; but that could not always be. To marry now would be selfishly to neglect a sacred duty, and so, hating scenes, he parts with Honoria deliberately, "on the steps of a shilling show" in Regent Street, as his friend and biographer expresses it. With the Arakan fever not quite extirpated, as it never was, he and John sail for India, and after a five months' voyage reach Calcutta in February, 1830. Months passed on in the study of Persian and Hindostanee at Kurónal, varied by riding lessons, which fitted him for many a long journey in after days. Soon John was appointed to Delhi, within a few hours' distance of both his elder brothers, and Henry was transferred to the Horse Artillery. A year or two passed; good appointments so came to him and his brothers, as the result of hard work, that the pious fund grew apace, and he begins to wonder if now he dare ask Honoria Marshall to be his wife. He dares, humbly, almost despairingly; and in 1837 she lands at Calcutta, only to find that there is no bridegroom. Illness had driven him to the hills, and her letters to him

had miscarried. But when the news reached him at Simla, in August, the worst season, he soon made her his own.

Only those who have been privileged to witness their family life can tell all that Lady Lawrence proved to be to her husband. She was a woman of high culture and refined taste. Her literary productions were excellent, some of her letters, now published for the first time, cannot be surpassed. The poetry of her prose articles in the *Calcutta Review*, especially on such subjects as the Englishwoman in India, married life in India, and the sick-room in India, is exquisite. Her influence on his intense earnest temper was purifying. A true soldier's wife, she ever strung up his nature to meet the call of duty, the claims of affection, and the appeals of neediness, while she gently turned away his spirit from dwelling too long on slights and wrongs. In the one instance recorded by Sir Herbert Edwardes, in which the old temper burned so fiercely as to threaten a duel with an officer who had attacked his honour in its keenest part, she wrote him a letter, touching in its pathos and almost sublime in its appeals, and that only a fortnight after the birth of their first child. The sin was averted by the decision of his brother officers, that a challenge was quite unnecessary, the opinion of the army being with him in the dispute. At a later period we find their positions changed to that which is more becoming, the husband determined on a deed of heroic self-sacrifice, and the distant wife, doubtful at first, but soon encouraging him to the venture.

When in 1842 Henry Lawrence was with Pollock's avenging force at Oosman Khan's Fort, fourteen miles in advance of Jellalabad, Akbar Khan sent a second message, offering to give up the English captives if Pollock would retire at once and release the Afghan prisoners. George Lawrence, a captive, was

employed as one of the envoys, in the hope that he would influence his brother and the general to consent. The message was returned, that our force would advance, and the ladies must be sent in at once. With this George had to return to what seemed death at the hands of the murderer of Sir W. Macnaghten. Henry nevertheless volunteered to return in George's place, assured that his wife would approve. He had not mistaken her. Four letters, dispatched to her husband on the 17th, 18th, 19th, and 20th of August, record an incident unmatched in the annals of heroism. The first and most doubting thus begins:—"And you offered to go in the stead of George, darling? I am glad you did it, and I am glad there was no time to ask me, lest my heart should have failed." The next is more assured:—"Yes, you see I *did* say you were right in offering to go, and furthermore I shall say you are right if you *do* go to Cabul." In the two next she rises to the full height of the self-sacrifice.

"August 19.—Last night I was a long time awake, and felt great delight thinking of your offer for your brother, and how pleasing it must be in the sight of our great Redeemer, who gave himself in the stead of his enemies, that they might be made his friends, even his brothers. . . . The vivid feeling brought to my heart by your love and disinterestedness helped me more feelingly than I ever did before to thank Jesus Christ for what He did for our race, and for each individual of it."

"August 20.—And now, my husband, listen to what I say, for it is the steadfast purpose of my heart. You have more than my acquiescence in your changing places with George. Besides which, I cannot but feel that there is not an officer now in Afghanistan who may not be made a prisoner. Therefore, my Henry, if so it be your lot, your wife will be with you."

But George was worthy of such a brother, to whose wife he writes, "We return to-morrow Cabul-wards; Henry, as usual, volunteering to go for me, but this I could not allow." The life of Lady Lawrence is an example to every woman in India.

GEORGE SMITH.

ONE WITH THEE.

NEARER, nearer, heavenly Saviour,
Draw my cold, unwilling soul—
Closer, ever closer, hold me,
Till Thy touch have made me whole:
Oh, to think that I may be,
Blessed Jesus, one with Thee!

When the world my love allureth,
When I say to Thee, "Depart,"
Heed me not, but let Thy sunshine
Melt my hard ungrateful heart:
Till, like birds beneath the wing,
Unto Thee I turn and cling.

If the flesh, O Lord, should tempt me,
Show Thy wounds in foot and hand;
With the look that softened Peter,
Lord, before my spirit stand,
Till all dark deeds I forsake,
Loathing each for Thy dear sake.

When the devil strives to win me,
Hide me, hide me, Saviour blest—
Draw me, in a closer union,
Closer to Thy heavenly breast:
For no evil thing shall e'er
Reach the soul that's anchored there.

F. H. C. BROCK.

OUR DISTRICT.

By A RIVER-SIDE VISITOR.

II.—FAIRY ARMSTRONG.



T was on one of the occasions when it fell to us, to give out the "treat" tickets to the Sunday-school scholars that we first noticed Fairy Armstrong. We say *noticed*, for as at

that time she had been five weeks at the school, we had of course seen the blue-eyed, golden-haired little creature before, but it was only now that she attracted our special interest. On many a young face beside hers there were signs of a struggle between hope and doubt, but on no other face was it so plainly or painfully visible as upon hers; no other face struck us as so expressive. While yet some half-dozen children from her, as we passed along the row in which she stood, we caught her bright blue eyes fixed intently upon us, and saw that she was flushed and panting with excitement. As we came nearer to her, her excitement increased until, by the time we reached her side, her cheeks were all aflame. Her name was *not* on the list, and the instant we had passed her, her face grew suddenly pale, her head drooped, and though she bit her lips and struggled to "be hard," two great tears welled into her eyes. But, as we were pleased to notice, she did not mutter or grumble, or assume an injured or defiant air, as was the wont of the disappointed. Favouritism in dealing with children is, we know, a bad thing; but we are afraid that some little degree of it is natural. We knew that we were "favouring" Fairy Armstrong, and that it was wrong to do so, but we felt that we *must* do it.

When we had finished we went back to the governess, and, indicating Fairy Armstrong by a motion of the head, asked—

"Who is that little girl?"

"Her name is Annie Armstrong," answered the governess, "though I generally hear the other children calling her 'Fairy.'"

"Well, she is a fairy-like little creature," we said, glancing towards her as we spoke.

"Yes, she certainly is a pretty child," agreed the governess, with a smile; "still, I should hardly think the name had been bestowed upon her on that ground alone. Here, Smith," she went on, beckoning to one of the scholars. "Why do you other children call Armstrong 'Fairy?'"

"Which I don't call her it more'n others," answered the girl, who evidently had an idea that she had been called up to be reprimanded.

"I don't suppose you do," said the governess; "but why do you call her so at all?"

"Well, 'cos she's one on 'em, I spose," was the to us unintelligible reply.

"I don't know what you mean. One what?" urged the governess.

"One fairy, or whatever you calls 'em, in the pantermine, you know, all in white, and as if they wos in the air like. My brother Bill took me last year, and I seed her myself."

"Oh, and that is why you call her Fairy?"

"Yes, and some calls her 'Paper Wings,' and some 'Spangles.' She gets called all sorts of names, but not spiteful uns, like some is called; none on us means no harm to her; we like her, and she don't mind."

"Poor little thing!" we said, referring to Fairy, when the other girl had gone back to her class, "she seems sadly cut up at not getting a ticket; we can't help feeling sorry for her, and if it was a matter of payment we would willingly pay for her."

We were feeling our way, but the governess making no response, we were constrained to speak plainly.

"Come," we said, "let us intercede for her; if it is not altogether against law and precedent, you might give her a ticket."

"I have to be very careful in such matters," she answered; "still, the point is discretionary, and as she has been a very good little girl while she has been here, I'll see what I can do. Armstrong, come here," and when Fairy was nearer she asked, "How long have you come to Sunday-school?"

"This makes the sixth Sunday, please," she answered.

"And you came on purpose to get a ticket for the treat? At any rate, that was what you thought most about, wasn't it, now?" she went on, softening her question a little on seeing that the child remained silent.

This time she paused firmly for a reply, and at length Fairy stammered out—

"Yes, governess."

"And now that you haven't got a ticket you won't come to school any more, eh?"

"Yes, I will, governess," she answered; "I like school." And now she spoke steadily enough, and, raising her head, looked the governess in the face. "I will, indeed," she added earnestly, after a moment's pause, seeing that the other remained silent.

"I believe you will," said the governess, laying her hand kindly upon the child's head; "you are a good girl, Annie. Always tell the truth as you have done to-day. I would have known that it was the thought of getting a ticket that had brought you here, even if you had said it was not. If you had denied it I would have thought you a story-telling girl, now I know you are a truthful one—and you shall have a ticket."

The revulsion of feeling which this announcement produced was almost too much for Fairy; it put her beyond speaking her thanks, but the fervent expression of delight and gratitude that overspread her countenance was a thing to remember—and treasure.

On the day of the treat we kept an especial look out for Fairy. She was one of the first to arrive at the school, and came radiant in smiles—and red ribbons. Her dress was clean and comfortable, but it could certainly not have been described as neat. Most people, even without knowing that she had been upon the stage, would have been disposed to pronounce it stagey. Her well-worn frock of dead white muslin was low-necked and short-skirted, her stockings too were white, and she wore a pair of shiny "sandal" shoes; all the rest of her seemed red. There were red bows at her shoes, a red bow at her breast, her waist was encircled, and her hat heavily trimmed, with red ribbon; she had a little red worsted shawl over her left arm, and the paper flag that she carried—it was a custom with the children to provide themselves with small paper flags on these occasions—was also red.

"Here you are then, Annie," we said, as she took her place in the class; "why you are a regular little Red Riding Hood."

She looked puzzled for a moment, and then,

her face brightening, she answered with a volubility arising out of her state of excitement—

"Oh, I know, sir! the little girl in the story; dad's told me about it; he knows lots of stories. We had the ribbon by us," she went on, glancing down at her shoe bows, "and dad said I should wear it; he likes me to look nice."

Her faith in "dad's" taste and in "dad" generally was evidently unbounded, and as it was not for us to say anything reflecting upon the correctness of his taste, we passed on to other children, leaving Fairy proud and happy in her too-liberal adornment of red.

The treat ground this year was a lovely common some sixteen miles south-west of London; and here Fairy enjoyed herself with a thoroughness and *abandon* that was specially noticeable even in a scene in which hearty enjoyment was the prevailing feature. She raced on the grass, flitted about flower gathering among the underwood, led mimic battles in which the combatants lightly pelted each other with fir cones, and, conspicuous by her red ribbons, skipped and danced about in all directions in wild exuberance of spirits—

"Turning to mirth all things of earth
As only childhood can."

She was nine years old, the governess informed us, in reply to a question, and she was little for her age; but when tea time came she was quite motherly in helping to look after the younger children, and was most unselfish in giving way to others.

In preparing for the return journey she showed the same spirit, "making room" for others time after time, until in the end she found herself squeezed into a corner of the van in most uncomfortable fashion. Seeing this, we lifted her out of that vehicle and took her beside ourselves on the driver's seat of another van. She was quite tired out, and we were scarcely under weigh on the homeward ride when, nestling close to our side, she fell fast asleep. The season was far enough advanced for the evenings to be slightly chilly; and, seeing that she had fallen asleep, the driver good naturedly brought a rug out of his box and put it over her. We knew this driver as a "hand" of the gentleman who had lent the van, knew that he was a decent labouring man, living in the neighbourhood, and, noticing the fatherly tenderness with which he "tucked" the wrapper round Fairy, we asked him—

"Do you know her?"

"Well, like most others living in our neighbourhood, I know her in a general way."

"What are her people?" was our next question.

"Well, there's only two on 'em as I know of," he answered, "her father as she lives with, and her grandmother—Mother Dreadful as they call her—as I expect would like Fairy to live with her, though it would be a bad job for her if she did."

"Is the old woman a bad un, then?"

"And no mistake!" answered the driver, giving his whip a flick by way of emphasis; "she ain't called Mother Dreadful for nothink.

I should say she was a bad un! If there's ever a worse I should just like to see 'em, or rather I shouldn't like to see 'em. She must have missed her turn when hearts was a-given out. I never raised a finger agen a woman in my life, and I wouldn't, and in a general way I would be for knocking down any one as I saw doing it; but for all that I think a good dose of this"—shaking his whip—"is what would suit Mother Dreadful's complaint, and when I think of her I almost feel as if I could give it her."



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"What is she?" we asked.

"She calls herself a minder," was the answer.

"A minder!" we echoed. "What's that?"

"Well, a real minder," he replied, "is a woman as takes charge of children for the day while their mothers are out at work; but the minding is only a blind with Dreadful, her place is a regular young beggars' opera."

Again we were rather at a loss as to our companion's exact meaning.

"A beggars' opera?" we said.

"Yes; trains young beggars," exclaimed

the driver; "mostly singing ones, though she has all sorts. Bless you, sir, people would hardly believe there could be such things if they didn't see 'em with their own eyes as I've done. Why, I've seen her with a dozen children round her, teaching 'em to sing their beggin' songs, just as you might be teaching a class in school their ymns. *That* wouldn't matter so much; it's the way as she knocks the poor little creatures about, and starves 'em, that's the black thing agen her."

"But as we understood you just now, this little girl does not live with her," we said.

"No; but she'd like her to," he responded.

"She thinks the father don't make enough out of her, and she has tried it on to get her away from him, but though he's a bit soft on most things, he held fast there. There's no mistake about him loving his daughter."

"What is the father?" we asked.

"Well, that's just as you like to name him," replied our companion. "You could call him a musician, or a teacher of music, or a busker, which is what he really is. He's got a card with 'Music Lessons Given' stuck in his window, though I never heard of any one going to him for lessons—not but what I dare say he could give 'em, for he can play on a'most anything. He plays about the piers and in steamboat bands in summer, and in winter at the sing-songs and hops about our neighbourhood—the public-house concerts and balls, you know."

"And does he take this little girl with him to such places?" we asked.

"Not to the hops or sing-songs, he don't," answered our companion; "and he won't neither, though he's had offers to do it as would have tempted many a man. Fairy can sing and dance, and then she could be put as from 'The Theatre Royal;' and I know the landlord of the 'Help-me-through-the-World' offered him fifteen shillings a week to let her appear at his Saturday and Monday concerts, but the ole man wouldn't. And that's what crabs Mother Dreadful so much. I've seen her almost a crying with vexation, saying as how the child was a ready-made fortune to anybody as had sense."

When the vans reached the school there was a crowd of the parents waiting about, and Fairy, after one rapid glance at them, joyously exclaimed—

"There's dad! There's dad!"

Dad kissed his hand to her, and began to work his way forward; a tall, thin, round-shouldered man, with remarkably long arms, and a shambling gait; middle-aged, with iron grey hair, worn long and in limp ringlets. He had a shrinking, nervous expression in his eye, and a naturally cadaverous face made strikingly so by a bluish-black tinge on the cheeks arising from constant shaving. The children in the van had to get out at the back, so that he alone among the parents stood at the driver's end, and we had a good look at him, though a brief one, for Fairy, bidding us a hasty good night, called out, "Catch, dad!" and then sprang fearlessly into his arms.

He kissed her as he caught her, and putting her gently on her feet, wrapped round her a shawl that he had brought. Taking her

hand, they started homewards, Fairy skipping at a pace that put him to the trot to keep up with her.

On the Sunday following the treat there was, as usual, a large falling off in the attendance at the school; but Fairy, as we were glad to see, was not among the absentees. On that and the two following Sundays she was duly in attendance; on the fourth Sunday, however, we missed her, and again on the fifth, and we were reluctantly coming to class her with the backsliders, when we received a letter of explanation from her father, dated from Margate, and stating that it was his practice to take Annie to the sea-side for a few weeks every year; that this year he had gone away in a hurry, and his child had been so put out at not having been able to tell her Sunday-school teachers that she was going, that at last yielding to her importunities he had written to explain, though he "dare sayed" we cared very little about it.

Happening to meet our van-driving friend a day or two later, we mentioned the receipt of this letter to him, and speaking of Armstrong, observed "he appears to be a person of some education, and speaks of taking the child to the sea-side every year. Has he any means?" we asked.

"Oh, no!" exclaimed the man. "It's the other way about, as you may say. Instead of him having means to take her to the sea-side, it's taking her to the sea-side as gets him the means. His holidays pays its own expenses and something to the good. They go busking about to hotels and on the sands, him playing and her singing and going round collecting; and that's a bit of a draw, mind you, as there's plenty 'll give to a pretty little girl as wouldn't give to a rusty-looking old feller like 'im. Their sea-side trip and the pantermime season are their best times."

"But we thought you said he didn't take her about with him," we observed.

"Not to public-houses, he don't," was the answer; "but he does out of doors sometimes, and I think she likes it; at any rate she don't dislike, or she wouldn't be at it; I know he'd rather starve than force her to a thing like that."

Now, we had not so hard an opinion of the wandering-musician class as we knew many good people had—principally, we think, because we had a considerable knowledge of the class. Still, we knew very well that, making all due allowances, it was not a profession in which any one taking a friendly interest would like to see a child brought up—especially a girl. And as we had come to

take a very friendly interest in Fairy Armstrong, we decided, even at the risk of being considered meddling, to attempt to bring about her withdrawal from such a profession. With this purpose in view, we waited upon her father a few days after his return, some three weeks later than the date of his letter. He occupied a couple of rooms in a quiet by-street mostly inhabited by respectable labourers and their families, and we easily picked out his apartment by means of the card announcing "Music Lessons," of which the van-driver had made mention. We had selected a wet morning as being a likely time to find him in, and we were doubly fortunate on this point, as we found not only that he was at home, but that Fairy, whose presence would have been a check upon a conversation respecting herself, was out, having gone to a neighbour's house.

Armstrong himself opened the door, and greeted us with a coldly uttered, "What may be your pleasure, sir?" But on our mentioning our name, and that we had come to speak to him about his daughter, his face instantly brightened, and, asking us to come in, he led the way to his living-room. It was a clean, cozy little room, but—rare fault in our district—looked crowdedly furnished; an appearance, however, that was due not to any unusual quantity of ordinary household furniture, but to the presence in the room of a large, old-fashioned piano. Over the piano hung a couple of violins, a cornet-a-piston, and three flutes; coloured frontispieces from popular pieces of music were pasted about the walls by way of pictures, and a pile of sheet music had to be placed on the floor to free a chair for our use. Apart from the musical signs and tokens, the outfitting of the room was commonplace enough, with the exception perhaps of a large-sized, finely-executed, and nicely-coloured photographic portrait of Fairy in stage costume, which, in a heavy, gilt frame, occupied the place of honour over the mantelpiece.

"I hope you have not come to complain of Annie," said Armstrong, rather nervously, when he had taken a seat.

"Oh, no, anything but that," we answered. "We are all very fond of her at school, and feel an interest in her welfare, and—in fact, that is what we have come to speak about."

The subject we had come to broach was a delicate one, and now that we were face to face with the father we were at a loss as to how we should come to it, our consciousness of good-will in the matter notwithstanding.

"The fact is, Mr. Armstrong," we said,

"we take so warm an interest in your little daughter that, coupled with what we have heard of your affection for her, it has emboldened us to come here, and in all kindness put it to you as a matter for consideration whether the career to which she is now growing up is well calculated to promote her welfare."

His face flushed as we finished speaking, and for some seconds he sat in silence, nervously twitching his fingers, then, in a voice made husky by the endeavour to keep it steady under strong emotion he answered—

"You need not put *that* to me, sir, as a matter for consideration; I have considered it times out of number—considered it till both heart and brain have ached—considered it tearfully and prayerfully, and I hope, though it would tear my heart-strings to part with her, unselfishly."

"And what conclusion have you arrived at?" we asked, looking at him in surprise.

"Well, you see, she is still as she is and what she is," was his enigmatical answer.

"From the tone in which you speak, we can scarcely believe that you think that the best career for her," we said.

"Well, I hardly know," he answered slowly; "the best is a rather wide term; there's many things must go to the making up of any best, and it may have many meanings. I do think that as she is constituted, and as things have come to be between her and me, it is the *happiest* career she could have for the present, at any rate. In any other she would have to be separated from me, and that, though I say it, would break *her* heart—would make her miserable anywhere. There is a wandering strain in both of us. I have known better days, as the phrase runs, but always more or less wandering ones. My father was the manager of a provincial theatrical company, with which he 'worked' an extensive circuit. Sometimes he kept his brougham; at others, had to keep us without Sunday's dinner to pay the Saturday-night salaries of his company. On an average, however, he was pretty well to do, and he always managed to keep up an appearance, and through all to give me a good education. When I grew up I was furbisher of plays to the company. In my day I have written what by courtesy were called original dramas, I have acted, I have arranged music for, and been 'musical director of a large theatre;' and if I had only had what some call 'push' and others 'cheek' in my composition, I might have got on in the world. As it was I came down in the world. From being musical director of a large theatre, I came down to being second fiddle in a small

one, and so on down to what I am now—a busker. It was when I was about midway in my downward career that I met with my wife, who was in the ballet at a minor suburban theatre, where I was in the orchestra. As you may have heard, she was the daughter of the woman they call Mother Dreadful hereabout; but she had none of her mother's evil disposition in her. She was a simple, kind-hearted creature, and things might have gone differently with Annie if she had lived. But she died when our child was only a year old, and I was as both father and mother to Annie till she was old enough to understand, and then we grew to be companions. Believe me, sir, to separate would be to injure us—her as well as me. I once read some lines that I always remember as being—to my thinking—specially applicable to the relations between my daughter and me, or the notion of making us other than we are. They run—

'For the slender beech and the sapling oak
That grow by the shadowy rill,
You may cut down both at a single stroke,
You may cut down which you will;

But this you must know that, as long as they grow,
Whatever change may be,
You never can teach either oak or beech
To be aught but a greenwood tree.'

To find in the inhabitant of some very humble homes the follower of some very poorly paid employment, a thoughtful, well-educated person who had "known better days," was a common enough experience with us; still we felt surprised at finding what manner of man Fairy Armstrong's father was, and had been, and we listened to him with a sensation of wonder as well as of interest. For the moment we scarcely knew how to reply, and so we merely observed—

"But your daughter is very young."

"She is, sir," he assented; "but, whether for good or ill, I believe you'll find that she is a twig that has received its bent. There is one thing, I think, I am entitled to say," he went on, opening the door of the inner room and beckoning us forward as he spoke, "and that is, that she is neither uncomfortable nor neglected. This is her nest."

Following the sweep of his hand, we glanced around the little inner room which was, upon the whole, bright, cheery, and cozy—such a room as but few children indeed of the poorer working classes could have had to themselves. The little bed had a snow-white coverlet and hangings, and scattered about were pieces of cheap childish finery, picture books, and even toys; while from the open window came a welcome perfume from a number of carefully tended pot-

flowers standing on the window-sill, and enclosed by a neatly painted lath railing.

"That is her own room," Armstrong went on when we had finished our survey; "as yet she has never known what it is to want a meal, and very rarely known what it is to hear a cross word from me; and so far as I can I look to her moral and religious training, and shield her from all evil influences."

"Well, we were pleased to see that the child was so well cared for," we said, "and we did not doubt his affection for her, but—but—" and here we broke down.

"Don't think I would stand in the way of my child, sir," he said earnestly. "I am only anxious for her happiness—and I'll leave it to her. I give you my word that she shall have no hint from me of the object of your call here, and I will trust to your honour as a gentleman not to use any undue persuasion with her, and with that understood, you can try her on the subject the first time you see her. If you find her willing to leave her present mode of life, if you find her even not *unwilling*, I will do anything I can to help you."

This arrangement was the only one to which we could come in the end. Such as it was we proceeded to carry it out at the earliest opportunity: but the alarmed manner and scared look exhibited by Fairy on our merely hinting at the possibility of her being separated from her father, were sufficient to cause us to desist in our attempt.

"I knew it would be so," said the father, speaking to us a day or two later on meeting us in the street. "You see it *would* make her as well as me unhappy to part us. Not, mark you, sir, that I say she wouldn't give up her present way of life, if that was all; it's our companionship that is the pull. When I am gone the case will be different; and I will go all the happier now, for knowing that there is at least one person in the world who takes an interest in her. She'll still be young enough to train for something else; and I'm not long for this world."

He spoke with a coolness that was astonishing, considering the nature of his remarks; but making no comment upon that point, we merely observed—

"How long we may be for this world is a thing that none of us can know."

"I mean nothing irreverent, sir," he answered; "that of course is only my impression, but I have grounds for it. I have felt for years past that whatever of stamina I may have had has been diminishing. My chest has failed me so that for a

year past I have had to give up wind instruments altogether, and now I habitually feel sick and shaky as I go about in the daytime, and exhausted when I get home at night. I am pretty near worn out, and as I am not in a position to lie by or nurse myself, I must die in harness."

We scarcely knew what to answer to this, and while we were hesitating he resumed—

"If my fear, or feelings, or whatever it is, *should* prove true, would you still be willing to befriend my child?"

"More willing then than even we are now," we replied.

"God bless you!" he exclaimed fervently, by way of answer; and as he spoke he grasped our hand, and then hastily walked away, though not before we had caught a glimpse of the tears that he sought to hide.

Looking at his bowed and wasted figure as he passed down the street, we could not help acknowledging to ourself that there was in all likelihood a good deal of truth in what he had said about his being a worn-out man. But as this thought passed through our mind little did we think that for him the end was so near as in the event it proved to be. Three months later he was dead. The "outing" season was drawing to a close, and he had been working very hard as a member of bands accompanying or hanging-on to excursion parties. On one of these excursions he had got wet, and going about in his damp clothes for many hours afterward had caught a severe cold. He had been strongly advised to nurse it, but saying that he *must* make a little money for "wintering" on, he persevered in going out day after day, and the result was fatal in the end. One night in the midst of a paroxysm of coughing, he fell from his chair, and the people in the lower part of the house rushing up, on hearing Fairy's screams, found him insensible and blood gushing from the mouth. He had ruptured important blood vessels; and the next day Fairy was an orphan.

We heard of the death within a few hours of its taking place, and immediately hastened to the house, where the first discovery we made was that Mother Dreadful had already "come down like a wolf on the fold." We need scarcely say that we were deeply chagrined; but, feeling that we *must* accept the situation, we did so with the best grace we could muster.

"Where is the child?" we asked civilly.

"In her own room, pore little dear, a sobbin' her 'art out a'most," she drawled out in a whining tone that was palpably "put on."

"It's so sudden, yer see, but I dessay she'll be better presently; I've been a cheerin' of her up all I can."

"Don't you think it would be well for us to take her away for a while," we said; "we know a lady that would take charge of her till something could be arranged for her."

"Well, thanking you kindly, sir, I think I'd rayther take care of her myself," she answered, a covert sneer underlying her lachrymose tone. "I think her own grandmother is the fittest person to have charge of her."

We saw that any attempt at persuasion would be useless, and so assuming a sterner tone, we said—

"Now, look here, Mrs. —, this is neither a time nor place for wrangling, but we must be plain. We don't think you *are* the fittest person to have charge of this child; but, remember this, if you do persist in keeping her with you, you shall be well watched."

"I can stand being watched," she replied, now sneering undisguisedly; "I know what my rights are, and what yours arn't, and I don't care that for you or any of yer sort," snapping her fingers contemptuously.

We did see that she was watched in respect to her conduct towards Fairy, but we could hear of no attempt on her part to deal harshly with her. Finding, however, that at the end of three weeks she did not return to Sunday-school, we determined upon bearding the lion in her den, and accordingly proceeded to Mother Dreadful's residence.

"And what might you want?" was the greeting with which she met us on the doorstep.

"We wanted to know why Annie Armstrong did not attend Sunday-school now."

"Just because I ain't goin' to let her attend a school where her mind 'll be poisoned agen me—that's why," she retorted defiantly.

"That's nonsense," we said impatiently.

"It's what I'm going to stick to, any way," she answered, in the same tone. "As I told you before, I knows my rights, and I intend to stand by 'em. I wouldn't spoil her, like her fool of a father, but I'm doing what's right by her; you can speak to her, if you like."

"By herself?" we questioned.

"Oh yes," she answered; "I'll take a turn up the street while you see her; I know you can't stand to take her away."

Accepting this offer, we entered the house, where we found Fairy looking very thin and grief-stricken, and still mourning, with heart-breaking intensity, for her lost "dad." But while the sorrowful expression of her young face was pitiful to see, she was comfortably

clad in mourning, and had no complaint to make of hard living or ill-usage, but spoke of "grandmother" being very good to her.

We could point to nothing substantial to justify suspicion, and our work at this time taking us into another part of our district, and giving us many other people and things to think about, Fairy Armstrong was comparatively forgotten.

But, as events proved, she was destined to be but too soon brought under our notice again. Some three months after our last-mentioned interview with her, on a sloppy, foggy, miserable Saturday night in December, we were surprised by a visit from our van-driver friend. He looked strongly excited and mysterious withal, and his greeting was in keeping with the expression of his face.

"Look here, sir," he broke out, "come with me, and ask no questions; the things as I'll take you to see will explain itself."

"Can't you tell us what it is?" we asked.

"Well, of course I *could*," he answered, "but I'd rather not. An hour's telling wouldn't bring it home to you half as strong as a minute's seeing. You may take my word for it, sir, that when you *have* seen it, you'll say that seeing it first without hearing about it was out-and-out the best way."

We could see that he had set his heart on having his own way in the matter; and so, waiving the point, we set out with him. He kept a little ahead of us, with a view, as we took it, of avoiding questions on our part; and, after about ten minutes' walk, stopped in front of a large corner public-house known as the "Help-me-through-the-World."

"Are we going in here?" we asked.

"Yes, up into the sing-song room," he answered, and entering the house as he spoke, left nothing for us but to follow.

A description of a London sing-song would not be without a certain grim interest, but there is neither space nor necessity to give the description here. Suffice it to say that the large room was crowded with a rough, noisy, more or less drunken audience, and reeked with the fumes of rankly-strong tobacco and cheap cigars. We entered at a favourable moment; for the audience being engaged in *roaring* a chorus, we were able to take a seat unobserved.

It was a last verse they were chorusing, and the retiring singer was succeeded by a father bringing on two tiny children, whom he put through a number of violent contortions. Then ensued a pause and buzz of expectation, until the chairman rose and announced that Fairy Armstrong, of the Theatre

Royal, would now make her first appearance as a juvenile character singer and dancer.

This announcement was received with enthusiastic approbation, which found vent in the hammering of pewter pots upon tables. Under cover of this our companion whispered—

"There, now, the murder's out! That's Mother Dreadful's doings. It was to bring her to this that she pretended to be so kind to her. Look here, sir, I'd sooner see a little girl of mine laid in her grave than brought on to that stage. I say nothing agen the poor things as get their liven' in such places, God help 'em, they've most likely been drove to it, or never known anything better; but you see for yourself what sort come here."

"But what do you want us to do?" we whispered.

"Do!" he exclaimed, in the same low but energetic tone. "Why, if you really care for her, as I think you do, save her from this. Though her poor old father let her go with other children on the theatre stage, he'd have rather seen her dead at his feet than brought here to perform—he knew what it meant."

At this point the hammering and shouting suddenly ceased, and Fairy, clad in ballet costume, skipped lightly on to the stage, and gracefully acknowledged the round of applause with which she was received. Then she raised her head, gave a quick glance round the room and at the upturned faces, and instantly—as, watching her intently, we could see—turned pale and faltered.

Our companion also noticed this, for, clutching our arm, he whispered—

"There, do you see that? the light has broke in on her; you may depend she didn't know the sort of place she was being brought to."

Before we could make any reply all was uproar and confusion, for Fairy, after standing stock still for a minute, gave a hysterical scream, and, covering her face with her hands, rushed from the stage. Amid all the noise in front of the stage, we could hear angry voices behind it; and without a moment's further hesitation we pushed our way up, and boldly opening a side door, found ourselves in the little apartment which served the performers as waiting-room. Fairy was in the centre of an excited group, consisting of performers, waiters, the landlord, and Mother Dreadful. The last-named personage was grasping Fairy tightly by the shoulder, and trying to induce her to sip at some brandy which she held in a glass. Fairy's face being towards the door, she was the first to recognise us, and shaking herself free from

her grandmother's grasp, she sprang to our side, and seizing our hand, exclaimed—

"Oh, teacher, take me away; take me away from here, please." For, though we were not her teacher, she had always addressed us by that title since the day on which we had got her the "treat" ticket.

Before we could make any answer beyond what was conveyed by a pressure of the hand, the grandmother, her face all aflame with passion, broke out,—

"So it's you as has put her up to this, is it? It's a plant, eh!"

"Look here, Mrs. —," we broke in, "if we had known of this sooner, we would have interfered to prevent the child's being here at all, as now we shall interfere to prevent her being brought here again."

"And how *will* you prevent it?" she asked, with a sneer.

"Not by any appeal to you, certainly," was our answer, "but we warn the landlord that if he persists in being a party to the dragging this child here against her will, we will do all that we can to get his license taken from him."

The landlord protested that he would have nothing further to do with the affair; that he had been misled by Mother Dreadful, and "done out" of three pounds, which he had let her have in advance.

Hearing the landlord speak in this way, Mother Dreadful, shrugging her shoulders, and glancing significantly at us, observed,—

"Ah, well, if she won't work at this sort of thing, she must at something else. I can't keep her in idleness."

"You needn't keep her at all," we said; "we are willing to take her off your hands."

"But I'm not quite willing to let you."

"Then you had better take care how you treat her," we said.

"That is just what I will do," she answered.

"I know my book."

As there was nothing more to be done under the circumstances, we left the house, but with a mind full of forebodings for poor Fairy.

On the life of the child for a space of three months following, we will not dwell. It would profit nothing to speak of her termagant grandmother's cunning cruelty to her, or our feelings at finding ourselves impotent to prevent it. She "knew her book," as she phrased it. She did not thrash Fairy, or starve her, nor did she make her do anything that was not done by scores of other children in the neighbourhood; and yet it is not too much to say that she was killing her by inches. In the cold, wet winter weather, poor little Fairy, her spirit utterly broken, was sent out

step-cleaning, the result being that she caught severe colds, that her hands were chapped, her feet chilblained, and herself altogether miserable—and we could do very little to alleviate her sufferings, for the law, as she managed to keep within the letter of it, was upon the side of Mother Dreadful.

Such was the position of affairs when one dark and bitterly cold night in March, returning from the opposite side of the river in a small boat, we landed at the waterman's stairs of our district.

"A black night," we observed, in passing, to the man in charge of the stairs.

"It is," he replied; "I wish it wasn't, for I'm trying to keep a bright look-out."

"Expecting anything particular up the river, then?" we questioned.

"No; it's on shore here I want to keep my eye," he answered. "There's some poor girl dogging about here in sad trouble; and, young as she is, I do believe she means to make a plunge of it. I've heard her sobbing and moaning; but when I try to go near her she scuds away and hides, and I don't like to go far in case she should give me the slip and get down the steps. Whist!" he went on, suddenly dropping his voice, and laying his hand upon our shoulder, "there she comes, you'll see her in half a minute; she'll come into the light of that lamp."

We turned our gaze towards the spot he indicated, and presently made out coming slowly forward, and peering anxiously about her—our Fairy Armstrong.

In our surprise we blurted out her name, whereupon the man at our side, slapping his thigh, exclaimed,—

"Bless me, so it is! To think as I shouldn't a known her. Here I deessay I've been putting myself in a sweat for nothink; it's most likely as she's just been a-looking out for you. Were you expecting of her?"

"No," we replied; "but if she had been inquiring for us she would be told we were over the water. Without waiting to say more we hastened up the stairs, and the instant we came into the light Fairy rushed up to us, and, throwing herself sobbing into our arms, exclaimed,—

"O teacher, teacher! take me with you; I daren't go back to grandmother again!"

Then, as well as her grief would let her, she told her story. Her hands were so sore that she could not clean steps, and she had gone home on the previous day without having earned anything. But the grandmother had sent her out again this morning, telling her that, if she returned again without

money, she would "lick her within an inch of her life." Fairy had attempted to clean one set of steps, but the pain of her hands was so great that she had been compelled to desist, and, being again without money, feared to venture home, believing that her grandmother would do as she said.

As in heart-broken accents she poured out her tale, we resolved that we would defy Mother Dreadful, and chance her carrying out her oft-repeated threat of "lawing" us. Having found her a comfortable shelter for the night, on the following day we arranged with a benevolent lady that Fairy should be taken into her house; should be nursed there till she was strong again, and then brought in to be an assistant-nursemaid — always supposing that we succeeded in keeping Mother Dreadful at bay, as, happily, we were able to do, for though she came storming to the house and renewed her threats of "lawing," she took no action in the matter, probably seeing that she had as much to fear as we had from any appeal to law.

But alas for poor Fairy! Though she was lovingly nursed, she was destined never to be "strong again." The hardship she had gone through had been too much for her delicate constitution. The doctor called in to attend her could not say that she was suffering from any specific complaint. She simply faded away. She, as well as those around her, knew for weeks before she died

that she *was* dying. And in a simple child-like, but still confident and happy way, she was prepared to go. She spoke calmly, and with all the unquestioning faith of a child, of meeting her "dear Saviour," of being with the angels, and seeing "dad" again. She had a natural love of music, and her greatest delight towards the last was when the lady of the house would play over the air, while she (Fairy) murmured a verse or two of a favourite hymn of our Sunday-school scholars:—

"I know I'm weak and sinful,
But Jesus' will forgive;
For many little children
Have gone to heaven to live.
Dear Saviour, when I languish,
And lay me down to die,
Oh! send a shining angel
To bear me to the sky.

Oh, there I'll be an angel,
And with the angels stand,
A crown upon my forehead,
A harp within my hand;
And there before my Saviour,
So glorious and so bright,
I'll wake the heavenly music,
And praise Him day and night."

When the end came it was peace. Painlessly, and with a smile on her lips she passed away. By the kindness of friends who had become interested in her, she was laid in the same grave as her father; so that of the poor broken-down busker and his child it might, with very little stretch of poetical license, be said that they "were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided."

VOICES.

I. THE VOICE OF THE DISCIPLE.

ONE fate with Thee, my Master, I will share;
Shame were it to rejoice where Thou didst weep;
Where Thou didst wake, my Lord, I would not sleep,
Or faint where Thou didst bear.

Far off I follow Thee in spite of strife,
Returning to Thee, though awhile I stray,
In spite of thorns and briars in the way,
Still on the path to Life.

And not alone, because Thy presence fills
My midnight darkness and my midday light;
And so, though friend-bereft, I am not quite
Guideless upon the hills.

II. THE VOICE OF THE BELOVED.

My child, thou doest well to trust my love—
Can any save thee if I let thee die?
Has the world proved to thee more kind than I,
That thou shouldst doubt and rove?

The world gives tinsel, and I give thee gold;
I cast not off my friend for being poor;
Come, sad and desolate, unto my door,
Or totter even when old.

Who suffer here, hereafter reign with me,
If only they trail not their spirit-wings,
Or tire them, by pursuing earthly things,
For my eternity.

ALICE HORTON.

IN REFORMATION TIMES:

Some Glimpses of Life at a Great Era.

PART I.—A SCOTCH SCHOLAR.

CHAPTER IV.—AT MONTPELLIER, IN AN OLD FRIEND'S LODGINGS.



HE house for which Dr. Thomas was bound was that of the friend, Mistress Dalrymple, with whom Dundas and the young laird of Brieche-side had first lodged when they came to

Montpellier. She was a Lithgow woman by extraction, and so was like a breath of home—long forsaken but well remembered to Dr. Thomas. On her part, her heart still turned back fondly from the land of a quarter of a century's adoption to what she called her "ain countrie"—her "cawf countrie," and she warmed towards Dr. Thomas in the same connection. Besides, had he not stood her friend in all her former difficulties with the young laird, than whom Dr. Thomas was far more staid and discreet?

Mistress Dalrymple's hospitality was her strong point, and she liked a gossip about old places and friends, and was always glad to see Dr. Thomas. And so was young Jenny Dalrymple, who was her mother over again—only not yet crushed by an overwhelming burden, while it remained to be seen whether Jenny, drawing strength from fresh resources, would escape the load which had broken her mother's back and taken the content and hope out of her nature. Jenny was soft and supple, accustomed to endure and to rise against a great deal of dolefulness and murmuring. And hers was a fair spring face

and figure, conspicuously fair and sunshiny, yet subdued and delicate among the warm-tinted Languedoc girls, whether brought up in conventual stillness or in their jealously-guarded homes. Jenny's Scotch primrose charms, displayed not altogether to disadvantage beside the vivid maiden blossoms of southern France, had their admirers, and, to poor Mistress Dalrymple's consternation, were even trolled in students' songs.

Dr. Thomas Dundas did not know that he admired Jenny. Such gallant admiration was hardly in the rugged, devoted scholar's way, any more than an analytical contemplation of nature. But he liked Jenny with a brotherly partiality, part patronising, part condescending; and Jenny, with a true instinct, turned to him from her light-headed admirers as to a tower of strength. She was eager to hear him talk of his Scotch home, his mother, his wise sister Giles, and was sensitively curious as to his thoughts of her and her influence over these thoughts.

Even the Dalrymples' house—that of a widow with a straitened income,—showed that it was in the country which led the renaissance in letters, in art, and in science; causing the thought of France to be cherished with almost passionate tenderness by curt and otherwise dispassionate men, to whom letters, science, and art were not lords and kings, but well-beloved mistresses. Mistress Dalrymple's family-room had woollen hangings in place of bare walls, and a cover on the boards of the small table. There was also a mirror, set in a steel frame, which hung opposite the window, and which Mistress Dalrymple, though she failed to remove it, continually dreaded as an encouragement to vanity. A silken coverlet was spread on the cumbrous bed; and, as Jenny happened to have a musical voice, the service of which she had contributed to the choir of a neighbouring convent, there was a claverin or small harp, which a noble patroness of the convent had presented to Jenny, causing her to be instructed in the use of the instrument as a fitting reward for the devout exercise of a natural gift.

Mistress Dalrymple and Jenny wore kirtles of no costlier material than black serge and white muslin, laced with blue; but the older woman's pinched face, with the mouth drooping and the eyes running over with lamenta-

tion, was shaded with a fine cambric coif, while falling back from Jenny's round throat and resting on her slim and sloping shoulders, was a cambric collar equally fine. Even Dr. Thomas—no butterfly gallant, wore a fair, clear collar over the neck of the vest, which was seen under his frayed and stained mantle; so that it was no wonder Jenny's collar was fastened by a string of Scotch pearls, which her mother had saved out of the wreck of her fortunes, and carried with her from Scotland.

Jenny could read and write almost as well as Giles Dundas, for she had received a little convent favour and instruction; but she did not, like Giles Dundas away in the homely Port-House of Lithgow, read every morsel of print—"Complaint of Scotland," poem of Dunbar, or Douglas, or chapman's ballad—which came in her way. Jenny practised her reading in her "Book of Hours," "Legends of the Saints," and scraps of old provincial hymns and romances. It somehow soothed and gratified Dr. Thomas's not very musical ear to listen to her playing and singing, his fingers beating time on the chair's back, and his face turned towards her as she sat at the claverin, though he looked far beyond her out of the casement, at the crimson sunset fast purpling into dusk, or the lustrous moon rising above the houses and gardens, the colleges and ruins of Montpellier.

"Come in, and welcome, Dr. Tammas," Mistress Dalrymple hailed her visitor on the present occasion, glad to get a new recipient for the outpouring of her woes. "Let me tell you how I have been fleeced by a Montpellier merchant, and put upon by my last lodger. Eh! Dr. Tammas, your mither has an easy down-sitting ower yonder in the kindly Louduns, whence she has never been moved, maid or wife."

"Hooly, madam," Dr. Thomas interrupted her good-naturedly, and falling back into his native tongue; "my mother is a widow woman, like yourself; and is it not some deprivation that she has not set een on her only son's face, even granting it a gruesome ane, these ten long years?"

"She kens your face is biding her, and she dwells between times among her ain folk," maintained Mistress Dalrymple. "Can you tell me," she continued less peevishly, "gin the merle still sings as sweetly in the palace park at the gloamin', and gin the Lithgow wells are as caller as they were wont to be on the simmer mornings lang syne?"

"My mither aye threeps," put in Jenny in better Scotch than the Languedoc dialect, which she spoke to the mass of her neigh-

bours, was good French, "that the nightingale is nocht to the merle or the laverock, and that our fountains are but drumly to the Lithgow wells."

"I kenna." The arbiter thus declined to settle a question which his patriotism might hinder him from settling correctly. "But there are other fountains in which pur auld Scotland is deficient, and in search of which her sons have left her. She's but a benighted country in this sixteenth century, where knowledge, both sacred and profane, is concerned, though I dinna say that Wardlaw, Kennedy, and Elphinstone did not ettle their best to help her."

"No, Dr. Tammas," forbade Mistress Dalrymple indignantly, "dinna gie foreigners room to brag ower us. That werna the speech o' a leal Scot."

"Gin foreigners hae room they'll no be denied the richt by me, mistress. That were not the speech of a leal man," proclaimed Dundas; "besides, if we are not to own our defects, how are we ever to mend them?"

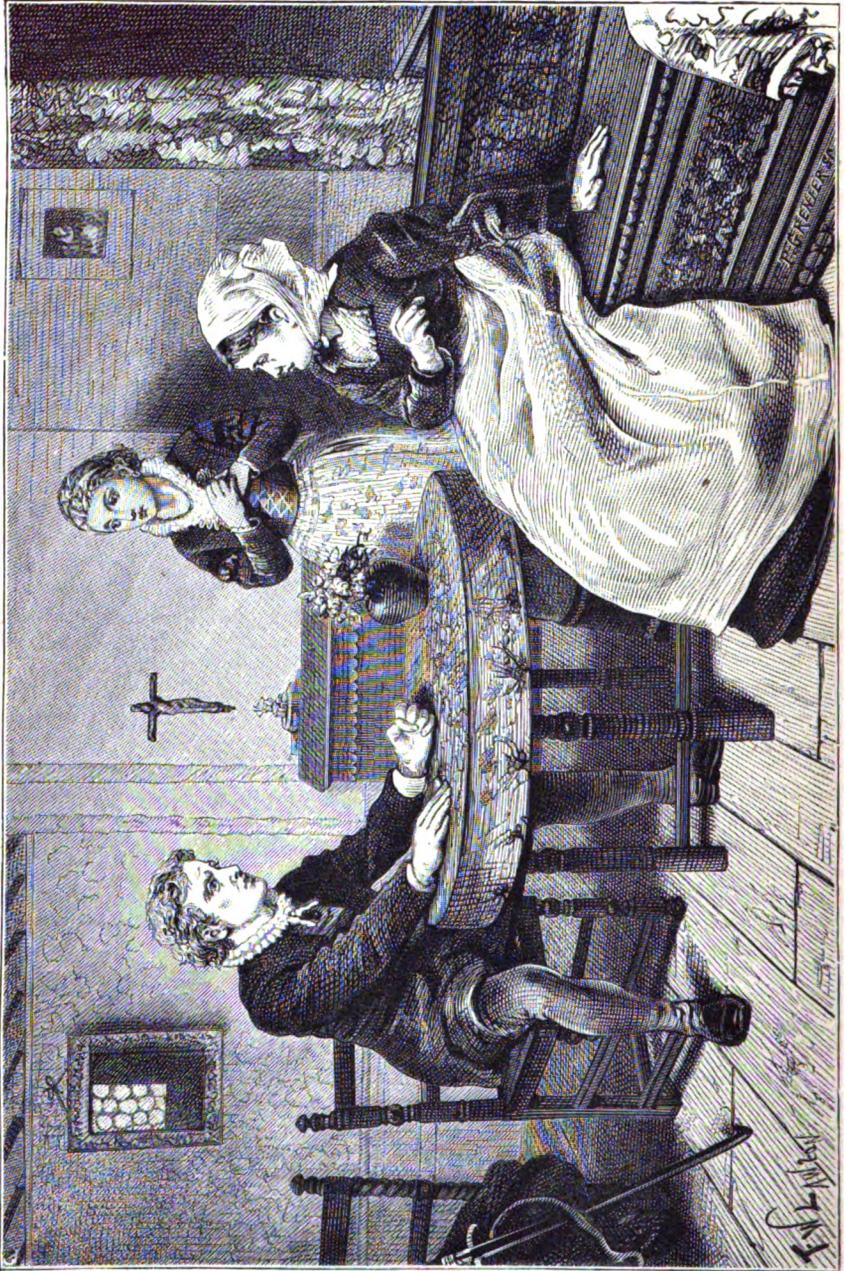
"But Scotland was chokefu' o' priests and teachers when I kennaed her," answered Mistress Dalrymple, changing her cue. "What'na o' grand abbeys and kirks there were! It was a privilege to be a kirk vassal, for the abbots and priors had a hantle in their power. As for ither lear wasna there Blind Harry and Tammas the Rhymer—wise Tammas—whase bonnet you'll never rieve for a' your French doctor's degree; and there was Davie Lyndesay—why, Davie Lyndesay made fun o' the very palmers and pardoners to their faces! The maist feck just leuch, though some scowled. I saw and heard it mysel' when I was a heimpie like Jenny, and stood in the crowd as the "Complaint o' the King's Popinjay," and "the Three Estates" were sung and played afore the king's majesty, his court, and commons at Lithgow. Ah, times were nae sae hard then, Dr. Tammas."

"You're richt there," answered Dundas, thoughtfully; "the kirk either had not ta'en alarm, or rather the better men who had not left her, in their fairness, bore down the unfairness of the worse."

"Whisht, sir"—Mistress Dalrymple tried to silence him imperatively—"the kirk can do nae wrang. Is na his holiness the Pape in the hie seat o' Saunt Peter, wha got the keys, and was to open and shut, wi' neither man nor angel to forbid?"

"Say you sae, mistress," queried Dr. Thomas; and the born disputant pricked his ears and raised his eyebrows, not disdaining





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so shallow and flimsy an antagonist. "But, come, tell me again what you thoct o' Davie Lyndesay's sangs in those fine days lang syne," he misled her mischievously.

"I thoct they were very merry, and pleasant, and instructive, sic as nae man—even a Montpellier doctor, by your leave—could mak the day," protested Mistress Dalrymple with dignity and triumph, utterly unconscious of the snare into which she was being decoyed.

"Yet the Pope o' Rome condemned them to be burnt by the common hangman a year after Lyndesay was dead; that is, after the tongue was silent and the hand stiff, which could hae garred Scotland and Europe ring wi' the monstrous offence against justice."

"Pity me! pity me! no possible," protested Mistress Dalrymple, in horror and dismay at her own admissions amongst other things; "an' me to see wi' my ain een abbots in copes and mitres, and begging friars wi' rope girdles, hearkening and cheering on the ditty. You're fleying me, Tam Dundas, wi' your story o' banned and brunt heresies. Mercy on me! I believe there is a copy o' the "Complaint o' the Popinjay" in this very house, which shall be flung on the back o' the fire, afore I'm a day alder."

"Rest easy, Mistress Dalrymple," Dr. Thomas assured her scornfully, "your straying amice in the walks o' heresy is kenned to naebody here, save to me and Jenny. Even gin they were kenned, the authorities o' Montpellier, Nismes, and Narbonne have offences nearer home, and stinking more foully in their nostrils, that they should travel out o' the gate to call up ancient Scotch heresy. Eat your fish on Friday, mem, dinna fail to go to confession on saunts' days; aboon a', dinna stint your awmouses and offerings, and the kirk here like the kirk yonder, will hold you a dutifu' dochter, never fear."

"I do abide, as I'm a sinner, by a fish diet whenever the kirk ordains it," replied Mistress Dalrymple, her very fractiousness driven out of her by the extent of the danger which she had unwittingly provoked; "Jenny will tell you that, and I'm regular at confessional when my ailments will let me, though Father Antony is twice as hard on me as he is on that wheedling, sorry La Clere next door, or even on Jenny, though I aye say that Jenny suld be let take some o' my ayes and pater-nosters, were it but to keep her hand—that is to say, her tongue—in. Besides, I spend on masses for my gudeman's soul and pilgrimages to our leddy's shrine at Nismes—because she's thoct to be by ordinar'

gracious there to sic steeks in the side as that which I have added to my ither troubles—on candles and bonnie deys to the altars, mair than I can spare, Dr. Tammas, for I'm a puir woman, like to be rugged and reived frae, till I'm roupit out o' house and hold."

"I believe you, madam," answered Dr. Thomas, dryly. "Muckle gude may your fastings and pilgrimages do you, since you'll no try simple prayers to one God, and Father, and Saviour."

"Dinna mint it, Tammas Dundas," protested Mistress Dalrymple, and she put her hands over her ears, and rose to leave the room. "I would like ill to forbid you my house, far less to carry tidings against a countryman, an auld lodger, and an auld gossip's son, who will get mair wit and grace yet, it is to be hoped. But I daur you to say another word to me, and I put it to your honour no to speak to a bairn like Jenny sic language against our holy mither kirk, while I go about my proper housewifeskep."

He might have dared, but the appeal to his honour placed a barrier against the hot words which rose to his lips.

It was Jenny who broke down the barrier and addressed him, remonstrating in mingled girlish dogmatism and timidity against his conduct. "What gars you, sir, cast laith on what my mither reverences, and try to rob her of what she believes, without being able to give her another gospel?" protested Jenny, with the ruffled plumes of a dove, and the severity which is the under side of a certain kind of softness.

"I spoke but as my heart prompted me, Jenny," he half apologized. "I had no thoct o' wounding your mother; but I also believe that the refuges of lies maun be cast down before the true refuge can be found."

"It may be sae," admitted Jenny. "I ken there is muckle mair in this heresy than my mother jalouses. I ken that it is spread far and wide, in secret, through this France as through other countries. There are sisters in the convent of St. Catherine's, where I gang, of whom other sisters whisper that they are touched with heresy, and so are their confessors, yet they are among the best behind the *grilles*. Noble ladies and princesses, they say, are among the converts. I dinna pretend to judge of the right and wrang of it a'. But oh, Dr. Tammas, is there to be no peace for them who do not pretend to judge, and who are not prepared to be sifted as wheat for what they but half compass? Gin they follow the licht they have and do their best, is there no hope for them?"

"I dinna say that, Jenny," Dr. Thomas denied, earnestly, "though I would implore silly women and bairns, and erring men, too, for that matter, to pray and strive for mair licht. But it is the Pope and his councils who profess that there is no hope for them that differ; it is not true Protestants. Only, Jenny, I put it to you, can you believe that even a gude reasonable man or woman would tak it as a glorious hansel and head mark o' heavenly virtue in me that I should abstain from an ox's sirloin, or a venison pasty, and whet my hunger on a dish o' trout or o' coterred eggs on Fridays?"

"It is the motive, no the act itself," whispered Jenny.

"Canna you let me grasp the motive in simplicity, unencumbered by the senseless act?"

"Fasting is mentioned in the New Testament, that you cry so loud you cleave to."

"But is it put in the forefront o' a man's duty? Is it not classed with forms and ceremonies which may be expedient but never essential? Is there not a likening of it to the auld bottles which held the auld wine, that seems to mark it as a relic o' a past dispensation, fu' of outward observances which, in the husk, profited not, and were at the same time too idly irksome to be borne? How mony o' your Catholics, even your priests, stick to the rule o' fasting on Friday, hey, Jenny? Forby, there is no warrant in the New Testament for fasting ilka Friday. Na, na, the New Testament is ower fu' of calls to repentance and godliness, to keep sounding a summons to fast on Friday."

"You are unco familiar wi' the New Testament, lad, and you are learned enuch to read it in its ain tongue, though you have no warrant for the study ony mair than the ignorant vulgar hae," protested Jenny, with a mixture of vexation, admiration, and pique. "But I think I have heard in the kirk's lessons out o' the Auld Scriptures, that there were fastings enjoined by the prophets—fastings frae strife and debate. What do you say to them, Dr. Tammas?"

"I say that you hae me there, Mistress Jenny," he acknowledged; "but mealy mou's were never for reformers. Did the auld prophets bogle at terms when they stood forward to ding down apostacy and idolatry?"

"They had a commission."

"Sae, in a sense, has every honest man, Jenny Dalrymple."

CHAPTER V.—IN THE TOWER AT BRIECHSIDE.

DUNDAS was back in Scotland, at length, but he only paid a passing visit to his mother

and Giles, and was wondered over and made much of by them at Lithgow, from which more than the coots had flown since he was there last. Dundas had to go where he could earn his livelihood through his scholarship. In the stormy transition state of Scotland in the early years of Mary's reign, such a call was both difficult and dangerous. There were only two ways—to join one of the universities which sorely wanted scholars, both ripe and young, but which, though in a less degree than the English universities, were still trammelled by state and aristocratic influences; or to enter the household of some man of rank—a representative of the lords of the congregation; and, living in his shadow and sheltered by his power, to send forth from that stronghold vigorous attacks on clerical abuses, and what had been popular superstition. The scholar and reformer who was thus privileged to pursue his work from a comparative fastness, was expected to give some return for the service rendered him by being a stanch party man, on his host's side in politics, by lending it all the aid of scholarly reputation and power, and by hitting hard in diatribes the hereditary and personal enemies of the head of the honourable household in which the writer dwelt. The antidote to this description of clientela was the strikingly independent habits of thought and speech which the early reformers, in their rebound from despotism and falseness of every description, cultivated towards king and council, friend and foe. Such fearlessly plain words positively staggered into silence and compulsory magnanimity the patron who had a grain of generosity left in him.

Thus, when one reformer was addressed by the chancellor in the name of the Council Chamber, with the fiery challenge, "Who dare sign this deed?" referring to a national protest of the day, he answered coolly, "I dare;" and advancing into the galaxy of frowning faces, appended his signature; and when another Presbyterian divine met the rough oath of James VI. with the honest rebuke, "Do not ban, sir," there was nothing to be done either by council or king at the time but submit with a bad grace.

Dundas, who accepted the opening, and entered the household of his old pupil the laird of Briechside, did not escape the perils of a satellite because of his former connection with the laird. Neither was the laird one of those exceptionally noble spirits which are rarely to be met with in any generation. All that the experience of travel and the polish of a foreign university had effected for the laird

who ruled at Briecheide in the room of his father, was to render a little more reasonable and a little less illiterate, one of the haughty and headstrong gentlemen, who fought stoutly in the national struggle for their own way and their own share of the spoil, as well as for the good of kirk and nation. But the laird at least maintained the assumption of a liberal and hospitable establishment; and possibly there was never any want of rude hospitality in these old Scotch towers and holds, where accommodation and entertainment were as easily come by as they were homely; which, therefore, bristled with kinsmen and retainers, presenting an ostentatious retinue in time of peace and a formidable brigade in time of war, as, indeed, when was it not the time of civil war and private feud?

The laird welcomed his old tutor to Briecheide—rather vain of the connection because of the standing which Dundas had won among scholars; while the laird counted not the less willy on the benefit of commanding Dundas's weapons against Briecheide's foes. Thomas Dundas could count on no immunity from the encroachments on his natural liberty and rights claimed over him, save what he could get by God's blessing on his integrity.

Dundas had undertaken, and was prepared to give, other equivalent for his board, and the countenance extended to him by the laird of Briecheide. He was to act as the laird's secretary and as tutor to the laird's half-brothers. The last office, though it were in behalf of little lads no farther than their primer, was fulfilled cheerfully by the first scholars in Scotland at that time. So simple, well-nigh sublime, was the enthusiasm for learning, that the very hewing of wood and drawing of water in its service—the showing to a child or to an ignorant adult his letters,—was recognised and accepted as a profitable and honourable task. There was no condescension in the matter. To instruct the ignorant was to help to cut away the gross buttresses of error, vice, and crime, and to build up the fair pillars of wisdom and virtue.

When Thomas Dundas came to Briecheide from Montpellier, after many detours and delays, he was agreeably surprised to find an old acquaintance and friend there before him. Mistress Dalrymple had died, and Jenny left an orphan, with a very slender provision in savings of silver pennies and bonnet pieces, had been transported to Scotland in the safe keeping of a Scotch skipper and his wife, who, when no English or Spanish privateer was in the way, sailed between Leith and Bordeaux. And so Jenny

was committed to the care of the Briecheide family. Her presence at Briecheide will be seen shortly to have been at once a source of comfort and of complication in Dundas's affairs.

The Place of Briecheide was situated within what would now be held an easy half-day's journey of Lithgow; but, in the state of the roads and of the country then, and after a sharp enmity which had chanced to arise between the laird and the provost of the burgh at that date, the household of Briecheide were largely shut out from intercourse with the county town, or indeed from outside intercourse of any kind, since the house or fortalice was in the wilder and less populous district of the shire. The laird and his stepmother only, paid periodical visits to court, attended by as large a train of men-at-arms as they could muster, unless when they were in disfavour; for Briecheide was a partisan of Murray and the Reformed kirk, and not of Mary and the Catholic barons.

Not Luther in the Wartzburg was left more to his own company, or more confidently understood to want no other society, than was the comparatively obscure young scholar whose little dark closet, crammed even with his scant allowance of books and papers, was also the Briecheide boys' schoolroom.

The house of Briecheide was a solid square building, with some pretension to battlements, set in a courtyard, and having on the opposite side from the courtyard a small terraced garden, the ground beyond which descended as abruptly as heathery braes can descend, a hundred feet or so, into a natural hollow watered by a little burn. This "howe" was the only irregularity within sight in an otherwise level moorland, only a small portion of which was in cultivation as corn-fields. In like manner the "howe," (it was no more, and did not pretend to be glen or dell, though it had been adroitly made of avail to render it less liable to attack on one side,) offered the single example of wood within miles. There was a sprinkling of hazel, thorn and birch on the sides of the hollow, just enough to relieve the eye, looking down from the terraces of the garden or out of the narrow windows of the house, on the bare, rough sward, which yet afforded pasture for cattle and sheep, and included the few ill-fenced corn-fields.

Doubtless, and the exemption was a fortunate one, very few of the men and women who then called Briecheide their home, missed any brilliance or luxuriance or even fatness from the landscape. Were there not black-faced sheep on the moorland and long-horned cattle closer in field? Did not these

stunted oat and bean crops suffice for home consumption? As for the garden, beyond the kail plants, the herb or two, the half dozen hardy fruit-trees, what more was wanted? Rare vegetables and flowers were for the idle cultivation of the monks, who were banished from the land. Still, was there not a great pear-tree in the Briechside garden, and enough gilliflower, lavender, and roses to busk posies in their short season; and who cared for flowers out of their June and July fitness?

From the cavernous guard-room and hall in one, up the steep winding stair to the laird's chamber and the lady's bower, as exemplified at Briechside, Scotland, distracted and engrossed with more serious concerns, had made slight progress in domestic refinement, even under a French-bred queen. Briechside, the house of a laird, was not so well furnished with provision for the needs of thoughtful men and delicate women, as had been the college or even the lodging-house of Mistress Dalrymple in Montpellier. There was hardly a book beyond those which had been gradually accumulated by Dr. Thomas, not a musical instrument save a shepherd's pipe, or the harp which a travelling harper might carry in with him the one day and carry off again the next; and not a flower which was not included in that briefest June and July bloom of the garden and the pasture. Of social intercourse there was none to speak of beyond the walls of the Place, barely even ghostly ministrations, for Dundas was not in orders, though he acted as reader and exhorter; and the laird having quarrelled with the town of Lithgow in the person of its provost, did not choose that any of his family should wait on the preaching there.

The act had been passed by which the celebration of mass became treason to all save the queen and her household in their private chapel, and even that celebration was not persisted in without angry interruption from the populace. It was a changed world since Patrick Hamilton and George Wishart had passed away with glorious steadfastness in flame and smoke, becoming thenceforth beacons of renown, as they themselves had taught,—never dying torches to light the way of the Reformation. And Mistress Dundas had charged her gifted son not to meddle with priestcraft, and Mistress Dalrymple had put her fingers in her ears, lest they should catch the most distant blast of that trumpet-tongued proclamation, which bade the people go free

from their ages-long, intolerable yoke of credos and saints, confessions and penances, with the iron of arbitrary violence and unutterable baseness driven deep into many a soul!

Still the Reformation was young and shaking to its foundation, granting that it was an everlasting foundation. The rookeries had been pulled down in the swell of the tide, wisely or unwisely; but many a rook yet lingered in high and low places, threatening to overthrow the Reformers' work and re-establish Popery in Scotland, as it had been temporarily restored in England under Mary Tudor. It is wonderful to reckon up the limited number of great names, making up in quality for what they wanted in quantity, borne by those who established the Reformation in Scotland—Knox, Buchanan, the two Melvilles. Certainly there were other and less pure forces at work besides those which prevailed in the scholars and protesting priests; notably that of the restless, rapacious nobles, craving change, catching up watchwords, which would serve them in waging war to the knife with each other, coveting the forfeited wealth of the proscribed Church. But in the partisanship of the nobles loomed a great danger, to meet which there was but a single city church—that of St. Giles in Edinburgh. The first General Assembly of the Reformed Church consisted of only forty members. There was but one man fit to confer with Murray and resist the queen, than whom no woman ever lived whose blandishments proved more irresistible.

The dwellers at Briechside lived to some extent as the illiterate dwellers at a remote Australian or New Zealand station live today. The men engaged in the circumscribed agricultural operations, in such sport of fishing, fowling, otter-hunting, &c., as they could command; in games of foot-ball, in the practice of archery and sword exercise—the latter in anticipation of what might be needed in conflict with the English next year, or with their neighbours any day; in keeping a considerable amount of watch and ward; in telling men-at-arms' and country people's stories round the winter fire, or lolling on the sunny courtyard wall. The women baked and brewed, spun, stitched, gossiped, and told grandmother and maiden stories.

Jenny Dalrymple was in the sorriest case. As it happened she had been an alien in France, and now she was an alien in Scotland. It was not so much a matter of religion as of climate and custom. Absolved from the terrors which had obscured her mother's vision, while always disposed to be

guided by her natural leaders for the time, she had given in her adherence to Protestantism. But Jenny missed innocently the light, warmth, and vivacity of the southern town. Jenny, too, could have said, with a far more miserably alienated Scotchwoman, that she had been brought up to joyousness and not to gravity; so that the atmosphere of Brieche-side and Scotland, though nobody was actually unkind to her, and she had found an old friend, was at first raw and surly.

Jenny's patroness, Lady Brieche-side, a faded, handsome woman, in her silver girdle with its chain and keys, and velvet curch, was of an order of fine lady not uncommon in any age. She meant well, and tried to rule beneficently, thinking to maintain her rank and state honourably, and hand them down unimpaired by her to her sons' wives. But she was unable to avoid sinking the woman in the lady, not being a great enough woman to rise above her ladyhood, or to understand that truest ladyhood is truest womanhood. Thus she had grown always more pre-occupied and self-engrossed. She was formal and distant, however gracious in her manners. She was much engaged with the receipt of her due in rights and privileges accorded by her late husband's son; with the etiquette of her bower, her seat in the chimney corner, her place on the dais at table; with her daily walk on the garden terraces, and her countenancing of what was called the Exercise, the reading of Scripture and prayer, which Dr. Thomas Dundas was appointed to conduct. She was concerned about the degree of her authority over her boys and their tutor; in arbitrations between the tirewoman and house-keeper, steward, cooks, and scullions, when they chanced to fall out; and, in addition to the rest of her duties, she had the ordering and accomplishment of rare visits and the entertainment of company at home. In the same manner many a modern fine lady lives in a whirl of religious, charitable, social, and æsthetic obligations, and is thoroughly distracted between setting an august example in the management of a village club, presiding over a stall at a bazaar, making imperative sojourns at country houses, and cultivating art-exhibitions and oratorios.

Lady Brieche-side granted her protection to Jenny Dalrymple, and was well pleased that the girl should enjoy the safety and light of a reformed and honourable household. But naturally the great lady saw but little of the orphan girl who did not rank above a poor dependent. A civil word bestowed on her, now and then, was all that

Jenny received or had reason to expect from such a source. Yet this was but a poor substitute for a mother's fond concern, weak and full of murmuring as Jenny's mother had been. Lady Brieche-side's head-women, staid, confidential, and none of them young, copied their mistress's bearing strictly. Besides, they, too, were full of their own aims and objects, and almost inevitably regarded Jenny as an interloper. Doubtless, also, though Jenny was tractable enough, and a sweet though quick-tempered child always, she had not at this time acquired the grace and breadth which should have prevented her from being petulant to equals and inferiors.

Thomas Dundas, a quickly observant and far from a dreamy and abstracted man, was apprised of Jenny's pining isolation, and was more patient and sympathetic with it than he was with most small pains, whether they beset himself or his neighbours. He would contrive to have chats with Jenny, when they encountered in the court or in the guard-room, as it was arranged for a chapel, recalling old Montpellier days to brighten the sombreness of her present experience, and bidding her be of good heart. In order to help her, he spoke good gentle words to her, reminding her how Paul charged young women to be sober and keepers at home. He enjoined on her to be diligent in all her tasks, whether baking of wassail bread, gathering and drying of herbs, or passementing of garments; to strive to live in tender charity with all men, so that the older men and women might look upon her as a daughter, and the younger men and women as a sister. Above all, he laid before her eloquently the beauties of holiness and of a godly conversation, urging on her to cultivate them, promising her that they would yield her in the end such noble satisfaction and sweet content as her soul, being in the divine image, could never draw from any merely earthly and mortal "joyousness," until she should come to look upon this life at Brieche-side, which at present she viewed in the light of a sore cross, as the perfecting crown of her being.

No wonder that Jenny learnt among other lessons to trust and cling to her old friend, and to think no face or figure manlier, more gallant. Thomas Dundas stood by and defended Jenny in every difficulty. Almost as a matter of course, a young man like the laird admired a creature with Jenny's April charm and a certain flavour of foreign novelty and piquancy, mellowed as it was by the familiarity of old acquaintance and remote kinship. She was not so far removed from him either in birth

or education. But the laird—an ambitious one, like so many lairds of his day—would no more have contracted an alliance with Jenny than with his meanest scullion. He was not, however, above seeking to amuse himself, and to tease his stepmother by taking notice of Jenny at the risk of depriving the helpless girl of what were her most precious possessions—a good conscience and peace of mind.

But Jenny was not without sufficient safeguards. She had the purity of nature and prudence of a really good and God-fearing girl. She knew that there was something more and better worth having in the world than a man's love; and this she felt was a light, mocking love at which her upright nature revolted justly. These are sufficient safeguards to render a good girl proof against



vanity and light love of whatever degree. But Jenny had other defences. Dundas did not hesitate as a man might hesitate nowadays, out of a sense of private rights and from motives of delicacy, to speak to the laird of Briecheide—his host—on the laird's meaningless attentions to Jenny, and to remonstrate with him on the annoyance which they caused her, and the scandal to

which they might give rise. And the laird of Briecheide, however irritated and offended, could not choose but listen sulkily and attend so far to the remonstrance. What were reformers and exhorters for if they were not to arrest a man when he was lapsing into error, and to counsel and rebuke him? The laird of Briecheide's censor was very little older than he himself was; and if Thomas Dundas

had once been the laird's tutor, Thomas was now the laird's protégé; but the word protégé was never less synonymous with the word minion than in that generation and country.

"The lass is fatherless and motherless, without a home, except what the leddy here affords her," protested Dundas boldly; "and I put it to you, sir, whether it is worthy of you or of any Christian gentleman to make her feel the hardship of her lot, and to drive her to seek another, perhaps a worse refuge."

"I meant no ill," grumbled the laird; "it was only an idle hap in bestowing an idle moment. The lass is as saucy as gin she were a duke's dochter."

"She is not saucy," her defender urged; "at least I have never found her saucy. She has only the spirit which every honest lass ought to show in declining to sing off the same book with you when the leddy is not by, and in refusing to have your gifts of rokelay and mittens, seeing that the time was neither Hansel Monday nor her birthday."

"Since you hear her stories, do you pretend to plight troth with her?" inquired the laird, turning the tables on his assailant.

Dundas drew back, reddening violently.

"You must ken, sir, that poor scholars have no troke with troth plights. I hope I would take the part of any orphan lass in the country," he defended himself indignantly.

"Ilka body is ower kind to this orphan lass," retorted the laird; but he attempted no more condescending daffing with Jenny.

Jenny, on her part, was of some use to the scholar. She lent a friendly hand to keep in order the raiment which could not be always transferred to his mother's and

Giles's care; and he was wont to offer for her perusal the treatises against evil in Kirk and State and against individuals in power, which it was the chief glory of Dundas's life to cause to issue from Briechside. These treatises were caustic, daring, not guiltless of employing scholarly quibbles; being framed rather for the display of the sardonic humour and intrepidity of the writer, than for the expression of that gentleness of heavenly wisdom in which the pride and wrath of man do not form elements.

Jenny was little qualified to understand these treatises, even when they were not in the Latin tongue. She could only admire and marvel over them at a humble distance. But there was one thing that she could do. She could see quickly when there was any passage savouring of scurrility and abuse, and in her instinctive love of peace and her regard for the writer she could put her finger firmly on the spot and venture to suggest—

"I wouldna put that in, Dr. Tammas. Na, I would be a hunder times readier to abstain from a hard allusion to the man's wicked gutcher, or from calling the man himsel 'Lucifer' and 'Judas,' just because he had cast at Briechside and you the names of Korah and Dathan, of Absalom and Jehu."

Dundas always contested the point stoutly with her, and fought hard for the reasonableness of his speaking his mind freely, but he ended by withdrawing the offensive paragraphs; and when he had once consented to the excision, somehow her call for it and his compliance with it resulted in mutual satisfaction, until it were difficult to say whether Jenny or he regarded the improved text with the more complacence.

THE LAW OF GROWTH IN NATURE AND IN GRACE.

BY THE DEAN OF CHESTER.

"First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear."—MARK iv. 28.

DURING the recent autumn months our minds have been occupied somewhat anxiously with thoughts of the harvest: and perhaps there are reasons for anticipating hard times in the coming winter.

Many persons, on the Sundays of these months, have carried with them into church such thoughts of the harvest: and in carrying such thoughts into church on Sunday there is no harm, if we seek to make this subject the ground-work of spiritual learning—if we use the laws of Nature for a help to a better appreciation of the laws of Grace—if

the supplies which we have seen around us on the fields—supplies, it may be, in some respects, attended with disappointment, but supplies beneficent and undeserved—remind us of what is done for our souls in the moral world of which we form a part.

This is the manner in which our Lord made use of the growth and the ripening of the harvest. Speaking to His disciples, while the view of the corn-fields was before them, He said, "So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the

seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come."*

These words possess a remarkable interest in more ways than one. In the first place, they constitute the only parable which is peculiar to St. Mark. Even so, this parable stands out very definitely apart from all the rest. But, further, it is a very unique parable as to the truth which it expresses. Most of the parables admonish us, in some form, of what we ought to do. This rather tells us *what God does*, and admonishes us that, in some very important senses, we must be content to be passive,—though certainly very important duties follow also again from this very fact.

There are certain things in God's constituted system of the world, which proceed in an orderly regulated way—certain laws, as we call them, which cannot be altered: and our part is to acquiesce in these laws—cheerfully, thankfully,—to adapt ourselves to their requirements, to shape our conduct according to the course which they inevitably mark out.

This is eminently the case in regard to that beneficent law of vegetation which causes the earth to "bring forth grass and herb yielding seed after their kind,"† and the full and final operation of which is briefly described in the words quoted above, from St. Mark's one characteristic parable: "First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear."

We have here before us *the law of growth*; and in attempting to draw out the religious meanings of this law, and to illustrate its connection with the responsibility of human action, we should first turn our attention to the mere natural growth of the corn-plant, which our Lord takes as the basis of His spiritual instruction. This is necessary indeed in order that we may appreciate the force of the parable: and even this natural growth has its important connection, both with the principle of trust in God and with diligent performance of human duty.

The point of the parable is this, that from the moment when the corn is put into the ground, the husbandman dismisses all anxiety in regard to its growth. He is perfectly convinced that it will grow in the usual orderly manner, and that it will grow according to its kind. He proceeds to go about other business. "He sleeps and rises night and day." From the sowing-time to the harvest-time he

knows that he can do nothing to promote or modify the growth. He leaves all this to the inevitable operations of nature. "The seed springs and grows up, he knows not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself—first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear."

The farmer is one of the most perfect examples of *faith* which the world can show. He has the most calm and absolute confidence that all these results will take place, and in this order, after the seed has been put into the ground. He is also quite sure, not only that this order will be observed in the growth of the corn-plant, but that the growth will be according to its kind. If he sows wheat, he knows that the harvest will not be barley. In this confidence he waits patiently till the harvest, and then—when the fruit is ripe—"immediately," without waiting a day, unless the weather should discourage him, or difficulty arise in obtaining labour, "he puts in the sickle, because the harvest is come."

Moreover, the husbandman is an example not only of faith, but of faith showing itself by *works*. He is so perfectly certain of all these things, he has such absolute confidence in God's beneficent laws, that he makes his arrangements long beforehand,—he engages his servants, he buys his ploughs, he stocks his farm, he attends markets,—all the whole varied business of his active life *grows out* of this one principle of calm trust in what God has ordained and fixed.

So we see human activity in its connection with a law of nature and with a law of growth. Why is there not the same faith in regard to the spiritual world? and why not faith manifesting itself in the same way by works? Our Saviour clearly uses the natural world as an emblem of the spiritual: and we now turn to the operation of the law of growth in Grace, as illustrated by this parable.

Nature will have its own way, and so will Grace. And as we trust Nature, so we ought to trust Grace. And as this very confidence leads to activity and diligence in one instance, so it ought in the other instance. This is clearly part of what He says to us: and this is the part of His instruction to which attention is here invited. Let us now contemplate this sacred comparison in three points of view.

First, let us give a few moments to the consideration of it in its bearing on *education*.

Anxiety on the part of Christian parents is natural and inevitable, knowing as they do the inherent evil that is in their children, and the temptations to which they will be exposed. The mother's heart is often dis-

* Mark iv. 26—29.

† Gen. i. 12.

ressed, even at a very early period, when she sees the plain symptoms of bad temper, selfishness, and untruthfulness. As years pass on, the father trembles inwardly, when he marks the rising spirit of independence, perhaps of rebellion; for he well knows what the consequences are of passion and folly. Under these circumstances, to the parent who prays and has confidence in God, it is a great comfort to reflect on this law of gradual, secret, invisible growth, which is a principle of the world of Grace as well as the world of Nature. We must not expect too much at an early period, and we must not expect all at once. It would be unreasonable to look for the harvest when the seed-time is hardly past. We are of course bound to do our own part; but we must leave the growth to God.

Nor must we expect this growth to go on without discouragements. Even if we have much ground for hope, we must prepare for disappointments. Even after that fresh early green—the first sweet promise of the coming harvest—has gladdened our eyes, there may be many a sharp wind and bitter frost.

And besides this, natural virtues and spiritual virtues are, in early stages, not easily distinguished. Grace will take its own course and follow its own secret ways; and we cannot ourselves keep Grace alive, or regulate the exercise of its power. We must learn therefore to be patient as well as diligent. Later influences may succeed, where earlier efforts have failed. "Behold, the husbandman *waiteth* for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath *long patience* for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient and stablish your hearts."*

Thus we ought to have far more confidence in prayer and in the hidden goodness and wisdom of God, than in any efforts of our own. Though certainly this kind of confidence ought not to make us relax our exertion. On the contrary, it imposes on us the responsibility of exertion, and stimulates and strengthens exertion, because it causes us to feel that there is something to which we can trust. Whether in the family, or the school, or the parish, the training of the young gives one of the greatest opportunities for the exercise of faith, and for active, hopeful effort. Only we must remember that it is the sowing which belongs to us—that the growth must be left to God—that we sow in order to obtain a harvest—and that our confidence rests on those Divine methods, unknown to us, which are the established laws of the spiritual world.

* James v. 7, 8.

But besides this process of education, viewed as the operation of a Divine law bringing those fruits to maturity of which we have sown the seed, there is for the Christian another very serious subject, connected in the same way with the world of Grace. There is that grave question of *the growth of his own religious character*.

I am sure I shall have a response from many godly hearts among the readers of these pages, when I say that thoughts and inquiries about this growth are often attended with feelings of much discouragement. It seems sometimes as if we were never to be any better. Bad tempers surprise us when we thought they were overcome: hasty words escape from our lips when we had resolved not to utter them; and on close examination of our daily life we find that the old unworthy motives in our hearts have been at work again. These things are disheartening; and we ask ourselves, with something like despair, "Are we never to improve?"

Now here again some comfort is to be derived from the parallel between the world of Nature and the world of Grace. We must expect variations of season in the one as well as the other. And sometimes the very checks which we suffer may be overruled for bringing the fruits of holiness to maturity. "Tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed."* The secret law of God's grace may be operating all this time in ways which we do not understand.

And one law of His spiritual kingdom affecting the growth of character is not altogether secret. I mean *the law of the formation of habits*. I mean this, that separate acts, continually repeated, and persevered in for a considerable time, result inevitably in a new condition of mind and heart. Things that were difficult gradually become easy; things that were disagreeable gradually become congenial. This is an established law of God's government as certainly as the law of the growth of the grain from seed-time to harvest.

And evidently it is our duty and our happiness to act in harmony with that law. It imposes upon us, in fact, the double responsibility of eradicating bad habits, and of forming good habits. Weeds grow as well as corn, and in the selfsame way. When there is neglect in regard to the former, progress in regard to the latter will be hindered, just as is the case in the literal cornfield under the influences of rain and sunshine.

Thus in the laws of our mental and moral

* Rom. v. 3-5.

constitution we have a very strong ground for confidence, a very urgent motive for diligent exertion. And this exertion ought to take a healthy and orderly form. There may be a disquietude of mind which is very unfavourable to growth—a morbid form of self-inquiry which is almost like pulling up the plant to see how it is growing; while if there be a diligent, watchful attention to the details of common duties, we may have a cheerful confidence that, according to God's established law, the growth of Christian character is really going on—"first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." One of the early Christian writers puts the matter in this way: "When we conceive good desires, we put seed into the ground; when we begin to act, we are the blade; when we finish a good work, we are the ear; when we are matured into the habit of good, we are the full corn in the ear."

And there is one subject more which to the religious mind is the occasion of serious thought in connection with the progress of spiritual growth; and this perhaps is the subject on which the parable is most especially intended to bear. I mean *the advance of Christ's spiritual kingdom in this world.*

Christ our Saviour is gone away from the earth. It is as though the husbandman had sown his seed and left it to itself, and turned his thoughts to other things; and the progress seems very slow, and the prospect of the great harvest very discouraging. And indeed the seed *is* left to itself; but it has life in itself, and it "springs up and grows"—we "know not how." And though Christ is departed for the present, the Holy Spirit is ever working; and we do see some of the results, though we cannot understand the process. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit."*

There is, beyond any doubt, in Christ's kingdom a secret law of progress, inexplicable to us. When we look back on earlier ages, we ourselves can distinctly see what wonderful effects the Gospel has already wrought. And so it will be in time to come. Not indeed without interruption. I do not expect any outward visible growth of good, gradually and uniformly overspreading the earth, before Christ's second advent. On the contrary, when I read His prophecies, and the prophecies of His apostles, I look for far greater outbreaks of evil than the world has yet seen. But still I believe He does allow us to perceive

* John iii. 8.

some symptoms of His secret working, and of His preparation for the great harvest. Every marked change in society—every new step in the progress of human thought—every great scientific discovery—these are like the sound of the chariot-wheels of His coming. And meanwhile, these things are also (it is our part to remember this) opportunities which ought to be promptly made use of by God's true servants for promoting good in the world.*

One main point that is urged in these remarks is this, that everything which is ascertained to be one of God's laws in the government of the world involves, on our side, a corresponding duty. And this is as true of a providential law in the moral world as of a physical law in the world of nature. Our part is thoughtfully and seriously to watch what is going on around us—to be very sensible of the evil which prevails—to be on the alert for using remedies. God does suggest remedies in the course of His providential ordering of the world; and with us rests the responsibility of observing them and using them. Take any great discovery or invention. Once established, it constitutes one of the laws under which the human race was appointed to live. Let it be the invention of printing. The changes which followed in the condition of society were irresistible: and thenceforward a new obligation was imposed on every man of Christian feeling to do his utmost to apply the use of the printing-press to good and religious ends. Or let it be the railway system. How much capability for good or for evil there may be in that system we hardly yet know. But it is one of the powers under which henceforward we must live. It is now a providential law, impressed upon society: and we are bound to learn and to employ what methods it can supply for promoting the charities of life, for diminishing vice, and for the spread of the kingdom of God.

A principle runs through God's moral world of responsible beings, strictly analogous to the principle running through that physical world which supplies our earthly wants. There is a law of growth in Grace as in Nature. The law is briefly laid down in the words quoted at the head of this paper, and more fully expounded in the parable from which they are taken. We have seen how

* In one of those remarkable sermons which were preached by Dr. Newman between 1830 and 1840, he says:—"These theories of science are ever most useful, in enabling us to *obey* the course of God's providence, and the ordinances of His will to the benefit of man. Thus we are enabled to enjoy His gifts; and let us thank Him for the knowledge which enables us to do so, and honour those who are His instruments in communicating it."—Vol. ii. p. 405.

the principle is exemplified in three instances of familiar experience—in improvement through the religious education which relies on the gracious promises of God—in the improvement of our own characters, through the operation of the law of habit—in improvement of general morality and happiness, by

the aid of whatever providential agencies are within our reach. Other illustrations will easily suggest themselves to the religious mind. May God enable us in this spirit to read the harvest lesson of the present year, and of any future years that He may grant us to see!

JOHN S. HOWSON.

EVANGELICAL WORK IN SPAIN.

THE writer of these notes, who has recently visited Spain, proposes to give a simple statement of what came under his own observation in connection with the Protestant movement in that country. Cradled as she was only a few years ago in the midst of bitter and unrelenting persecution, the Spanish Protestant Church—the new Sister of the Reformation—lays claim all the more strongly to our sympathy.

Entering Spain from the north, the first place we visited where Evangelical worship has been established was Valladolid—the birthplace of that ruffian Philip II., and likewise notable as the place where Christopher Columbus, after a life unspeakably noble, went to his rest. The house where he lived for some years and in which he died still stands, and is pointed out to the passing traveller. We were sorry to learn how greatly the Protestant congregation had been persecuted here. At the instigation of an intolerant priesthood they have been twice or thrice turned out of their place of worship, and been compelled on each occasion to rent premises inferior to those they had been driven from. The numbers who now attend public worship are in consequence smaller than they once were, and much smaller than they would be had they a larger church in a better situation. But on the other hand Señor Cruzada, the teacher, assured us that the number of devoted adherents and members of the church at Valladolid has not fallen off. There are about eighty members—all very poor, but they contribute a little towards the cost of ordinances. We looked over the list of names, with the small contributions affixed to each, with much interest. Besides Señor Castro and Señor Cruzada there is a colporteur stationed at Valladolid, Señor Flores.

We reached Madrid on 3rd April. We were fortunate at being there while the Synod of the Reformed Church was assembled, as we thus made the acquaintance of several pastors of churches at places we were unable to visit. The chief business of the Synod was to revise and adopt a Confession of Faith

which had been prepared by a committee previously appointed. We attended the meetings on several occasions, and, being familiar with the Spanish tongue, were greatly interested in the proceedings. We were much pleased with the manner in which discussions on a number of the articles in the Confession were conducted, and it was satisfactory to know that, though several continental deputies *counselled* the adoption of less distinct utterances, they all ended in the adoption of sound Evangelical views. We were greatly impressed by the tact and ability of Señor Cabrera of Seville, whose views almost invariably commended themselves to the acceptance of the Assembly. Several lay delegates or elders were present and took a prominent part in the proceedings. The adoption of this Confession of Faith is a most important step, and it will serve as a bond of union (or "alianza" as they themselves call it) amongst churches hitherto isolated and separated from each other.

Another important step taken by the Synod was the adoption of some wise regulations, restricting the use of the pulpits in the different churches to authorised and properly qualified men. This was a needful step, as hitherto (no doubt owing to the scarcity of qualified preachers) their pulpits have been occasionally occupied by men not "apt to teach." Before the close of the proceedings, the Synod ordained several pastors, and licensed Señor Flores, of Valladolid, as a preacher of the gospel, as well as Señor Escudero, an ex-canon of the Roman Catholic Church in Mexico. Escudero, although comparatively a young man, has had a somewhat remarkable history. He was chaplain to the unfortunate Empress Charlotte of Mexico, and came with her to Europe. After returning to Mexico, he came a second time to Europe as secretary to his bishop, who attended the celebrated Œcumenical Council. When at Rome, Escudero expressed himself as adverse to the pretensions of the papacy. He was put in prison, but afterwards found his way to Spain, where

he is now effectively assisting the Rev. Mr. Jameson, of the Limon Spanish Protestant congregation at Madrid.

During our stay at Madrid there was a social gathering of nearly all the pastors and delegates who were attending the Synod; and they formed a band of Christian labourers in the long uncultivated Spanish field, whose labours in many parts of Spain have already been honoured by the Master of the vineyard.

We had also while at Madrid several opportunities of worshipping with our Spanish Protestant brethren. On Wednesday evening, 3rd April, we heard Señor Carrasco preach in his own church, Madera Bajo Street, from the text, "They hated me without a cause." There were present about four hundred and fifty persons. On Thursday evening, in Señor Ruet's church, Señor Sanchez, of Huelva, preached to a congregation of six or seven hundred from the words, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." A large proportion of the congregations on each occasion were labouring men, who, after a hard day's toil, came in their work-day clothes, and appeared to be earnest and devout worshippers. On Sunday morning, 7th April, we were again at Señor Carrasco's church, where we found a large congregation of about eight hundred people. Señor Cabrera, of Seville, occupied the pulpit. In the evening, at Señor Ruet's church, we found a large congregation of eight or nine hundred people, Señor Ruet himself conducting the services. On the evening of Monday, 8th April, we went to the church of the Limon, an outlying district of Madrid, where Mr. Jameson ministers to a Spanish congregation. Señor Cabrera preached. There were about two hundred and fifty persons present, which we understood was a larger congregation than usual. The present congregation has been recently formed. There are about thirty or forty communicants. Mr. Jameson has a mission-hall in another district, where Señor Escudero preaches with much acceptance to large congregations. A Bible-woman also labours in Mr. Jameson's district, and under his direction. Mr. Moore's recently-formed congregation at Peñuelos numbers from two to three hundred. There are most useful and well-conducted day-schools for boys and girls, attended by nearly three hundred children, attached to his church; and we were glad to find that day-schools are also connected with Señor Carrasco's and Mr. Jameson's churches. Besides these four congregations in Madrid,

there is another under the pastorate of Mr. Knapp, an American Baptist, who has also day-schools under his superintendence. To Mr. Knapp's grief, a number of his agents lately went back to the Church of Rome.

Altogether, the work in Madrid appeared to be in a most promising state. We were much struck by the hearty way in which the people joined in singing the hymns. Many who were unable to read had evidently learned the words, and were able heartily to join in the service. Señor Carrasco's and Señor Ruet's congregations occupy very humble places of worship, low in the roof and badly ventilated. It would be most desirable to see better churches provided, but as the people are very poor, this is a step they themselves are quite unable to take.

From Madrid we proceeded to Granada, where we spent a few days under the shadow of the celebrated Alhambra. The congregation at Granada is fluctuating, and not very large. We gathered that the attendance now is considerably smaller than at one time. But, as at Valladolid, that does not imply any diminution in the number of really interested and devoted adherents and members of the church. Señor Alhama frequently goes on evangelistic visits to the villages in the neighbouring valley, the fertile Vega of Granada. He is invariably well received, and has often large and attentive congregations. There are good day-schools for both boys and girls connected with Señor Alhama's church.

After leaving Granada we visited Cordova, where there is likewise evangelical work and a Protestant church organized. At first, when religious liberty was conceded in Spain (about four years ago), everything looked hopeful and encouraging at Cordova—crowds gathered to hear the Word—but there have since been many discouragements. A thousand people congregated on the very first occasion, when Señor Soler preached. But he, unhappily, turned out an unsatisfactory agent, and ultimately went back to the Church of Rome. The labourer who succeeded Soler was also unsatisfactory. Lately, Señor Sanchez has gone, and we heard good testimony to his zeal and devotion. The communion was recently dispensed, when sixty-two persons joined in the ordinance. The congregation which now assembles for worship usually numbers fifty or sixty. Señor Sanchez, besides preaching twice on Sabbath, has two week-evening services. On the other evenings of the week he has Bible and adult classes. Such zeal and energy we were glad to find existing, and Mr. Duncan Shaw, a well-known friend of

the cause in Cordova, gave us good accounts of Señor Sanchez's devotedness to his work.

From Cordova we passed on to the large and important city of Seville. This is the field of Señor Cabrera's labours, and where he has been the means of doing much good. Before Señor Cabrera embraced the reformed doctrines, he was a priest of the Romish Church, and belonged to the order of the Esculapians, the one which, being a teaching order, has not been suppressed in Spain. He is perhaps the most accomplished scholar and the ablest theologian of the Reformed Church of Spain. Through the liberality of Christian friends in Great Britain and the United States, one of the Roman Catholic city churches was purchased for him and his congregation some time ago. It is a beautiful church, with a high dome, and very comfortably fitted up; but we were sorry to find it a very unsuitable place for speaking in. This church was one of the many which the state sold when it appropriated the funds and property of the monastic orders to national purposes, a few years ago. The congregation usually numbers about a hundred and fifty. Señor Cabrera as yet has no day-school attached to his congregation. The people are very poor, as at the other places we visited. Señor Cabrera's stipend is raised abroad, chiefly in Scotland.

The English chaplain at Seville, the Rev. Mr. Tugwell, has devoted much of his energy and strength to the gospel work at Seville in face of opposition, and deserves the highest praise. At the schools which he established, and which he finds the means for sustaining, there are two hundred and fifty children, obtaining instruction gratuitously. His efforts have stirred up the Romish priests to establish free schools also; and, though the spirit of opposition is not to be admired, the results, we hope, may be good and useful. A mission church, in which a liturgical service is used, has been begun, under Mr. Tugwell's auspices, by Señor Palomares, an ex-priest. Mr. Tugwell's educational efforts have prospered better than those of an evangelistic character.

Cadiz was the last town we visited in Spain, where the new reformation has got a foothold, and with what we saw and heard there we were much interested. There are two Protestant congregations in Cadiz; one under the pastorate of Señor Hernandez, the other under the pastoral care of the Rev. Mr. Benoliel. The former is sustained by the Edinburgh committee, the latter by the United Presbyterian Church. Señor Hernandez has a congregation numbering about

four hundred in all. The attendance at public worship is usually one hundred and fifty to two hundred, and the membership of the church has increased largely during the past year. In 1869 there were thirty-five communicants. In March, 1871, there were seventy, in November ninety, and in March of this year one hundred and twenty-seven sat down at the Lord's table. Mr. Benoliel's congregation is a much larger one. His church is very commodious and well-situated. Sometimes the congregation numbers five or six hundred persons. This congregation has been more recently planted than the other, and there are as yet only about thirty members. Admission to the membership of Mr. Benoliel's church is only granted after long probation, and on public profession of faith in Christ before the congregation. We were greatly interested in visiting the admirable day-schools in connection with Mr. Benoliel's church. They are under excellent management, and seem to be very popular. The number in daily attendance we found to be about two hundred and fifty boys and girls, with three hundred and twenty-six on the roll at the time of our visit. Nor is Mr. Benoliel's activity confined to Cadiz. He has recently arranged for mission-work at the adjoining town of San Fernando, where a large hall was being fitted up and an evangelist ready to undertake the work with every prospect of success. Mr. Benoliel had not seen it to be his duty to attend the synod at Madrid, although labouring as the representative of a Presbyterian Church, but we trust he may ere long cast in his lot with his brethren of the Spanish Reformed Church.

So far we have borne witness only to what came under our own observation. There are many other evangelical churches in other places which we were unable to visit; but the narrative of what we did see should serve to assure Christian people in England and elsewhere, regarding the character and extent of the religious movement in Spain. The Spanish Reformers of the sixteenth century were all of the higher classes of society—educated men. They were too prominent and notable to elude the diabolical vigilance of the inquisitors. Now it is different. The common people hear the word gladly. Amongst them the good seed of the kingdom has been widely scattered, and it would be impossible now to eradicate the reformed doctrines, or to take the Scriptures out of the hands of the people.

S. WILLIAMSON.

LITTLE ALICE.

BLESSINGS on my little Alice !
 Be her heart a brimming chalice,
 Full of love, and free of malice.

Through life's journey, glad or weeping ;
 Toiling, resting ; waking, sleeping ;
 God still have her in His keeping.



Jesu ! bless my little daughter,
 Wash her in the blood which bought her,
 Give her drink of living water.

With the bread eternal feed her,
 In the way of duty speed her ;
 For Thy name's sake, guide her, lead her.

Her may sin or Satan never
 From Thy side, O Saviour, sever,
 Till she dwells with Thee for ever !

THE CHRISTIAN'S WALK.

WE walk by faith, not by sight—these were the words that rose to our recollection on visiting the ruins of that famous old castle at St. Andrews, from which those earliest and noblest of Scottish martyrs, Hamilton and Wishart, came to die at the stake. Groping our way along a tortuous passage, we descended by some steps into an inner prison; where a faint light, streaming through a loophole in the massive walls, revealed an opening in the centre of the floor. It looked like the mouth of a draw-well. Candles lighted and swung down, we saw the shaft descending into the very bowels of the rock, and, like the neck of a bottle, widening out below into a dark, damp, dreary vault. A dreadful dungeon, it was called—and justly called—an *Oubliette*, or place of forgetfulness; those that black mouth once swallowed up being henceforth lost to light and liberty, to their friends and the world, almost as much as the dead that “in the grave forgotten lie.”

It made one shudder to look down into that horrible pit; nothing seen but “the blackness of darkness,” nor heard but the muffled sound of the waves as, breaking on its rocky walls, they seemed to moan for the crimes that had been perpetrated there. There, speaking of this very dungeon, John Knox says, “many of God’s dear children suffered death;” slowly pining away—their life ebbing out like the tide upon the shore, or suffering sudden death at the hand of the assassin. Such were the dark and bloody days of Popery—gone, we trust, never to return! And standing there, as our fancy called up the great and good men entering that low-browed door to be swung down into this living sepulchre, like a coffin into its grave, and never to leave it unless to die on the scaffold or at the stake, we could not help exclaiming, “They walked by faith, not by sight.”

St. Paul himself makes a similar use of these words. In his hands they were what the heathen, who had neither desires nor hopes beyond the present world, must have regarded as a complete enigma—a key not only to the patience, but even the cheerfulness, with which the first Christians bore their sufferings; though obscure and humble, the magnanimity they displayed; how they gloried in tribulation, and took joyfully the spoiling of their goods; how they sought death, rather than shunned it, smiling in the face of the

King of Terrors, and gathering crowds to see them go to the stake, singing, rejoicing, radiant as a bride to the arms of her bridegroom. He speaks of stoning, scourging, famine, exile, prisons, and cruel tortures, even of death itself with a sort of divine contempt. Calling what makes other men shudder and has sometimes turned the bravest into cowards, “light afflictions,” he says, “Our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work out for us a far more exceeding, even an eternal weight of glory.” The reason why?—“we walk by faith, not by sight”—“We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

No doubt, our days are different from those of the Apostle. Not that, like many other great and ancient empires, Satan’s has been overthrown; or that the revolutions which have changed the face of the world, have changed human nature. By no means. “The carnal mind is enmity against God” still, is not subject to his law, nor indeed can be; and never will be till God pours out his Spirit, and taking away the stony heart, fill its place with one of flesh. Yet that old enmity, restrained by providential circumstances, does not chafe, and rage, and foam, against the Church as once it did. In the beautiful language of Holy Scripture, “no sound of archers is heard at the place of the drawing of water;” the sword of persecution hangs in its sheath, nor is red now with aught but rust; and the fires are sleeping in their ashes that Pagans and Papists kindled in the days of old. Still they are there; ready to burst out—the world, like that volcanic mountain where, though vineyard and fig-trees, orange and olive and citron groves mantle its sides with the richest verdure, an occasional groan, a tremor, a puff of smoke, a burst of lava, shows that there is fire within, and that the volcano, which in other days buried Pompeii and Herculaneum beneath its fiery discharges, is dormant only, and not dead.

So is it with the carnal mind, and its enmity to God. Any way, and in all ages, His people have, as much as they ever had, to walk by faith. Not only so, but we may have more reason to dread a life full of pleasures than one full of perils. No doubt, it is much more pleasant to walk on a flowery meadow than on a rough and flinty road. But the roughest road may be the

safest, and the hardest life the holiest. How much better, for instance, for David when the host went out to battle had he gone with it, resigning the ease and pleasures of his palace for the hardships of a campaign; instead of his beautiful and alluring wife to have had Uriah himself at his side, grim with the dust and blood of battle? His body might have been wounded there, but not so likely his conscience; fighting the Philistines by day and sleeping on the hard cold ground by night, he had been away from the soft temptations that ended in so sad and shameful a fall.

Whatever be the character of the times, or the age we live in, or our condition in life, as there is but one name given under heaven whereby man can be saved, there is but one way to it. Not two, far less many, roads to heaven. With all the saints now in glory, whether they wear or wear not the martyr's crown, we must walk by faith, not by sight. We cannot be saved or sanctified otherwise. Never otherwise, be the road long or short, the voyage calm or stormy, shall we reach that happy home, where, amid the beatitudes of the skies, and in the presence of Him who loved and redeemed us to God by his blood, faith shall be changed to sight, and our brightest hopes be lost, like stars at sunrise, in the blaze of unimagined and unimaginable enjoyment. God bring us, through his grace, and by the blood of the covenant, to that blessed home! Meanwhile, let us turn our attention to one or two of the many ways in which we must walk by faith rather than by sight.

Believers walk by faith in the work and cross of Jesus Christ.—By faith Noah, by faith Abraham, by faith David, and many other saints in Old Testament days, won themselves a place in the "cloud of witnesses;" and yet I cannot but think that the old man who waited in our Lord's days for the consolation of Israel, though his name has no place in that distinguished roll, was second to none of them. In old age, when, to borrow figures from Solomon, the almond-tree blossoms, and the grinders cease, and the windows are darkened, and the keepers of the house tremble, and the grasshopper is a burden, man "is afraid of that which is high;" yet, where shall we find faith taking a higher flight, rising on stronger wings than Simeon's? Never was finer fruit plucked by the hand of God or man than from that old gnarled, moss-grown tree.

Venerable for years as for grace, what is this he holds in arms that tremble more from joy than age, as he bends over the object of

his earnest gaze a head white with the snows of many winters?—an infant, a feeble infant, the child of a humble woman, clad in mean attire; that, like a common vagrant's, had been born in a stable and cradled in a manger, and now, awoke from sleep, wails, and cries, and, like any other child, refuses to be comforted but at the fountains of a mother's breast? Its life a spark, a foot could tread out; a flame, a breath could blow out, how easy it were to quench it—the young of no creature that walks the earth, or swims the waters, or cleaves the air, more helpless than that little child!

There is a stage in life and in the ordinary providence of God when the feelings get blunted, and enthusiasm dies, and we sink to some extent into a state of apathy; at least grow calm and placid as rivers that approach the sea. Yet, though Simeon had reached that stage, the sight of this child throws him into a holy ecstasy—his eye flushes with exultation; his pale and withered face beams with gratitude, and hope, and triumph! The long-looked-for, the Hope of Israel, whom prophets and righteous men of old desired to see, has come at last; and now, as if there were nothing more on earth worth looking at, nor waiting for, the old man, borne away on a transport of joy, raises his hands and eyes to heaven to exclaim, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation!" Thy salvation? Spoken of a weeping, wailing infant, folded in a mother's arms, hanging on a mother's breast, faith never uttered a bolder speech, nor without faith man a more foolish one; but—no drowning man who as he rises from the cold plunge catches at a passing straw—Simeon saw in that child, like the giant oak in the tiny acorn, the Saviour of mankind, and, in the arm that hung on a mother's neck, the power which sustains the universe.

He certainly on that occasion walked by faith, not by sight. Yet we have not as much, but more than he, to do the same. Mine eyes, he said, have seen thy salvation—a privilege this our eyes have never enjoyed; nor shall, till they are closed in death; shut on this and opened on a better world. Still less has our faith those aids which their senses lent to the faith of our Lord's disciples. They saw the feet that walked Galilee's stormy waters—they touched the hands that wrenched her fetters from the tomb—they heard the voice which rebuked disease, and calmed the tempest, and called back the dead, and, better and greater than all, said

to the woman who lay weeping at his feet, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." These twelve men had the evidence of their senses for the existence, the presence, and the divine power of Jesus, as much as Thomas, for the fact of his resurrection, when, turning to the doubter, half in kindness and half in rebuke, our Lord said, "Reach hither thy fingers and behold my hands, and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless, but believing."

Do we wish that we had lived in their days; esteeming them happier than ourselves? We have no cause to envy either Simeon or the twelve. They saw and believed; but blessed, says our Lord, are they who have not seen and yet have believed. If we have been enabled by grace to believe, our faith is a higher attainment than theirs, and indeed I know no flight of human genius for boldness and sublimity to be compared with the faith of the humblest Christian. It is the gift of God, as the Bible says, and a marvellous gift it is. Regard it. The emigrant who stands on yon deck watching the mountains of his native land sink beneath the wave, has seen and handled the gold that others have washed from the sands or dug from the mines of the distant land to which his ship is bound; he has held converse with those who have been there; he has seen them go out poor and return rich, and unlike Naomi go forth empty and come back full. With such evidences of its existence it is easy for him to believe in a country beyond the seas where the rivers run over golden sands. But we believe in the existence and have set our hearts on the treasures, and are sustained amid the trials of life by the hopes, of a country, not beyond the seas, but beyond the grave; where there is no night, nor sorrow, nor sin; and whence, though we have seen thousands depart for it, we never saw one return to reveal its secrets. We believe in a Saviour we never saw, nor have seen any that ever did; and to Him have committed not all our money, but something more precious than money, than all the gold in the Bank of England, our immortal souls. We stake our everlasting welfare on a work done long centuries ago, of which—whatever Papists say to the contrary—neither in the manger where He was cradled, nor in the cross where He hung in bleeding agony, nor in the sepulchre that received his sacred remains, nor in any of all the sick He healed or the lepers He cleansed, or the dead He raised, is there so much as a vestige on the earth for faith to cling to, like ivy to a mouldering ruin. Such confidence in any ordinary matter,

we ourselves would regard as the highest folly. Yet the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and in making such a venture we are not mad, as Paul said to Festus. The only ground on which we plead for pardon lies in the mercy of the Father and the merits of the Son; and in rejecting as the ground of our acceptance with God all that might be accounted our good works—our penitence, our prayers, our virtues, and charities—to lay the whole stress and strain on the righteousness of Jesus Christ, on his imputed righteousness, in thus walking by faith, not by sight, we are not casting away the substance to grasp at an empty shadow.

Unseen! What though Jesus, lover and Saviour of our souls, is so? The most real and enduring objects are unseen, and the things we see are but the shadows of the unseen. Our spirits, for instance, are unseen, but they shall survive the stroke of death, and live when this body is a heap of unanimated dust. These heavens we see shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up—they shall perish but not their Maker, and He is unseen. "No man hath seen God at any time or can see Him;" and to tell me that He is unseen in whose service I would choose to live, and in whose blessed arms I would like to die, no more shakes my faith in Jesus Christ than in the existence of God, of my soul, of angels, of the heavens above me, or of those redeemed and exalted spirits who beckon us there and wait our coming.

Unseen! Yonder lighthouse tower, away among the tumbling waves, seems to have nothing else than them to rest on; yet there it lifts its stately form, beautiful in the calm, and calm amid the rage and billows of the wintry tempest, to warn the sailor off the sunken reef, or guide him to his desired haven, through the gloom of night and over the pathless sea; and this because beneath these weltering waves it has a rock to rest on. Blessed tower, that with its light flashing through the darkness rises on many an anxious eye as the star of hope, what it, resting secure on an immovable foundation, is to a house built on the sand bank, the shifting sand which the last storm threw up and the next may sweep back into the sea, Christ's righteousness and works are to ours—to the best of ours. Hence the language of a dying Christian, of one like Dorcas, "full of good works," whose feet now cold in death, had long trod in Jesus' footprints—this his answer to one who, little knowing what

can support a man in such an hour, was recalling the good he had done, "I take my good works and my bad works to cast them into one heap and flee from both to Jesus—Jesus! He is all my salvation and all my desire." Followed as loyally through life and trusted as lovingly in death, may He be ours!—ours with such full assurance that we can say, "Whom having not seen we love, and in whom, though now we see Him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

Believers walk by faith in the Providence of God.—In language intelligible to men of every tongue, "the heavens declare the glory of God," says the Psalmist, "and the firmament sheweth his handiwork; day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard—their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world." None so deaf as may not hear that voice. All nature worships God; sea and shore, valley and snow-clad mountain, earth and azure sky, are vocal with hymns of praise—praise heard as well in the sweet songs of woodlands as in the roar of the tempest and the peal of the rolling thunder. No nobler study than the providence of God; nor nobler task than to illustrate its might and explore its mysteries. But to write a book to prove it, to demonstrate the being, power, and presence of a Supreme Intelligence would seem to be a waste both of time and labour. Carved on every rock, painted on every flower, written on every leaf, who are so blind as not to discover these by the light of a noonday sun, are not likely to see them better by help of our feeble taper. "The invisible things of him," says St. Paul, "from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead;" and for ourselves—though the fool may say in his heart there is no God—we stand astonished to find any man outside the walls of a lunatic asylum denying either the being or the providence of God.

But while a general providence is manifest, the special care God takes of his own people, as distinguished from a world that lieth in wickedness, is often a thing less of sight than of faith. The tares and wheat grow side by side; the sun shines alike on the evil and the good; the rain falls alike on the just and unjust; the corn grows as tall, and the sheaves stand as thick, on the fields of Nabal as of Boaz—of a godless as of a godly husbandman; and of many things else, be-

sides death, it is true, that "there is one event to all." Faith in the special providence of God finds greater stumbling-blocks than even these in its way. Lazarus, over whom angels hover to carry his soul when he expires to Abraham's bosom, sits a beggar at the rich man's gate; and in bitter poverty, in wasting sickness, in household sorrows, in successive bereavements, God's children have sometimes the bitterest cup to drink, and the heaviest burden to bear. They want where others waste. Others sleep in peace when their eyes are kept waking, and their pillow is soaked with tears; and with half their children and more than half their hearts buried in the churchyard, they may be said, amid crowding memories of the dead, "to dwell among the tombs." "Peace, Mary," said a godly woman, who had been bereaved of all her family, to a querulous and godless neighbour that refused to be comforted because God had taken one out of many; "Peace, Mary, you have had but one, I have six pairs of empty shoes to look on!" On climbing the steep sides of a lofty mountain that, heaving its head high above all around it, the sun at rising was the first to touch, and at setting was the last to leave, we found the rock that crowned it riven with thunder, and its summit all naked and bare; and so it has happened, and that not unfrequently, that they who live nearest to God, with their heads I may say constantly in heaven, enjoy least earthly prosperity, and have the fewest earthly comforts. Hence the complaint of Job, "The tabernacles of robbers prosper;" and hence, also, the question of an afflicted and bewildered prophet, "Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper, and are all they happy that deal treacherously?"

"Behind a frowning providence
God hides a smiling face."

So, like the bird that keeps her song for the gloom of night, and sings, they say, the sweetest when her throbbing breast is wounded by a piercing thorn, sings the poet; and certainly, in dark and dubious circumstances, our comfort lies in believing *that*—in walking by faith and not by sight.

I have known a timid traveller whose route lay across the higher Alps, on a path that, no broader than a mule's foothold, skirted a dizzy precipice, where we saw the foaming river far below minished to a silver thread, find it safest to shut her eyes; nor attempt to guide the course, or touch the bridle where a touch were fatal, throwing steed and rider over to bound from shelf to shelf and be dashed to

pieces in the valley below. And there are times and circumstances when to be saved from falling into sinful doubts, and even into blank despair, the believer must, if we may say so, shut his eyes; and committing his way to God, let the bridle lie on the neck of providence, and walk not by sight but faith. God—however things may look—has not forgotten to be gracious, nor is his mercy clean gone for ever; and when we are walking in darkness and have no light, there is nothing for it but to trust in the Lord, to “stay ourselves on God.”

Had Jacob done so, he had not been so utterly distracted and crushed by the loss of Joseph; nor, as he clung to Benjamin, had he turned on his other sons, like a bear on the hunters come to bereave her of her whelps, with this doleful, angry cry, “Me have ye bereaved of my children; Joseph is not, and Simeon is not; and will ye also take Benjamin away?—all these things are against me.” Had he done so, he had borne himself more erect before the king of Egypt, a venerable and noble witness for God in a heathen palace, instead of wailing out this pitiful complaint, Few and evil have been the days of my pilgrimage on earth! He lived to unsay *that*, and regret that he had walked so much by sight and not by faith; living to see, as all God’s people shall in another world, if not in this, that all things—the bitter and the sweet together, losses as well as gains, coffins as much as cradles—were not against, but for him. One of whom it might be said that “nothing in his life became him so much as his leaving it,” see him dying!—his faith breaking out in full and bright effulgence, like the sun at the close of a cloudy day. Propped up on pillows, with one hand on Ephraim’s, and the other on Manasseh’s head, he raises his sightless orbs to heaven to breathe out this grand confession and prayer—The God which fed me all my life long unto this day, the angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads! With that history, and many such before them, never let God’s dear children yield—no, not in life’s darkest hour—to the thought that all things are against them. Even when deep answereth unto deep at the noise of his water-spouts, and all God’s billows and waves go over them, and their barque, with sails torn to ribbons and bulwarks gone by the board, is staggering through a sea of troubles, never let them fancy that they are the sport of winds and waves. Your Father is at the helm! The Lord reigneth, let his enemies tremble; the Lord reigneth, let his people rejoice: He

will make all things work together for good to them who love Him, and are the called according to his purpose.

Believers walk by faith in another world.—

The discovery of the New World, as the vast continent of America with its islands is called, was not, as many great discoveries have been, an accident, but the reward of faith; of Christopher Columbus’s faith. Fruits were found on the western shores of Europe, cast up there by Atlantic waves, diverse from any which the temperate, the frozen, or the fiery zones of the Old World produced. Strolling along the sea-beach, Columbus one day picks up, I shall say, a nut; he takes it into his hand, takes it into his fertile and capacious mind, and out of that seed grows his faith in another world, lying far beyond that watery horizon, where, as he boldly conjectured and events subsequently proved, the bed of the sea was sown with pearls, and the veins of the mountains were filled with silver, and the rivers that flowed through forests of spices ran over sands of gold. The world thought him mad—mad to leave his two sweet boys, and loving friends, and pleasant home to embark on a sea keel had never ploughed, in quest of a land no man had seen.

God’s people know in whom they have believed, and can give a reason for the faith that is in them. Columbus could do the same; and so he launched his barque on the deep, and with strange stars above and strange seas around him, ominous signs without and fierce mutinies within, hoping where all others despaired, no danger daunting his courage or trials exhausting his patience, he stands by the helm, keeps the prow of his caravel ever onward and westward, till lights gleam on Salvador’s shores, and at break of day “Land,” the joyful cry of “Land” is sung out from the masthead, and with the crew kneeling at his feet and ready almost to worship him, success crowns his faith and patience has her perfect work.

Here, I have always thought, is a type of the believer—only the faith of that bold seaman puts ours to shame. We blush to read it; and as we read the wondrous story we seem to hear an echo of our Lord’s own words, “I have not found such faith, no, not in Israel.” For how stands the case? Where Columbus had conjecture only, we have certainty; where he had not even the word of man, we have the sure testimony of God—that there is another and a better world, where Jesus, having opened a way to it through his blood, waits to receive us, to receive and welcome the very chief of

sinner. Thwarted by priests, deceived by kings, regarded by almost all as a dreamer, Columbus had no help from man, but our help is in the Lord our God. And we need that help, and should seek it in earnest prayer; for, though the believer may say with Paul, I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me, it is far from an easy thing to walk by faith. Among things seen, to love the unseen, and love the unseen best; with so many attractions drawing, and often dragging us down to earth, to rise, soaring like a lark into the skies; to be in the world and yet not of it; for them that have wives to be as though they have none; for them that weep as though they wept not; for them that rejoice as though they rejoiced not; for them that buy as though they possessed not; for a king on his knees to remember that he is a beggar, and for a beggar in his hovel to remember that he is a king; to believe the hand kind that wounds us; to be content, though it be to place it in his bosom, that Jesus come down into our garden and spoil it of its fairest flower; when we lay a loved one in the coffin and the churchyard mould is rattling on its lid, to say, Father, Thy will

be done! This is no easy matter. Who is sufficient for these things? In the corruption of our nature, the snares of Satan, the seductions of a world alienated from God, we have all but insuperable difficulties to encounter; and, abandoning the enterprise, would return to the world, saying, Here will I stay. If I perish, I perish!—but for the promised aids of the Holy Spirit, and our covenant right to all the blessings couched under the grand, the farewell words of Moses, ere he ascended to his unknown grave on Nebo's Mount, "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass, and as thy days so shall thy strength be. There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. He shall thrust out the enemy from before thee, and shall say, Destroy them. Israel then shall dwell in safety alone; the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine; his heavens also shall drop down dew. Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help and the sword of thy excellency!"

THOMAS GUTHRIE.

THE FARMER OF BAAL-SHALISHA.

A Harbrest Miracle.

2 KINGS iv. 42.

PART SECOND.

BAAL-WORSHIP was a species of pantheism. It was a deification of nature—a perfect identification of God with the works of His hands. According to this belief there could be no special movement in nature—no interruption of its totality—no supernatural manifestation of any kind. Whatever action took place in it or upon it was the action of the whole. Like Wordsworth's cloud, nature moved altogether if it moved at all. To counteract the influence of this degrading worship was the great mission of Elisha. He laboured to recall the idea of a personal God—to bring the great I Am home to the hearts, the prayers, and the lives of His covenant people in all the reality and nearness with which He communed with their fathers during their wanderings in the wilderness. The doctrine of a special Providence was the distinctive feature of his teaching. All his works were wrought for the purpose of restoring this missing link between heaven and

earth. He passed from miracle to miracle, heaping proof upon proof that He whom they had forgotten in their idolatry—whom they imagined to be too distant to be invoked for the common needs of life—was indeed the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, the Source of all their blessings and the Foundation of all their hopes. In these miracles the Being, who seemed too abstract to be realised in their thoughts, walked visibly before them, and nature, as it were, changed step for a moment, in accommodation to His lofty footsteps.

The harvest-miracle, which we considered in the last number of this magazine, was wrought, however, not so much to produce conviction in the minds of the worshippers of Baal as to strengthen the faith and encourage the hearts of the pupils of the prophetic school at Gilgal. Distinguished as was the position of these prophets, and most important as were the functions which they

performed, they were not endowed with the highest gift of direct inspiration; they had not the witness in their own hearts of the Divine presence and power. It would seem, therefore, as if the multiplicity and variety of the miracles wrought by Elisha in connection with the college at Gilgal were intended to compensate them for the want of the internal evidence of prophetic inspiration. They needed to be encouraged in the arduous work in which they were engaged by an assurance appealing to their senses, that greater was He that was with them than all that could be against them. They were very much in the position of the children of Israel in the wilderness. They had resigned their secular callings, by which they might have earned their own bread. They had renounced the life of sense for the life of faith—the independence which man secures by his own efforts for the broad support of the Everlasting Arms. In ordinary circumstances the benevolent offerings of the pious were the roundabout means by which God fed them. He put it into the hearts of the true Israelites to minister to the temporal necessities of those who ministered to them in spiritual things. But during the terrible famine which had devastated all the land, this source of supply was exhausted, and the prophets were therefore thrown directly upon the providence of God.

It is a very significant feature of Elisha's miracle that it was wrought at Gilgal. It was there that the Israelites first tasted of the corn of Canaan; and as the consequence of this, we are told that the manna which had been their food for so many years previously ceased at once. The supernatural food that was necessary in the wilderness, when they sowed not and reaped not, merged into and was superseded by the natural food in a region of agriculture, where man's ordinary labour sufficed to supply his ordinary wants. It was like Christ commanding Jairus and his wife to give their daughter meat after He had raised her from the dead. The miracle must give place to the common processes of life; for the supernatural is temporary and for one purpose, the natural is constant and for all purposes. In connection with this, therefore, it is most interesting to notice that in this same Gilgal the old *manna* returned when the old corn of the land ceased. The former event was reversed. The natural gave place to the supernatural. The Hand that for several generations had remained concealed behind the veil of the ordinary processes of nature was again put forth to give

to man his daily bread when man himself could not supply it. The almighty Arm that had been clothed with the raiment of second causes—with the tilling of the ground, and the sowing, and the reaping of the harvest—until the clothing was almost regarded as the Arm itself, was again made bare in the miracle, to help by direct interposition the representatives of the holy people in their distress. When the fruitful land became a wilderness, the manna of the wilderness came back to feed the faithful; and the covenant-promise was fulfilled that there should be no want to them that fear God.

In all the details of this miracle at Gilgal, we find it to be a striking prefiguration of our Lord's feeding of the multitude in the wilderness of Capernaum. It was the shadow cast before of the coming event—only foreshortened as became its place in the inferior preparatory dispensation, and as wrought by one who had grace only in measure; just as the duller crimson colour and coarser texture of the young spring leaves prepare for and prophecy of the coming blossom with its richer tints and its more delicate substance. In one respect, which has been generally overlooked, our Lord's miracle differs from that of Elisha. The Old Testament miracle was wrought during a time of universal famine, and in a scene where the drought had burnt up the verdure, and the footsteps of desolation had stamped out all the beauty and fertility of nature. Our Lord's miracle, on the contrary, took place during a season of ordinary fruitfulness and plenty. It was not, so to speak, an oasis in the desert, like its prototype, but a greater development of the existing abundance—a fairer garden in a smiling Eden—a focus of nature's luxuriance. It happened in the springtime of the year, after the continuous rains of the short winter had filled the veins of the earth with a copious circulation of life-giving fluid. The thirsty, dried-up soil put forth its fresh green verdure at every pore, and all nature looked refreshed and invigorated as with a new life. It is significantly said that there was much grass in the place,—that Jesus commanded the multitude to sit down on the *green grass*. That pictorial feature introduced with especial picturesqueness into St. Mark's narrative, of itself irresistibly suggests to us the universal abundance. It speaks to us of the profuse bounty of nature—of that Gracious Hand which maketh grass to grow upon the mountains, which maketh even the wilderness and the solitary place to be glad with beauty, and the desert to rejoice and

blossom as the rose. In that uncultivated region nature displayed her wealth of resources as freely and fully as in the corn-fields and vineyards that enlivened the haunts of man, and cheered the heart with their rich promise. Looked at from this point of view, the multiplication of the loaves was only a manifestation of the same Power which on the bare, desolate table of the wilderness spread a plentiful feast of grass, wild fruits and herbs for the sustenance of man and beast,—which converted by the slow processes of nature the stones of the waste into bread, and covered the barren sand, which no man owned or tilled, with verdure. The miracle was on the same line of progression with the natural process—parallel, but not counter to it. The bread which the multitude held in their hands was but a few degrees removed from the grass upon which they sat. They both belonged to the same order of vegetation. A carpet of green grass afforded a welcome resting-place to their wearied bodies; and the seed of barley, a species of grass, furnished grateful nourishment for their exhausted strength. It was the same Power which at first enlarged abnormally the seed of a grass, which multiplied the nutritious elements in its ear, and made barley, so to speak, a *Divinely artificial* plant, and gave it as a miraculous provision for man's wants—that multiplied the five loaves until they became a sufficiency for thousands. The perennial grass under their feet, at the very moment the miracle was going on, was in the act of multiplying itself by a process of lateral extension, each root sending out a new shoot, and thus, in the absence of blossom and seed, spreading itself over the soil, and affording an abundant Heaven-provided feast for the dumb, helpless creatures that could neither sow nor reap, nor gather into barns. Thus, by a somewhat analogous process in the miracle, our Lord made the same kind of provision for the wants of the multitude who had followed Him into the wilderness far beyond the reach of the ordinary sources of food-supply, as He uniformly makes in the scheme of nature for the supply of the wants of the inferior creatures.

Taken together, the two parallel miracles of Gilgal and Capernaum were meant to counteract, for those who witnessed them and for us who read of them in faith, the effects of Nature, or Baal-worship, the deadening and materialising influence of regularity and uniformity in the ordinances of nature and of human society. They turn away the thoughts, by their wise and gracious interruptions, from the established course of the world, back to its origin

and up to its source; and disclose the great Living Will by whose word it was created, and by whose continuous work it is upheld. They connect themselves with the common methods by which bread is grown, just as the miracle of the manna in the wilderness connected itself with the growth of the corn of Canaan and merged into it. They are God's object-lessons, as it were, teaching us the meaning and design of the wider phenomena of nature; God's experiments illustrating the wonderful working of the one Divine Power which everywhere produces out of the various ingredients of the soil and the air the food of common life. He who rained manna directly from heaven; He who multiplied the barley loaves by Elisha's instrumentality at Gilgal; He who fed the multitude at Capernaum, is the same who season after season raises the seed-corn into the waving harvest. We see in the common event no less than in the rare miracle—not a dead course of things, but the work of our Father's hands, the light of His glory, and the tokens of His love. While the more uncommon and astonishing events of His providence are signs to us of a new creation—the first-fruits of a new order, the pledges of a new power which will gradually purge the whole creation, which groaneth and travaileth together in pain until now, from the evil of sin and the curse of barrenness, and cause it to share in the glorious liberty of the sons of God. What are the miracles of Gilgal and Capernaum but the winding up *intensively*, as it were, by the Divine hand of a providential mechanism which has been working itself down *extensively* ever since in the prevention of famine and in the multiplication of food over wider and wider areas of the earth's surface? The teaching of the prophets of Gilgal and of the Saviour at Capernaum, signed and sealed by such wonderful practical proofs of its effects, has contributed to the order and freedom and comfort in which we rejoice,—has enabled us to disarm nature and harness her to our help,—has been the means of giving a richer success and a larger return to the culture of the soil throughout all Christian lands.

The fact that both Christ and Elisha employed intervening agencies, instead of giving the bread out of their own hands direct to the multitude, is not the least significant, and certainly not the least Divine, circumstance in the miracles. It is in entire and beautiful accordance with God's procedure throughout the whole economy of human life. He does not give the produce of the yearly harvests directly to those who consume it. There

are numerous intermediate ministries and services. Very few of my readers raise their own food. Not a particle of corn is grown in the streets and squares of the great city where these words are written. The inhabitants are occupied in other pursuits which are necessary for the well-being and advancement of mankind. And yet this great multitude is fed. Christ says virtually to the farmer, and the miller, and the merchant, "Give ye them to eat." They are fed day by day and year by year not by their own direct efforts—not immediately from the hand of the Lord of the harvest—but by the agency of those who rear and prepare and sell the food—by the ordinances of nature and of human society, which are of God's appointment, and which He causes to work together for good ends. Relatively to the number of those engaged in other pursuits in this country, the number of those who produce our food is almost as small as the number of the disciples compared with the multitude whom they fed. In this connection it is a significant circumstance that our Lord should have caused the multitude to be arranged in regular order before He proceeded to divide the small supply of food. St. Mark, with his usual graphic power of description and eye to pictorial effect, calls the separate parties of fifty or a hundred by a word in the original which means spaces separately and carefully marked off, like flowers planted in garden parterres. Are we to suppose that this arrangement was made merely for the sake of conveniently distributing the food to the crowd, and that it had no other purpose? This, as it seems to me, would be taking too low a view of this feature of the miracle. Just as the hem of Christ's garment was replete with healing power, so the smallest details of His miracles are full of spiritual suggestiveness, and point to a larger and wider purpose while fulfilling the more immediate object in view. If the miracles are typical or illustrative of the grander natural processes of the world, then we must regard the arrangement in the miracle of the crowd into convenient groups of fifties and hundreds as symbolic of the order of society, and the division and organization of labour by which the wants of the great human family are supplied. In the first instance we see exhibited to us in the miracle on a small scale and in a more precise form the same wonderful Divine order which pervades all the arrangements of nature—the succession of the seasons, of seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night—the correlation of

physical agencies and influences by which the bread of man is grown and ripened. He who so carefully prepared the multitude for receiving the miraculous food, had with equal care prepared the way for the production of that food from the earth by the slow gradual processes of nature. But further, we see reflected in the orderly arrangement of the miracle the division of the great human multitude by the Divine appointment into groups of trades and industries, by which the food that is grown and earned by man is distributed with least noise, confusion, and loss of time, and by which the young, the aged, and infirm are prevented from being deprived of their share by the selfishness and inconsiderateness of the strong. Our Heavenly Father has so arranged the various pursuits and interests of society that they act and react upon each other, and the good of each depends directly upon the good of the whole. The operations of each human being carried on for his own advantage, pass over into some wider usefulness. All monopolies are broken up into companies of hundreds and fifties to be fed from the common store. If riches are increased, they are increased that use them; however selfishly accumulated or retained, they inevitably run over into circulation for the general good.

Our common English word *order* has a twofold meaning; it may be used in the sense of *command* or of *arrangement*; and this identification of the two meanings points to the great Will or Divine Law by which every arrangement or system exists. No one can reflect upon the order of society by which human food is produced and distributed without recognising the operation of the Divine Will. When old occupations have ceased to become profitable, new industries are opened up by which men may earn wages and their bread. When the increase of population presses too heavily upon the limits of the food-supply grown in old and long-cultivated regions, then, in God's order, new countries are discovered; a population is drawn to them by the discovery of the precious metals; and when this source of attraction is exhausted, the inhabitants settle down to the cultivation of the ground, and thus a surplus of food is produced to supply the deficiency of the mother-country. Is it not a remarkable providential arrangement, for instance, that when the harvest has failed so lamentably in Britain this year, California—which, a few years ago, was an unknown and uncultivated wilderness, or merely a gold-field—has gathered into its barns one of the richest

harvests which the earth has ever yielded to the labours of man, and is now prepared to pour into our empty lap its overflowing treasures, to feed a multitude which, but for this timely succour, might have had to face famine and starvation? By these, and such-like methods of arrangement, the Great Father feeds the multitudes and the generations as truly and effectually, as wisely and advantageously as the five thousand were fed in ranks by the hands of Jesus in the wilderness. We are thus taught in the most impressive manner our mutual dependence upon each other and upon God for the supply of our daily bread.

In the animal kingdom it has been observed that various creatures are frequently found associated with others altogether different. They are not parasites, but simply take advantage of the larger animals to which they attach themselves in order to obtain food, which they would otherwise be unable to acquire, and which, in most cases, is identical with that of their hosts. They dine at the same table as it were; the two animals furnish together an example of what is called commensalism. A higher kind of this commensalism may be seen in human society. Human beings dine together at the same great table which Heaven furnishes every season with the produce of the fields. The wise and the strong are made by God's arrangement to provide for the commensals, which share with them the same home, or neighbourhood, or country,—the wards and the pensioners of society, the young and the aged, the incapable and the unfortunate. What a rebuke is there in the Divine words, "Give ye them to eat," to those who refuse to do good and communicate, to administer to a brother's necessity what they have got from the Lord for that very purpose! What a rebuke is there to the many in our great cities who hasten to be rich, and riot in luxury and extravagance, even though it be at the expense of the poverty, degradation, and hunger of their fellow-creatures—who selfishly interrupt and appropriate to their own use the gifts intended to be passed on to others! What a rebuke to our workmen and to our capitalists, who, by their foolish strikes and greedy combinations, are raising so enormously the cost of living! We may rest assured that every monopoly which fixes the barriers of its own advantage against the general good, has the providence of God leagued against it, and cannot succeed. Commercial schemes that seek to fatten upon the necessities of the poor inevitably come to a disastrous bank-

ruptcy. Measures of special co-operation, trades-unions, and other similar combinations of class against class, interfere with the regular action of the social family, hinder the law of mutual help, and are therefore certain, sooner or later, to produce much social distress: everything that disturbs by a class privilege the common balance and broad partnership of the industries, everything that sets man against his brother, eats up the common substance and raises prices for all. "Give ye them to eat," says Christ to all employers. Let those who help to create wealth share more in the fruit of their labours; let capital and labour adjust their claims more equitably. "Give ye them to eat," says Christ to the guardians of the poor whom we have always with us—which guardians are all those whom God has blessed with abundance. And what is thus passed on by all the employments to its right destination is multiplied as it passes on under the blessing of Heaven; so that those who distribute and those who receive share in common in the blessed increase.

But the great lesson which we learn from the miracle of Gilgal is the duty and blessedness of giving the first-fruits of all our harvests, whatever they be—whether of profit in business or profit in farming—to the Lord. What a powerful practical illustration of the text, "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth," is the feeding of three hundred prophets by the twenty loaves! Had the farmer of Baal-shalisha kept his barley loaves to himself, they would only have furnished him with seven meals; they would have sufficed for only one meal to his small household, and the pleasure of the indulgence would have been speedily forgotten. But giving them to the Lord, they were made the means of an abundant feast to the whole college of prophets; the farmer got a spiritual blessing from the act; and this thing which he did to the disciples in the name of a disciple immortalised his memory. His gift of barley-loaves—like the pot of manna—is treasured up in the holy place for perpetual remembrance. Let us imitate his example. In spite of all unfavourable influences this year, God has proved His faithfulness to His covenant promise. He has given to us a harvest such as it is; He has kept us from famine; and perhaps when we come to count up our gains with our losses, our present gloomy fears may be disappointed. In any case, let us in gratitude and faith yield the first-fruits of our harvest to God; and as the first-fruits are

thus made holy, let us remember that we are thereby pledged to employ no part of the produce of the harvest in the work of sin, but, on the contrary, to expend the leisure, the health, the strength, the blessings which the harvest imparts in the service of God, in doing good and communicating. And thus consecrated and employed, the harvest far below the average will be much above the average in its power of blessing and enriching. The

little that a just man hath—and it is to be feared that there will be little indeed in many households during the coming winter—used in this manner will be more than the great riches of wicked men. The scanty barrel of meal will be multiplied by the blessing of God into an abundant feast, and will leave enduring and gracious results behind to benefit all generations.

HUGH MACMILLAN.

THE FUTURE OF THE WORKING CLASSES.

FIRST PAPER.

"**M**ORE leisure and more pay," are the two great points of the charter for which the working man has been struggling during the last dozen years. And beyond all doubt he has struggled to some purpose. It says not a little for the energy he has displayed (we speak not of other qualities), that he has made substantial progress in both directions at one and the same time. Nor is there much sign of his deeming that he has yet reached the stage of "Rest and be thankful." Many are asking in astonishment, Where and when is he going to stop? That his goal is definitely fixed in his own mind we do not doubt, at least in one of the two directions; nor do we think that he is likely to carry matters to the point sarcastically indicated by the American lady, who advertised for a servant that would have to work but one hour a day, and for whom a music master would be engaged to give lessons on the piano.

We assume it, then, as quite a settled point that the working man of the future will have more leisure and more pay than he has ever had since settled industry had a home in this country. And this is just to assume that he is about to enter on a new era of his history. With a considerable amount of spare time and spare money, he will be a different sort of being from what he was, when every available hour was spent in labour, and every shilling he earned in the bare necessities of life. Spare time and spare money are fitted to become noble levers for raising him in the scale of being. Will the working man rise in the scale of being, now that he is coming to possess these two things? We think that he may, to a large extent; that is to say, we think that he may reach a new development of his higher faculties, hitherto all but dormant, and along with this, that he may attain to a considerable share of what is truly

valuable and desirable in leisurely, cultivated life. But we deliberately say that he *may*, not that he *will*; he has conquered the one, it remains to be seen whether he will conquer the other; he has gained the opportunity, and it is for him to decide whether he will now turn the opportunity into the reality. There seems to us to open, in the not distant future, a magnificent vista for the working man; the whole style and character of his life may undergo a remarkable elevation; a considerable share of all that is bright and pleasant in the life of the middle and upper classes may come to his lot; and the change may affect not merely the few who rise to a higher class, but the whole platform of labour, the great mass of our working population. Such a consummation is worthy of the help and the prayers of every earnest Christian among us; for, as labour has hitherto been regulated, there has commonly been so much of strain and drudgery and exhaustion about it, that it is only in a few exceptional instances that the delicacy and beauty of the Christian life have been reached in its ranks. But now that there is to be more leisure and more means, if only men are willing and God's grace comes to bless their efforts, we may find among the working classes, in addition to the solid Christian worth which they have often exemplified, not a little of the cultivation, and the taste, and the easy pleasing manners that have hitherto been associated mainly with other classes of society. The working man may become, what Dr. Chalmers saw afar off, a companionable, cultivated being, whose fellowship all may be able to relish; and the amenities of life, which have hitherto been distributed in proportions so unequal, may come to be diffused much more abundantly through the lower strata of the community.

Why, for example, to put the case in a practical form, and to begin at a low level (we shall ascend higher by-and-by), ought not the working classes of the next generation to become at least as civilised in their style of life as the lower section of the middle class are at the present day? We have often asked ourselves the question, as year by year we have seen a social transformation going on in the matter of dwelling houses. During the last dozen of years a very conspicuous change has been going on in Edinburgh, and we believe in most other large towns. The middle classes have been steadily leaving the houses which were occupied by previous generations, and building much superior dwellings in the suburbs. The old houses thus left vacant have generally been taken possession of by the class below. Why should not the working class, as they take possession of the houses, enter also on some of the things characteristic of the mode of life of the previous occupants? Why should they not try to keep a similar collection of books, for example, and a musical instrument, and to have the tea-drinkings, and the social intercourse, and it may be the occasional change to the country, of those whose houses they have taken possession of? That the thing is feasible is proved by the fact that in a few instances it takes place. If the working man, as a general rule, would practise the self-control, the providence, the self-reliance, which have been characteristic of the more industrious members of the middle class, there is nothing now to prevent him from having as fair a share of what is really desirable in civilised life as his middle-class brother enjoyed a couple of generations ago.

The working man, we have said, has gained the opportunity; it remains to be seen whether he will attain to the reality. A crowded railway train is coming along the line, and nearing the place where the pointsman stands. It depends on the pointsman whether it is to be carried straight along the line to the proper terminus, or shunted off in a wrong direction to encounter some nameless catastrophe. So it depends greatly on the working man of the present day whether the coming generations of his fellows are to have a career of such worth and honour as must satisfy the longings of their most ardent friends; or whether, on the other hand, shunted off in the direction of grovelling indulgence, they are to go further and further astray, until they reach a depth from which there can be no resurrection.

That the working man may better his position without bettering himself—may increase his earnings and increase his leisure and at the same time debase himself more shockingly than ever, is only too apparent at the present day. Is it creditable to the working classes that there should be even a plausible ground for debating the question whether they are better off for their greater wages and shorter hours? Is it creditable that we should be debarred, for a time at least, from applying confidently to this movement the test, "The tree is known by its fruits?" "Fruits!" some will say to us, "see what they are! Drinking-bouts that last for days and nights together—neglect of families—no laying up for the future—the Sabbath of God turned into a high festival of the devil—insolence to employers—coarseness and brutality in every form!" Unfortunately, in every neighbourhood, there are outstanding instances of this state of things quite enough to give a colour to the assertion that, like Midas's gift of gold, all that the working man has recently got has been a curse to him. They may be quite exceptional instances, and often they are; but they are what attract attention, and very often, though very unfairly, they are represented as showing the usual state of things. We sympathize very deeply with the mass of excellent men who suffer in reputation for the sins of their neighbours, and in public estimation are treated as if all were alike. It is true, all the same, that every one acquainted with the domestic circumstances of working men, especially in certain industries, such as those of iron and coal, can tell of this family and the other whose united earnings amount to two or three hundred pounds a year; yet their bedding is not worth five shillings, and their whole household gear would be dear at five pounds. The inspector of the poor has his stories of their improvidence and their meanness—how they apply for parish aid for their father when he is unable to work, or how they actually suffer their mother to die in the poor-house. It is usually in such families that the children grow up uneducated, and it is the greed and the grovelling habits of such parents that send mere infants to labour, and compel them to support themselves before they can write their name. The only institution they support on a liberal scale is their stomach; without a figure, their god is their belly; their worship is an index of their character; and really if they tried nothing else they could hardly succeed better than they do in degrading themselves, and disgusting their well-wishers.

Unhappily, too, there are other facts that bear in the same direction. A quiet sea-side town is favoured with a visit of an excursion party from a mining county. The excursionists pour like an army of skirmishers along green bank and sandy beach, wooded glen and rocky promontory. In a very short time the pleasure arising from the novelty of the scene is exhausted, and it becomes a question how the day is to be got through. They have no band of music, and do not even fall on the device of most excursionists—a dance on the level green. The objects of the sea-shore have little interest for them, though some of them may never have looked on the sea before. A few of the men fall on the odd amusement of plunging into the water, clothes and all. For the time being it is great fun, but by-and-by there comes a chilly feeling, suggesting the public house and a bumper of whiskey. By degrees the whole party, or very nearly the whole, are patronising that grand institute of modern civilisation. As the hour for leaving draws on, the village streets swarm with staggering men and women. And after they are gone, the one prominent tradition of their visit is that half of them were drunk.

We do not blame them overmuch. We know something of the miner's life, going down to work in the blackness of darkness before he has learnt the games of schoolboys, before he has learnt to love the face of nature, an exile from the light of heaven, and all its cheering influences, coming up at night stiff and weary, with no one perhaps to take him by the hand in a brotherly way, or show him how life may become agreeable and at the same time blessed. But such a fact as that which we have now noticed is very sad and very ominous. It is not easy to refute the scornful comment on it which we are so likely to hear—"See what your holidays and high wages come to!"

We are justly proud of our railways. We like to think of the millions that have been spent in their construction, and of the engineering skill and indomitable perseverance of which they are the enduring monument. But what a black chapter in their history would be that of the contractor's pay-day! It happened to the writer of these lines to spend a Saturday afternoon lately in a secluded part of Lanarkshire, consecrated to the memory of the Covenanters, near the grave of John Brown of Priesthill, "the godly carrier," as he was called, who was shot by Claverhouse at his own door, in presence of his wife and family, on the spot where his tomb-

stone stands. It was a balmy, bright afternoon; the moorlands and hills bathed in the sunshine, looked as if resolved to make up for all their sullen looks in duller days; and from the martyr-land that lay round and round, there seemed to come forth a holy influence that braced one's soul, as if for every high and heroic deed. It is not easy to tell with what revulsion of feeling, as we drove homewards, we saw the way strewn with navvies, dead drunk and helpless, certainly not natives of the district, who had just received their fortnight's pay. And the most melancholy thing of all is, that such scenes have become so common as to excite no surprise. They are expected as punctually as the high-tide at full moon. "Only a railway navvie who has got his pay!"

But we have not reached the full significance of these facts till we have considered that they are the fruit of a law of human nature, which is as sure and as wide in its operation as gravitation itself. That law, thank God, may be superseded by other laws, but unless it be so, the working man's ruin is sealed. The law to which we refer is, that which regulates enjoyment. There are certain pleasures which may be relished without any preparatory training; there are other pleasures, and these of a higher kind, which are in no sense pleasures to the uneducated and undisciplined soul. It is chiefly our animal gratifications, eating and drinking, and the like, or the gratifying of any of our bodily propensities, that need no preparatory process. Of the same class is the excitement of gambling, and that of witnessing a fight, or a race, or of hearing or reading accounts of them, or accounts of daring crimes or shocking accidents. These are the ready and handy resort of all undisciplined minds, whenever the opportunity occurs. And on every side there are caterers who know the fact, and spread the tempting bait whenever the workman has time and money on his hands. But the effect is to degrade, to brutalise, to destroy. It is precisely this class of pleasures that demand the exercise of self-control. If you plunge into them with a careless *abandon*, all is over with you. On the other hand, a man's mind must be educated to relish natural beauty, to enjoy improving reading, to be interested in rational conversation and quiet society, to feel the charm of the higher kind of music, to find pleasure in botany, zoology, or geology, or in museums and galleries of art—in a word, to relish the purer and better enjoyments of leisurely life. We are not

speaking here of the highest of all enjoyments—those of the soul in fellowship with God; but if this were our subject, the argument for a preparatory change in order to their being enjoyed would be all the stronger. What we now affirm is, that unless the working man have an educated mind, and a large share of self-control, he is sure, when he has leisure and money, to fall upon the class of enjoyments that need no preparatory training—those that are nearest and handiest—and unless prevented by higher influences, to indulge in them to a degree that will prove absolutely ruinous. It may be assumed as an axiom, that after any considerable muscular strain, after any long spell of work, there comes a craving for relaxation and enjoyment, and that whensoever the leisure and the money to command enjoyment exist, it will be eagerly sought. And this craving is naturally very strong in the case of the young. The elasticity of their nature is such, that after the restraint and pressure of a long pull at work, the spring bounds back with peculiar force—the craving for enjoyment comes with an irresistible impulse. The question is, what species of enjoyment will they resort to? Now, what we dread most of all in looking forward to the future of the working classes is, the possession of ample means and leisure for enjoyment, *without that intellectual, moral, and spiritual training which will incline them to enjoyments of a pure and elevating kind.* In former times, the limited means and limited leisure of working men, though they did not neutralise this tendency, kept it within moderate limits. Let the means and the leisure be multiplied, and no purer tastes and cravings formed, then assuredly we may look at last for the fulfilment of Prince Metternich's celebrated prophecy, "After me, the deluge!"

We do not think that it is possible for any friend of the working classes to warn them too loudly of the fearful danger to which they are exposed, as the result of a low use of their greater leisure and better pay. Let us take, by way of sample, the case of girls earning considerable wages in mills. We happen to know a provincial town, where a pastrycook's shop is a great attraction to such girls, insomuch, we are told, that one large share of their earnings goes for tarts and buns. Of course they must have smart head-dresses and body-dresses for Sundays and holidays, and another considerable share of their earnings is absorbed in gum-flowers, ribbons, and flounces. Literature does not cost them much; what they do patronise is

the *London Journal* and the *Police Chronicle*. As for accomplishments, all they care for is to learn to dance. Observe now the daily life of such girls. They are up early in the morning, summer and winter, seldom, we fear, bending the knee in prayer before they go out; their beds are made by their mothers; they come in to breakfast—that, too, is prepared by their mothers; in to dinner, ditto; to tea, ditto; and in the evening, perhaps, out at a dance. Is this the way to elevate their order? Are these the future wives and mothers of our working classes? If it be so, what on earth is to become of our country?

But happily there is another side of the picture. There is evidence of the existence of a large amount of sound feeling and lofty aspiration among the working classes. Take, for example, the Good Templar movement that has spread so widely. We do not inquire into the rules or methods by which the Good Templars seek to attain their object; it is enough for our purpose to mark the object which they seek to attain. Good Templarism, then, as we take it, is an effort on the part of the working classes to steer clear, and help one another to steer clear, of that gulf to which we have adverted—the cesspool of mere animal gratification, sensual indulgence, degrading pleasures. The imminent danger of the class has been forced on the notice of its more observant members, and they have felt it to be of the last necessity to do something to avert it. The Good Templar movement may or may not be adapted permanently to effect its purpose; but it is at least an interesting proof of the earnest desire of a large number of the working classes to get the ship steered into a safer channel than that to which she has been drifting. And it is interesting to see the heartiness with which the friends of the movement throw themselves into it. It shows that there is a large measure of brotherly feeling among the working classes, when so many of them are consecrating their leisure to such earnest and disinterested labour on behalf of their fellows.

The large number of teetotallers who belong to the working classes, and the still greater number of supporters of the Permissive Bill, are additional facts bearing in the same direction. Further, as showing that all do not bow down to the idol of gross animal indulgence, we may advert to the large amount of deposits in the savings-banks, and to the remarkable success of building and investment societies, resulting in the erection of workmen's houses by the hundred thousand.

In Scotland we can advert to a still more significant fact. The working classes supply many thousands of our godly church-goers, and there are elders and deacons from their ranks not a few. And though in our mining, and in some of our urban districts, where the population is largely Irish, there is much indifference among working people to education, it is otherwise with the great mass of what may be called the people of Scotland. If in some quarters *London Journals* and *Police Chronicles* are eagerly devoured, there is many a student, on the other hand, of such works as Cassell's "Popular Educator," and many a reader of some of our best periodicals. We cannot speak of England as of Scotland from personal observation, but for the more northern kingdom we think that there is ground to say that among working classes there is a sufficient leaven of intelligence, self-control, and godliness to warrant the expectation that, in process of time, through God's blessing, the happy future of which we have spoken will be realised to a considerable degree.

We are very far from thinking that the working classes are the only portion of the community that lie open to the temptations of misused means and misused leisure. Would only that we could speak of the upper and middle classes as models in these particulars! Would that there were no occasion to reproach any of the privileged classes with those very vices to which the workman is prone—sensuality, gambling, betting, and other unrestrained gratifications of the lower part of our nature! Alas! that in spite of their opportunities of self-improvement, so many even of the upper class should devote their youth to the lowest and most destructive forms of gratification, without even the excuse of a long spell of exhausting labour, and in spite of the responsibility entailed on them by their high position. As for the middle class, there is much in their position too, especially in connection with the wonderfully rapid increase of wealth among them, to create the deepest anxiety. It is a serious thing for the country that so many young men, the sons of those who have acquired great wealth during the last thirty years, will begin life without the necessity of working for their bread, with little or no stimulus to exertion, with every luxury and pleasure at their elbow, and exposed to the whole host of caterers and flatterers skilled in the cultivation of

wild oats, who waylay them in the hope of making something out of their weaknesses. In selecting the future of the working classes as our subject, we have not been influenced by the notion that they alone are exposed to danger, or that they alone need to be urged to strive to fulfil their destiny. What impresses us is, that there is something so remarkable in the present *opportunity* of the working classes, and at the same time that there is so great need for their being urged to avail themselves of that opportunity. Some may resent our attempt as an uncalled-for interference—a ridiculous endeavour to lecture an independent order of men into ways of life which they are perfectly able to follow of themselves if they chose. We can afford to bear this cuff, because we know so well that we shall have the countenance and benediction of many a working man to whom nothing is more refreshing than to hear a hearty voice from another quarter beseeching the millions of his labouring brethren to strive to realise for themselves a glorious future. Many a working man sees all that we have now said, and feels it deeply; and nothing grieves him more than the difficulty of getting his fellows to see it, and to band themselves together in an effort to make the future of their order as bright as it might be. We do not dream of a premature Paradise, and we will not waste our labour in sketching an ideal Utopia. We take our stand upon a foundation of realised fact. We see a practicable way by which the labouring masses, if they choose, may, with God's blessing, attain to a mode of life brightened by many advantages and enjoyments hitherto seen only from afar. We see a way by which they may do more than they have ever done for blessing mankind, and turning to account glorious capabilities of heart and soul hitherto left dormant or allowed to run to waste. Of some of the details of that life, and of the forces by which it is to be realised, we shall try to speak in succeeding papers. We do not hesitate to announce broadly, that we go on the old principle that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. We have nothing to say to the wanderer till he return to his Father's house; if he do return in a filial spirit, he will find it true that godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come.

W. G. BLAIKIE.

IN THE WILDERNESS.

LORD JESUS, I am sad and lone,
Scarce have strength to make my moan ;
Like a sick babe, here I lie,
Only love can hear my cry,
Only love have might to bear,
The wayward purpose of my prayer
For strength, for life, for rest above :
But then I know that Thou art Love ;
I know not what I want or would,
But this I know—that Thou art good.

Lord, my life has struck its tent,
Its days 'mid Elim's palms are spent ;
The desert stretches parched and bare,
Dead bones of pilgrims whiten there ;
The very sun seems not the same,
Its golden glow has waxed to flame :
But yet upon the burning sand,
I read the writing of Thy hand.
"Fear not to come. This path I trod,—
The soul is safe which follows God."



O Lord, I fear, but still I come !
The way is hard,—the end is home.
I do not pray Thee make it fair,
I only pray Thee, bring me there ;
Thy staves must break, then let them be
Thy rods to chide me nearer Thee !

My limbs must fail, my sandals slack,
I care not, so I go not back !
Heed not what'er I cry in pain,
But help me on to walk again ;
Only when all the road is o'er
Come out, and meet me at Thy door !

ISABELLA FVIE MAYO.

THE EDITORS' ROOM.

I.—NOTES AND COMMENTS.

TO OUR READERS.

THE readers of the SUNDAY MAGAZINE have probably observed, from statements in the public journals, that Dr. Guthrie has recently had a severe attack of illness. Though his recovery has been advancing as favourably as could have been expected, he has been interdicted by medical authority from undertaking work that would involve any strain, whether of mind or body. This will not interfere with the arrangements for carrying on the Magazine in all its departments, as announced in the programme for the year; nor will it prevent Dr. Guthrie from writing papers of which the materials are already in his hands; but it will render it necessary for him to suspend for a time the papers which he was to have contributed under the title, "Among the Stricken"—a class to which it may be said that for the present he himself belongs. Dr. Guthrie has had so much experience of the kindness of the readers of the Magazine, that he does not doubt that he will have their sympathy and forbearance on the present occasion. Should strength be given him to renew the series, he need not say that he will esteem it more than ever a privilege to help to make known some of those noble institutions, the blessed offspring of Christian love, by which it is sought to alleviate the sufferings of the stricken, and minister to the wants both of body and soul. One would have little claim to be a follower of the great Master, if the personal experience of suffering did not make one more able to sympathize with the stricken, and more willing to succour them.

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

Even strangers cannot think of the present troubles of the Church of England without deep concern. Those who are most remote from it, as regards personal connection, and who are therefore least influenced by the personal feelings which a great controversy raises, cannot but be deeply moved when they think of the momentous results, for time and for evermore, that hang upon present proceedings. The crisis is too solemn to admit of any feelings inconsistent with those of deep and prayerful solicitude. We are overwhelmed by the number and magnitude of the interests that crowd on us when we try to estimate the bearings of present movements and struggles. Not only the welfare of the millions of England, high and low, rich and poor, but the interests of colonies and dependencies unprecedented in number and in magnitude, and crowned by the great peninsula in the East, are linked by very vital cords and currents to the Church of England. So mighty a stirring of a people's heart as is now going on in connection with ecclesiastical matters, embracing Nonconformists as well as Churchmen, is rare in the history of any great people. It is such a movement as takes place only once perhaps in centuries. The full effect of it cannot be apprehended till after it has

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settled down. Whatever be one's personal feelings or leanings, the one prevailing desire in every true heart must be, that God would give strength and power to his servants, show them their duty, and enable them to do it. Every succeeding event—every succeeding complication tends to deepen our fervour as we pray—

Thou framer of the light and dark,
Steer through the tempest Thine own ark
Amid the howling wintry sea;
We are in port if we have Thee.

SECESSION OF MR. MOLYNEUX.

All unite in bearing testimony to the high character and great usefulness of the Rev. Capel Molyneux, of the Lock Chapel, who in a pamphlet just published, has signified his determination to leave the Church of England, after an incumbency, we believe, of forty years. Those who deplore the step most, are not less ready than those who welcome it, to speak of Mr. Molyneux as an honour to any Church. It is the Bennett judgment that has induced him to take this step. We purposely avoid giving any opinion one way or other, but we may briefly state the leading grounds both of Mr. Molyneux and of those who differ from him. He holds that "there is no longer any security for attendants at our Church for knowing beforehand whether the teaching to which they shall submit themselves shall be of a directly infidel, Romanising, or evangelical character." Moreover, he holds that being an Established Church, "she is what the law makes and declares her to be. The law can unmake her, alter her, or destroy her at any time." He proceeds to pass under review the three possibilities that might enable one to escape from the position of countenancing the error which the Bennett judgment allows—namely, reformation, disestablishment, and secession. The first, including a revision of the Prayer-Book, he deems impossible. The second "looms in the distance, the cloud gathers, the day of disruption hastens upon us," but it affords no present relief. The third remains, and bitter though the necessity be, it is the only way of relief to him. "I presume not to decide the question for any other man living; nor to judge any other man living for the answer, be it what it may, that he may feel right to give; but I do presume to answer the question for myself, and that with perfect confidence, and the answer is, Secession is MY duty. And that duty I am, God helping me, fully prepared to discharge; yes, real, radical reformation, carrying with it the revision of the Prayer-Book, being impracticable, I will secede!"

The *Record* deems the step taken by Mr. Molyneux a great mistake, and one that might be fatal "were the example to be followed to any great extent, of which," it rejoices to add, "there is no probability whatever." The *Record* especially controverts his assumption that being an Established Church, the Church of England is what the law makes her, main-

taining that she exists by the will of God, and has independent rights and rules of acting given to her by the Lord, of which no State can deprive her. The State does not make her laws, but only interprets them. She is not the slave but the ally of the State, and maintains her independence and her power of action, subject to the risk of losing her temporalities. The *Record* further stamps Mr. Molyneux's course as pusillanimous. As a member of the Council of the Church Association, he should have been prepared for a long battle, and it is "anything but a brave or magnanimous course to desert the post of duty at the first repulse, and to fling down the weapons at the very time when there is need to grasp them more firmly, and wield them more resolutely than ever."

To this Mr. Molyneux replies, that it was not as a Church of Christ in the general that he maintained the Church of England to be under the power of the State, but as an Established or National Church, and that it was needless to assert that she had powers superior to the control of the State, if she could not use them. Could she proceed against Mr. Bennett? Could she refuse to be bound by the decision of the State? As to the charge of pusillanimity, founded on the fact that he had been one of those who were engaged in the prosecution of Mr. Bennett, he had engaged in that prosecution because he believed it to involve the interests of the truth and the honour of the Church; but now Mr. Bennett was acquitted, the object of the prosecution was lost, the evils that he wished to avert had come, and it was because he was unable in conscience to acquiesce in the decision that he felt it right to secede. He was not bound to adhere to the Established Church at all hazards and in all circumstances, and whether the step he has taken be or be not cowardly in the eyes of his brethren, it is enough for him that he deems it duty to his Master.

In reply it is alleged that Mr. Molyneux has taken this step either too late or too soon. There is nothing different in principle between this judgment and that by which the authors of "Essays and Reviews" were acquitted. Neither is there anything different from the state of things under which Dr. Colenso escaped being prosecuted, he having taken care not to contradict formally the Articles of the Church. If, therefore, Mr. Molyneux was justified in retaining his office for the last ten years, he ought not to secede now.

DEAN LAW'S VIEW OF THE CRISIS.

The Venerable Dean of Gloucester has addressed a letter to Captain Palmer on the present perils of the Church of England, and how to meet them. The state of things, in his view, is extremely painful. That when every nation in Europe is throwing off the yoke of Rome, England should be yielding herself up more and more to Romish views and practices, is utterly distressing and humiliating. The recent judgment he looks on as shaking the hope which hitherto had not been moved. In previous decisions rules had been laid down fitted to check the Romanising clergy. But in the most rebellious spirit they had set these

rules at defiance. And now comes a decision in their favour! And yet a very strange decision. The true doctrine of the Church is made very clear, but the culprit escapes! And he escapes just because his offence is so great! Just because *if* he is guilty the punishment is so heavy, every effort must be made to find a door for him to escape by. Minor culprits may tremble, but the most daring may rejoice in the safety of their position!

Dean Law had hoped for deliverance through the Bishops, and especially through the Primate, whose power was so great that he had been styled, not extravagantly, "Papa alterius orbis." That hope had been disappointed. Ought they, then, to resort to secession? Anything but that. "Secession savours of peevish petulance, of mortified self-will, of wounded self-importance, of imbecility and cowardice. It is not the brave front of Christian faith and Christian valour." And there was no call for it, the Church had changed none of its articles or doctrines. "Far from us be the timidity which forsakes a cause betrayed by some false friends." The remedy is in the pulpit.

"The grand doctrine of justification by faith only should be uplifted as a beacon on a thousand hills. Hearers should be distinctly taught our grand verities—the Father's eternal love—the terms of the unfulfilling Covenant—the Son's perfect and finished work—the Spirit's indwelling—the beauty and simplicity and purport of our sacraments—the evidence of faith—the might of prayer—the delight of praise—the labour of love—the patience of hope—the loveliness of purity—the high walk of uprightness—the solemnity of worship—the happiness of godly life."

We abstain from indicating any opinion on Dean Law's view of what is adequate to meet the crisis; but we can hardly abstain from signifying regret that he and others should so vehemently judge the spirit and motives of those who take a different view. In this judgment, we feel that they will not have the support of the church catholic.

THE ARCHBISHOP'S VIEW.

In his primary charge to the clergy of Canterbury, the Archbishop naturally dwells on the present confusions in the Church. His view is that the founders of the Church did well in making the formularies comprehensive enough to include a variety of ministers.

"We," said he, "who live in this generation, and look back upon the time of comparative darkness in which our fathers lived, rejoice to think that the Church of which we are members was wide enough for Charles Simeon and William Wilberforce, and those who in their day, in spite of much opposition, held forth the great Evangelical truths which had for a time been overlooked, never thought of leaving the Church of England, but found within its formularies full scope for the preaching of that Gospel in its purity which their hearts loved. We, also, looking still further back, I think, have no reason to regret that the Church of England was able to lead the van, in its struggle against Deism and various forms of infidelity under such as Paley; and if we look back to the time of Archbishop Tillotson, we don't, I think, regret that the Church of England found in its formu-

laries sufficient room for men of that turn of mind ; and when we look back further, I suppose there is not one of us who would wish that George Herbert should have been cast out of the Church of England."

Summing up his views as to the comprehension proper to the Church, he said :—

"As far as possible, it seems to me that the ideal of our Church is this—that men who agree in the grand essence of Christianity, who reverence the Lord Jesus Christ, who look to the purifying blood as the atonement of their sins, who confess themselves without hope of salvation without his death or passion, who point to the written Word of God as the test by which all the doctrines are to be observed—such men should, as far as possible, be united in one community, and I trust that as men become earnest in the great duties of their calling, they will more and more realise such truths."

In regard to the dependence of the Church on the State, he wished his clergy to consider that even Nonconformist churches were in certain respects dependent on the State. Nonconformist churches had property, and when the question arose whether they were carrying out the doctrines for which they had acquired the property, the decision of the question lay with the civil courts. Dr. Tait, who seems to regard "what is called" the Free Church of Scotland as a beacon to Christendom, and who, in the debate on the Irish Church, found even in her Sustentation Fund material for a solemn warning to the House of Lords, directed the attention of his clergy to a question now pending in that body. What was apparently the majority, who were now negotiating for union with other churches, were accused by the minority of departing from the original principles of the Church, and the minority were resolved to appeal to the civil courts to determine to which side the property belonged. Thus even the body which had made the greatest sacrifice to secure independence was unable to avoid the control of the State.

[In reference to a paragraph in our last number, under the head of "the Athanasian Creed," in which a parallel was pointed out between the Anti-union party in Scotland and Dr. Pusey, in their relation to their respective Churches, we wish to say for the sake of a correspondent who has misapprehended our meaning, that the parallel was limited to the points specified in the paragraph, and not meant to embrace the grounds on which the parties have taken up respectively the attitude they maintain.]

MR. ORBY SHIPLEY'S VIEW.

Mr. Orby Shipley is well known as an able and learned defender of High Church views, and as the editor of the volumes of Essays entitled, "The Church and the World." In the *Contemporary Review* for September he has published an elaborate paper, entitled "Church and State in Discord." He reviews historically the relations that have prevailed between Church and State in England, and comes to the conclusion that the recent treatment of the Church is at direct variance with the theory of their alliance, and that the Church has been subjected to such

opposite kinds of treatment that her position has been most grievously weakened. After discussing the possibility of remedy, he gives frankly his own conclusion :—"That only one complete remedy exists for this anomaly of Church and State in discord ; and that remedy is to be found in harmony restored by the severance of their union." Unless a speedy remedy be found for actual wrongs, "Disestablishment, combined with that which is even more strongly dreaded—Disendowment—will ensue more speedily than many expect, and under less favourable terms than it may be possible now to secure." In the matter of self-government three things were essential—legislative, executive and judicial. "Suffer her to decide her own spiritual causes ; enable her to elect her own chief officers ; force her to initiate her own reformation, and she will be placed in a position to re-assert her lost, but inherent and divine power." If these three things were conceded to the Church, he would concede not a little to the State. Convocation need not be permitted to enforce its laws without the sanction of the State ; the Crown might name bishops out of two or three priests elected by the diocese ; and the spiritual courts might be constituted in the name of the supreme head of the Empire. "All this might remain ; and yet spiritual things would be decided by spiritual persons ; the episcopate would be recruited after an ecclesiastic manner ; convocation reformed would become a living, active, energizing, and respected influence in both Church and State ; whilst some effort would have been made to diminish the existing want of harmony between the temporal and the spiritual powers."

THE NEW LICENSING LAW.

We observe, with much pleasure, that the general testimony, based on the results, appears to be generally in favour of the new regulations. A diminution of drunkenness and disorder appears to have resulted wherever these regulations have been carefully applied. If we may judge from the opinions of leading men in Bristol, the effect there has been markedly beneficial. At a public meeting, one gentleman declared that he had taken pains to ascertain how the new Act had worked in Bristol, and the testimony of the police and other persons was, that since the houses had closed at eleven o'clock the streets were much quieter. The medical officer of the Local Board of Health had expressed his belief that the indirect effect of the Act would be to lessen debauchery and licentiousness, and to prolong the lives of the public. In Liverpool we read that several of the large manufactories have been visited, and the vote of the persons employed has been obtained as to whether the public-houses should be allowed to remain open beyond the prescribed time. The opinion has been generally against such permission being granted. The same canvass has taken place in Birmingham, and in one manufactory, Messrs. Hind & Son, lamp-makers, out of one hundred workpeople, ninety-six were against any extension of hours to the publican.

We have little doubt that as experience is gathered

it will be more and more in the same direction; and we particularly rejoice to think that the testimony of industrious working men has been raised in favour of restriction. There is a general impression in the minds of many that working men have no desire but to drink away the ampler means and ampler leisure they now enjoy. We have observed that at public meetings, when any allusion is made to this impression, it is warmly and most indignantly repudiated by working men. We take the following from an account of a Birmingham meeting held the other day:—

“It had been widely stated, and extensively believed by those who did not know or understand the working classes, that any shortening of the hours of labour, or any increase of wages, meant only increased facility for extravagant habits and drinking customs.—(“Shame.”) This was simply shameful; it was monstrous.—(Cheers.) There was drunkenness in every class of the community, probably not disproportionately so amongst the working classes; but he asked them, as reasonable men, was the drunkard to be the standard measure of labour, or the sober, steady, and industrious man?—(Hear, hear.) Was the standard to be on the lower or the higher scale, and because an inveterate drunkard would, in all probability, spend foolishly any extra money which might accrue to him in consequence of an advance of wages, was the honest and industrious man to be deprived of the advance he could justly claim, and which would enable him to make his home more happy, and to give the education to his children which it was necessary they should have?—(Cheers.) They must get rid of all the nonsense which was talked about making the drunkard the standard of wages; and they must remember that whilst some men spent their money foolishly, there were hundreds and thousands of others who spent it wisely.—(Hear.)”

There can be little doubt that this is true of certain industries and bodies of workmen, but there are others to which it is unhappily not applicable. A more general testimony in favour of the shortening of the hours of public houses would serve to remove from the sober members of the class the imputation which they feel so keenly.

II.—OUR LETTER DRAWER:

CRIPPLES' HOMES.

In Dr. Guthrie's article on Cripples' Homes it is stated that those in London are the only institutions of the kind. We have received a letter from an excellent and most devoted lady in Edinburgh, stating that a small home for cripple children has existed in Edinburgh since May, 1870, and that the Home is now situated in No. 9, Salisbury Place, and visitors are welcome on Wednesdays and Fridays after two o'clock.

Through personal inquiries we are able to bear testimony to the admirable character of this Home. It has been carried on so quietly and unobtrusively as not to attract the notice which it deserves, but it has been, and continues to be, a source of great blessing to the children who have enjoyed its benefits.

But surely in a city like Edinburgh, with all its “Hospitals” and their munificent endowments, more

attention ought to be given to this most important class of “the stricken”?

RURAL CHURCHES FOR CITY POOR.

A correspondent from an English rectory draws our attention to the difficulty of establishing church-going habits among the inhabitants of dark and dingy rooms, when they are asked to attend churches scarcely less gloomy and oppressive. He proposes a remedy. Let a rural church be built for such in some green bright spot, the very sight of which will be a joy for ever, and let a train be run to and fro, to convey the inhabitants thither and bring them home. Our friend seems to think that church-going would become so attractive that the habits of neglect which prevail at present would be overcome. Many persons of choice attend church at a little distance from their dwellings, and enjoy above all things a church in a sweet rural situation. Would not the poor like it as well as the rich?

This is one of several proposals for benefiting the religious condition of the people brought under our notice by the same friend. Several of his ideas seem to us of value, and well worth pondering; but this particular proposal of rural churches, attractive though it be when it first comes into the mind, is one that could not be carried into effect.

There is first the question of the train—not only the principle of the thing, but the expense. The question of principle is supremely important. However cheap, it must cost a few pence, and that would be a serious obstacle. Then there is the effort to rouse one's self for the journey. For to people oppressed with much labour, this effort would be considerable. Further, there is the loss of the benefit arising from God's house being in the midst of them. God's dwelling among them is, or is capable of becoming, a great moral power. And still further, there is the mental dissipation of a journey, especially to such a class—the mind is shaken, and is not in a frame to join in worship demanding the consecration of all its faculties. The whole arrangement is too complicated and artificial, even if it were in principle sound.

But why should not a church in such localities be made bright and cheerful? And why might not a reading-room be connected with it, supplied with suitable reading for the Lord's-day? And children's services, bright and attractive, might be held too. There is no people that have done more to make mission services attractive, especially to the young, than the people of the United States. Let a stranger go to Philadelphia, and enter the spacious building used as a Sunday-school in the Bethany mission, with its fountain, its coloured windows, its pictures, its banners, and its organ, and the last thing that he will think of is dinginess and repulsiveness. Probably we should not go so far as our brethren on the other side; but we might at least take a leaf from their book.

OPENING OF MUSEUMS ON SUNDAY.

The agitation on this subject (adverted to under this head in our last number) has received a con-

siderable impulse from a letter published in the London newspapers, by the Rev. S. C. H. Hansard, Rector of St. Matthew's, Bethnal Green. He is in favour of the Sunday opening of the museum lately established in that quarter by the liberality of Sir Richard Wallace. His argument is :—

"It is always a matter of wonder to me that my poor neighbours (many of whom are my friends, though they never come to church) are as good, and orderly, and kind, and well-behaved as they are. But that is just the very reason why, if the way which I have adopted for elevating and improving their moral and social life does not commend itself to them, I should adopt another, not indeed by any means the highest and best, not indeed one which leads them to "eternal life," but one which, at any rate, will elevate this present life of theirs, which will lift them out of themselves, and make them, for an hour or two at least in the week, to learn to wonder at and admire what is truly beautiful and above them, or at least will keep them from temptation, and perhaps from sin. Truly it is a dog-in-manger spirit which makes good Christians say—'Because you won't come to our churches and chapels on Sunday, you shall have nothing more improving to do on that Christian holiday than to lounge about the dirty streets smoking bad tobacco, and "chaffing" the young women, and gambling with pence, and making the back streets of London a nuisance to every decent man or woman who passes by.'"

For this reason he would open the Museum, and give them the benefit of anything of the kind that is fitted to raise them in any sense, or to any degree.

Our attention has been drawn to a sensible article in a provincial paper which gives the other and, as we think, better side of the question. The *Yorkshire Post* points out that while the people of the district would probably care nothing for the museum, a great number of the working classes would be deprived of their Sunday's rest—attendants, cab-drivers, stablemen, and the like. Then other exhibitions would have to be opened, and the Crystal Palace, and the Polytechnic, and on you would go down to the theatres and music saloons. As to the working classes, between the Saturday half-holiday, the nine hours a day, and the festival of St. Monday, their opportunities for inspecting the public museums are not so very few. Moreover, if the Sunday once lose its sacred character, it ceases to be the day of rest—

"The drift, the inevitable tendency, of all such proposals as that which we are combating is to convert the Sunday into a holiday, and all experience shows us that when this transformation is effected the Sunday holiday ceases to be a day of rest. We see this result plainly exhibited in the large towns of the Continent. There the Sunday is a high holiday for the majority of the poor and the working classes, but to a very considerable minority it is the hardest working day in the whole week. This proposal is utterly inimical to the truest interests of the working classes themselves. They, more than any other section of the community, are vitally concerned in the retention of the first day of the week as a day of rest. We all of us need it, but they most of all. To denude it of its religious character, and make it a secular holiday, is to ensure its being converted into a regular working day."

We should like, if any of our correspondents could

tell us, whether there is any known case of museums or picture-galleries being useful in the first instance to raise a sunken population? Our own conviction is, that Christianity must first gender some taste for these things, and that they do not in themselves affect a debased people. Our Lord, we apprehend, indicated a principle applicable to both rich and poor. "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though"—they have a museum and a picture-gallery open every Sunday afternoon at their door.

III.—GLANCES AT WHAT IS DOING ABROAD.

THE OLD CATHOLIC CONFERENCE.

The annual gathering of representatives of the Old Catholic movement has been held at Cologne. Upwards of five hundred representatives attended. There were two public meetings, where the number present was some four thousand, and where the popular enthusiasm was very great. Representatives from the English and American episcopal churches were there in the persons of the Bishops of Norwich, Ely, and Baltimore. Dean Stanley had expressed his sympathy in a letter. The whole proceedings were conducted with great heartiness and spirit.

It appears that the new body is in a certain difficulty, out of which, however, the lapse of a little time will in all probability bring it. On the one hand, there is a disposition to adhere to all that is characteristic of the Roman Catholic Church, excepting only the Papal infallibility. It is desired to maintain the attitude of a Church which retains all that is old, and repudiates only this monstrous innovation. But though there may be a disposition technically to this view, the actual spirit of the movement is wider by far. There is a strong desire to get many reforms accomplished, for which the Church has been sighing for five hundred years. This is evidently the dominating spirit of the movement. At the same time, the leaders feel that the time has not come for dealing with the reforms proposed.

We have said once and again that if the movement rests merely on the basis of the opposition to the claim of infallibility, its support is far too slender, and its power of attracting the sympathies of the people far too feeble for popular success. But if it takes a wider basis, and sets itself not only to overthrow detailed corruptions, but to bring the people into personal contact with the living Saviour and the Written Word, then by God's help, a very different career may lie before it.

We have been interested in the speeches of Professor Friedrich, who seems to be the most popular and the heartiest of the leaders of the movement. Here is what he says of the basis to which they have gone back :—

"We have turned back to the foundation, which alone is the true basis of the Church, which alone is our safety: we have turned back to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in whom alone is our safety,

who only is our Teacher and Master. I, for my part—and I believe I may venture to say that I have devoted my life to serious theological studies—I, for my part, know not where the gracious Saviour has said that the saints must be dragged in, in order to win heaven."

One of the most interesting subjects with which the Alt-Catholics have to deal is the union of different communions. But what is to be the basis of union? One voice was heard, that of a Protestant professor from Heidelberg, proclaiming that a doctrinal basis was impossible:—that between Protestants and Catholics union on such a ground could not take place. They could only unite on grounds of morality and life, and this was the more possible among Germans, because a community of thought existed among all scholars of both confessions. The remark, however, was received with "sensation." Professor Reinkens noted four things which were the chief hindrances to reunion—unbelief, misbelief, indifference, and politics. "These four things we cannot use: unbelief, it has no hope, and so no Church is possible. Misbelief, it has no light, and, where no light, no Church. Indifference, it has no strength, only the enervating of man, and, without strength, no Church. Politics, for where religion is used as a political medium, there neither truth nor unity can be cherished."

Not much progress was made towards practical action, but a commission was appointed to inquire more into the matter; ascertain difficulties and endeavour to remove them; and by essays and popular writings spread a knowledge of each other's views, and awaken a wider interest in the subject generally.

BISMARCK AND CHURCH MATTERS.

Some difference of opinion has been expressed as to the expediency of the address of congratulation lately presented to Prince Bismarck by the Hon. Arthur Kinnaird. In particular, Ewald, the celebrated theologian, has complained that Bismarck is opposing the true interests of liberty, civil and religious, and does not deserve the praise of Englishmen. However this may be, the German Government not only show no sign of changing their course, but have gone on to take in some things more decided action. A step has been taken in the controversy with the Bishop of Ermeland which must bring matters to a crisis. Our readers will remember that Bishop Kremetz excommunicated two of the leading Alt-Catholics, Drs. Wollmann and Michelis, and refused even to remit so much of the sentence as had a reference to civil rights. To this he adhered after remonstrance from the Government. It was reported that the Emperor was opposed to more severe measures being taken; but if such was his feeling, it is no longer allowed to prevail, for it has been intimated to the bishop by Dr. Falk, on the part of the Government, that if he does not abandon the position which he has taken up, payment of the emoluments derived by him from the State, amounting to upwards of £1,100, will be stopped.

The future steps in this quarrel will be watched

with the utmost interest, for the forces represented on either side are as powerful as any that are ever confronted in human strifes.

FRANCE—ITS APATHY AND ITS SUPERSTITION.

A correspondent of the *Times* has called attention, in a very marked way, to the absence of everything like religious fervour, and even intelligence, among the thinking people of France. Hardly any interest was taken there in the Alt-Catholic Conference at Cologne, and not a single representative, so far as he was aware, attended it. This is not because the people are too good Catholics, but because, for the most part, they are only nominally Catholics.

"Such men as Père Hyacinthe or the Abbé Michaud have no backing among independent and earnest religious thinkers, simply because there are none. Good Catholics are bound by their consciences to believe, and not to think; bad ones are not worth having; and the 'Free-thinkers' are old-fashioned scoffers at everything serious, and have no original or religious ideas at all. The consequence is that there is no encouragement for priests to risk everything on a point of conscience, and France seems destined to hang as a dead weight upon the intellectual, moral, and religious progress of the age.

"It was curious to read the comments of the French press, for instance, on Père Hyacinthe's marriage; he was scoffed at by the infidels because he believed in a God, denounced, in what may without exaggeration be termed 'Billingsgate,' by the pious because he believed in a wife, while the masses, who were neither one thing nor the other, seemed aghast at a phenomenon they could not comprehend. The anomaly that appeared to puzzle these indifferentists, who probably never attend mass themselves, was, how a priest could administer the sacrament with his wife in the church. As a general rule the comments of the masses were about a match for this objection in intelligence, and proved what the effect of a habit of mind may be which is the result of training and prejudice and not of thought."

If such, however, be the condition of France, there are sections of her people quite capable of being roused into spasmodic religious fervour. Fashionable pilgrimages are becoming the order of the day. Lourdes is the place to which the pilgrims flocked, in order to celebrate the Immaculate Conception. On one day the number of pilgrims amounted to about thirteen hundred. Of these about half seemed to be priests, who carried pockets of tracts, pamphlets, and hymns in praise of Notre Dame de Lourdes, which were intended for distribution on the way. The remainder were for the most part old women of the middle or poorer class, who carried their own provisions apparently, and were laden with bundles and handbaskets, after the manner of old women generally. The men were in a small minority, and nearly all of them old.

On the Sunday forty thousand pilgrims assembled and were present at a mass celebrated in the open air by the Bishop of Carcassonne. After the ceremony a politico-religious speech was made by the Bishop of Tarbes. The pilgrims received it with cries of "Vive la France!" "Vive le Pape!" At two o'clock

there was a procession bearing two hundred banners, representing all countries, which were deposited at the church. Among them was that of Alsace-Lorraine. All the banners were covered with crape, as a sign of mourning. Their value is estimated at 200,000 francs. Nineteen deputies took part in the procession. The bishops present were those of Auch, Carcassonne, Mende, Lucon, Aire, Tarbes, and the Indies.

The explanation of this singular pilgrimage is as follows:—

"According to the legend, on the 11th of February, 1838, the Blessed Lady stood suddenly at the entrance of the grotto, on the bank of the Gave, opposite to Lourdes, before a peasant-girl named Bernadette Soubirous, and subsequently repeated her visit on eighteen distinct occasions. Bernadette told her neighbours of the signal favours vouchsafed to her, and the matter was referred to the Bishop of Tarbes, who, after appointing a commission to inquire into the portent, made himself answerable for the authenticity of the girl's statements by a solemn declaration, which also received the confirmation of the Holy See. Influential gentlemen and ladies of high rank throughout France, unwilling to rely on the spontaneous zeal of the faithful, have been for several weeks, and by every imaginable contrivance, ministering to the excitement, thus bringing to the spot a vast concourse of people, and raising a general expectation of some supernatural occurrence on the day set apart for the celebration of the most imposing ceremonies."

It is the old French spirit—vanity predominant. The uppermost thought in the mind of the promoters is the impression produced on the world. If they knew what the impression is, they would be somewhat taken aback. Contempt on the part of the world; compassion on the part of the Church.

THE WALDENSIAN SYNOD.

The Waldensian Synod has just met at La Tour, and has spent the usual time in reviewing and re-arranging its work in the Valleys and in Italy. By far the most generally interesting work is that of evangelisation in Italy. The Synod has not fewer than thirty-seven missionary stations in Italy and Sicily, where ordained ministers or schoolmaster-evangelists are placed, exclusive of evangelistic work carried on in small towns and villages around many of the stations. Since May, 1871, the number of regular hearers has not increased, but, on the contrary, it has fallen off to the extent of 350, a fact which is accounted for by a schism in the congregation at Leghorn. The adherents of the Church who worship regularly at the different stations amount to 3,220, and the communicants to 1,952. The contributions for the maintenance of religious ordinances raised in the mission stations throughout Italy by the people themselves, during the last fifteen months, amounts to nearly £850, as compared with £400 the previous year. The number of children attending Sunday-schools has also increased during the year.

The day of small things! one exclaims, reading these figures. But the kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed, and under the divine blessing

may yet grow in Italy to a great tree, in which the fowls of heaven will make their nests. Considering the state of things but a few years ago, it is matter for the greatest thankfulness that, independent of what is done by other agencies, this Waldensian Church, preserved in Providence amid appalling trials and calamities till now, has been able to hold forth the Word of life at so many centres, and to invite the people of Italy to the pure river of the water of life.

JOTTINGS FROM THE MISSION FIELD.

The Bible Society *Monthly Reporter* gives a singular history of a Bible found accidentally twenty years ago in the bottom of the Arno at Signa by a man bathing in that river. In the days of the persecuting Grand Duke who imprisoned the Madias, it had been flung into the river, most probably at Florence, by some one afraid of having it found in his custody, and had floated down from Florence to Signa; and having been well bound, it was not much injured. A joiner at Signa read the book, not only alone, but aloud to others, and of those who thus heard it was a stonemason of the name of Georgi, who, in consequence of what he heard, continued for twenty years to feel a want which he could not get supplied. At length he was led to the Bible Society dépôt at Florence, where he got a New Testament, and also much valuable instruction and guidance from the superintendent. He is now a diligent reader, an attentive hearer of the Gospel, and is becoming anxious to do good to others.

Dr. Krapf gives a narrative, in so far resembling this, as illustrating the change which a single copy of the Bible may effect. The case occurred in Abyssinia: A learned Abyssinian of the name of Wolda Salassieh procured a Bible in 1867 (one of those circulated by Mr. Flad), which had the effect of showing him the errors of the Abyssinian Church, and bringing him to right views of the Gospel. Being desirous of learning more about the way of salvation, he went to Jerusalem, where he became acquainted with Bishop Gobat, and received public instruction. Dr. Krapf has him now under his eye with a view to his becoming an evangelist in Abyssinia, and especially doing service as a teacher. It seems likewise that a monk, one of his friends, having been supplied by him with a Bible, has thrown his monkish dress aside, and resolved to give himself to the duty of a missionary among his own countrymen.

A still more interesting occurrence, with a similar origin, has taken place in India. A missionary in Bellary, in the south of India, in the course of a recent tour for disseminating the Bible, came upon a young man named Seeta Ram, who ten or twelve years ago obtained from a colporteur some portions of the Word of God, and more recently the whole Bible in Telugu, and proceeded to read it most diligently and try to apply it. Getting a little company gathered to hear him, including his wife and mother, he told them all that he had learned, and read the Bible to

them, and with marked effect. He himself was earnest in prayer to the One God and in trust in Jesus his Saviour, and much grieved at the idolatry and wickedness around him. Becoming ill about a year ago, he was more earnest than ever, and one night read the account of the New Jerusalem with very special warmth, asking his friends if they did not see the glorious city. The same night he died. He had desired that a tract called "The Book of Life" should be placed in his hand when he was buried, and that the portions of Scripture which he possessed should be distributed, and the Bible itself kept in the house and read amongst his friends. He had often expressed a hope that he might see a Christian teacher, and learn more than he could find out about baptism and the sacraments, and the way to keep the Sabbath. The congregation he left consisted of his wife and mother, two men and two women, and some lads. These were found by the missionary to be in the habit of meeting every Sunday for prayer, and the study of the Bible. His conversation with them was most interesting, the acquaintance of some of them with Bible truth being most wonderful. The unaffected way in which they spoke of God as their Father in heaven, and Jesus as their Saviour, and the Holy Ghost as their Comforter and Teacher, showed that flesh and blood had not revealed these things to them. "Seeta Ram's mother," says the missionary, "shed tears of joy mingled with sorrow as she told us of her son," her beloved pious son. "He used to tell me many sweet stories," she said, "and begged me always to pray to this one true God; he has gone before to the beautiful city."

How wonderful an instance of the Bible becoming its own witness, and the Holy Spirit using it even without a living teacher to bring poor souls to God!

A Wesleyan missionary in Mysore gives an account of an evening at a Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association, which is somewhat *à propos* to the discussion lately occasioned by the Archbishop of Canterbury's remarks at Carlisle:—

"The lecture was on 'Hindu Civilisation.' The bulk of the lecture was confessedly taken from Robertson, and, to us, nothing new or specially interesting. It was, however, most amusing to sit and listen to the various criticisms made upon the lecture: some ambitious, others humorous, and one or two sharp and cruel. Most, with the lecturer, displayed an overweening satisfaction with themselves, as contrasted with the rest of the world. Even their long submission to a foreign yoke was but one of the finest proofs of the civilisation of the 'mild Hindu!' One speaker, the acting head-tutor to H.H. the Maharajah, gravely propounded his belief that Christianity, as softened, refined, and philosophized upon by Thomas de Quincey, might not be unworthy the attention of inquiring minds; but even this new and improved edition of the old Christian faith could not hope to maintain a permanent hold upon the convictions of thinking men!

"Finally, the highest native official in the province stood up and gave a most sensible address, quietly brushing away the crudities of the preceding speakers,

pointing out what was lacking in Hindu civilisation: he acknowledged the honesty and justice of the English rule, confessed the inability of the Hindus to take care of themselves, and mourned that he could not look hopefully upon their future as a people or as a nation. Then, with reference to certain aspersions that had been made indirectly on missionaries, he spoke in evidently sincere and sufficiently flattering terms of their lives, labours, characters, and influence; and expressed his conviction that it was unfortunate for the missionaries that they belonged to the ruling race, as the conquered people were thoroughly convinced of our secret connection with the Government."

The *Church Missionary Society Reporter* states that on 17th May last Lady Muir laid the foundation-stone of St. Peter's Church, in the new Christian village of Bela, and that his honour Sir William Muir, Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces, opened the school recently erected by his liberality. The idea of a Christian village is an extremely pleasing one. In the course of his remarks Sir William observed that he had known the Christians at Secundra before the mutiny, where they had a flourishing village, a nice church and school, but he thought that the new village, with its comfortable houses and spacious streets, its magnificent schoolroom and church, was even better than that of Secundra. He hoped that, as a city set on a hill, their influence for good on the heathen around would be felt far and wide, and that as the church tower would point heavenward, so he trusted the conversation and morality of the village of Bela would be heavenward also. He hoped all Christian virtues would be exemplified in their lives, and they would not forget among other things that cleanliness was akin to godliness. He trusted that, with their present privileges they would strive to help themselves, for he saw no reason why native Christians should not educate themselves to fill posts of honour, and to take the foremost position in native society. He would have the children well trained, and urged upon the parents the necessity of bringing up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. He hoped that every man in the village would have his little cottage-garden, and thus make the village a model one in every respect for the North-West Provinces, also that the fruits of Christian grace might be visible in their lives, so that the Christian's peace might be theirs in death.

From New Caledonia there is very sad intelligence. At Ouvea, in the Loyalty Islands, according to the *Sydney Morning Herald*, a horrible massacre has taken place. It is believed to have been at the instigation of Catholics in the island, and of the chief Ombaloo, who have a fanatical hatred to the Protestants. The immediate occasion of the massacre would seem to have been the determination of the Protestants to build a church. Four men were killed in the first onset and many wounded. Four more were killed afterwards, and among these an old man, chopped with an axe in a horrible manner, who lived a few hours. The rest were compelled to become Catholics through terror, and at the edge of the axe.

CROOKED PLACES:

A Story of Struggles and Hopes.

BY EDWARD GARRETT, AUTHOR OF "OCCUPATIONS OF A RETIRED LIFE," ETC.

PART II.—HOW GOD GUIDED A GENIUS.

CHAPTER I.—THE TALENT PUT TO INTEREST.



ALthough his diligent boy-hood and youth, George Harvey lived a kind of double life. He might talk over some of his duties and prospects to his mother and sisters, but the real secrets of

his working existence remained in his own heart. If Mrs. Harvey had known all, she might have felt goaded to snatch him from it, at any cost, as a brand from the burning.

George's was a very hard place to begin with. It was easy to describe himself as "a reading boy," and to speak only of his wonderful trials and successes in his old skill in deciphering writing. To the brave, manly lad it was equally easy to be silent about the errand-going, window-cleaning, and office-cleansings, which earned more than half his humble wage. When George's hands looked unaccountably red and scarified, there was always some reasonable account of a seasonable and obliging assistance which had been required in the matter of presses and types. It was the truth certainly, but it was not the whole truth, nor yet one quarter of it.

O reader, in thy praiseworthy severity towards shams, include not under that name all things which are not precisely what they seem. Was He an impostor who supped at Emmaus in the guise of a stranger? Stop the counterfeit coin, and destroy its baseness for ever, but condemn not the foreign piece which thou hast taken unawares into thy

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purse. It may not be good to pay thy baker's bill, but it may be worthy to grace a royal cabinet. Askest thou, what is the use of the secrecies, and euphonisms behind which grow up only fair flowers of endurance and sacrifice? Askest thou, why should not the world see these beauties, these virtues? Why dost thou store thy dainty plants in winter? Why dost thou not leave them open to sweeten the north-east wind, and enliven the snowy landscape? Answer that question, and then be content to love even thy nearest and dearest, in the faith that they offer to God far sweeter blossoms than they can ever give thee in this world.

Poor little George Harvey, with his Greek verses, and his many crowding fancies!—no loving heart less tender and true than the heart of his Heavenly Father could have borne to see him, in his little greasy apron, rubbing away at smoky windows with sore chapped hands, or going from tap-room to coffee-house collecting the unctuous dinners of the ribald journeymen. He patronised the exact side-streets where he knew his mother would never see him. He met Milly once, and exhorted her "not to tell," and she was worthy of him, and did not, and never even mentioned it to himself, till years and years afterwards. And surely God wrote down his name in his book of heroes—a larger volume and of a totally different contents to any such work current in this world.

In their more prosperous days, George had enjoyed a small weekly allowance, which he had always hoarded for the purchase of books. But this was now set afar off, among unattainable luxuries. He had just to go over and over again, his old Homer, his old "Pilgrim's Progress," and his very ancient and battered Plutarch's Lives. He was often very tired of these at first; the mystery was that he grew less and less so. He did not remember that a sage had said, "Fear the man of one book."

George's scrambling duties led him among many varied people. He did not make friends as his sister Hatty did. Or rather he made friends to himself, but was not made a friend of. He filled his own heart and imagination rather than entered into others'. He really knew more about many people to whom he never spoke an unnecessary word,

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than did Hatty of those with whom she sat and chatted for hours.

There was the woman at the boiled-beef-shop. George knew quite well that she had been a great deal better brought up than the vulgarly handsome "master," who sat in her parlour smoking a long clay pipe. George quite understood that she was very unhappy, and though her eyes were red for weeks after her baby died, still George did not think she was altogether sorry. Heaven preserve the little printer boy, but he had his private doubts, which he would not have breathed to a living soul, whether she was really "Mrs. Smith." He always put her wasted tawdry figure into Hatty's song of—

"Oh no, we never mention her,
Her name is quite forgot."

And yet she was kind to the little quiet printer boy, and let him look over her shop-bundles of waste-paper, and pick out whatever he chose.

Then there was "Mr. Rollo," who wrote poetry, and got George's master to print it on credit. Mr. Rollo had been a wealthy tradesman's son, but he had been quite above the shop. He could not find Helicon in the cellar, nor Parnassus behind the counter. It staggered George at first, and he thought Mr. Rollo a shrinking, sensitive soul, too "sweet" and "light" for his hard work-a-day world. With Mr. Rollo in his eye, George even wrote a secret stanza about—

"That lofty soul, that noble mind,
Which no fit resting-place can find;
But bravely meets its lonely doom,
And only asks—a poet's tomb!"

But George presently discovered that if Mr. Rollo could not find Helicon and Parnassus in the shop, he seemed to find them in still stranger places. Did he think the gutter was Helicon, that George had to pick him out of it one fine winter evening? Did he think the police-cell was Parnassus, that he went there regularly every two or three months for blacking "Mrs. Rollo's" eyes? Why had he married poor Mrs. Rollo, if he did not like her?—and George could not wonder if he did not, for she was vulgar, fat, and loud. By-and-by George heard that Mrs. Rollo had a little money! It was altogether a shock to one's ideas to think—

"That heaven-born genius so should fall!"

But still poor Rollo was kind; he was the very first person to whom George ventured to show his own rhymes, and Rollo lent him Crabbe's "Poems," and Walter Scott's "Antiquary," and patted the boy's shoulder and

said, with something very like a tear in his fishy eyes, "that he'd better stick to his work, and that would make a man of him."

Poor little George! Once he set his boyish heart on buying a bound and ruled book wherein to copy his poetical efforts. These things were not so cheap sixty years ago as they are now, and it was a very common-looking thing, priced eighteen-pence, on which George set his fancy. But his wish was a profound secret. Nobody knew that he wrote poetry, and yet the longing for utterance was so strong with him, that it seemed to him as if an invisible public would read and sympathize, if once his rhymes were legibly written out! He used to picture to himself how he might die, and his writings be found afterwards, and his name made immortal! Morbid fancy of green youth, fruit of folly and not of genius! But in his case the sacred salt of genius preserved it from corruption into mere egotism. For he hoped it might bring friends to help his mother and sisters when he was gone!

But the practical part of the question was about this eighteen-pence, and what were the legitimate means of secretly acquiring such a fortune!

Now in the office there was a young printer, with whom George was on rather more intimate terms than with most of the other men. Mrs. Harvey heard occasional mention of his name—James Murray; but if she had known all about him and his history up and down, she would almost have died of terror for her poor boy's morals and manners.

James Murray did not know how he came by his name. His earliest recollections were of living with his mother in varying sets of furnished apartments. He had known none of the restraints and instructions of even nominally decent homes. He had been born and brought up at the bottom of the blackest pit of human depravity. It was a miracle that he was not a thief, in the coarsest rendering of pick-pocket or burglar, but that was the utmost that could be said of him, for sense of morality he had none.

In birth, in breeding, in that grain of mind and frame which grows out of these, George Harvey and James Murray stood at antipodes. And it was from their very distance that they drew together.

The other men and lads in the place were ordinary work-people, with the common merits and faults of their class—left, at that date, very much in their native "rough." They disliked George, calling all his little ways which differed from theirs, "a setting

up," and constantly jealous of the superiority his quickness of mind gained over their untutored strength. They despised James. There were always fights arising out of their coarse insults about his parentage; for though James confided to George that he did not much feel the sting of these, he always made them an excuse to display his physical prowess, as the best proof he could bring forward "that he was as good as they were."

The melancholy mystery of James Murray's whole life gave him a weird interest to George. George had put him into two poems—"The Foundling," and "The Homeless Waif," and we must say that James would not have known himself, and yet, perhaps, his failure would have lain with his own perception, rather than with George's art. Perhaps George, looking straight out of his innocent boyhood, saw the nearest to what God himself saw—a sight utterly sad and pitiful, to make angels weep and fiends rejoice. George was not yet philosopher enough to say coolly "that every human being must have had a chance in life," and so pass by, self-satisfied, on the other side.

James Murray, who kept no "Sunday best," had once, from a lounging post, seen the Harvey family going to church. He could not understand it at all—was as far from it as the best of us are from the angel's song and service. "She's a fine woman, that little chap's mother," he said afterwards. "I'd have liked to go up and speak to 'em, if I'd had on a decent coat."

It was this James Murray who happened one day to tell George that "his old landlady was in an awful pickle, for she'd a swell lodger who wanted his boots cleaned for him, and her own hands were bad with the gout, and she was "queer," and so suspicious of strangers that she would not have one in, and her own nephew said she might get them done how she liked, for he was above being "any man's flunkey."

George thought it over all day long. He was not without a boy's dislike for "menial" work, but he argued within himself, that when he already did so much like it, it was rather foolish not to do a little more, when he wanted eighteen-pence so very, very much! "It is easier doing it when one is not forced to do it, too," he argued within himself. "It is the forcing that breaks one's spirit. I should not like to be forced. I should not like mother to have had to say to me, 'George, you must take any sort of place you can get, and you must not be particular what you

have to do, for you must earn money.' I came here of my own accord, and I don't see why I shouldn't clean these boots for my own pleasure. This common boy, the old lady's nephew, is afraid of seeming a flunkey, because he is one already. I've heard mother say that nothing honest is beneath a gentleman, because, whatever it is, he can do it from a gentleman's motive, and in a gentleman's way."

Was he a poor little moralist on stilts? Never mind; stilts are only folly at a country fair, but we fancy we remember hearing of a district in Germany where some peculiarity of the soil sets all the sensible people walking on stilts, and only fools trail through the bog!

So George made up his mind to clean the boots, and requested James Murray to introduce him to the "queer" landlady, in case she might be disposed to trust him as not altogether a stranger.

"Well, this is a rum go!" James not un-naturally ejaculated. "Why, I wouldn't do such a thing myself, unless I hadn't a bit of bread to eat without it! But I'll tell her she can trust you—yes, with untold gold on her kitchen table, if she likes, and that's more than she could do with some that pay her rent, I can tell you!"

And so George cleaned the boots, and was pronounced by the old woman "a regular nice, decent lad," and became hateful to her nephew on account of his aunt's praises. The bitterness of the deed was over after it had been done once or twice, and as the old lady's hands were not quite recovered when the eighteen-pence was earned, George resolved to go on as long as he was needed. The worse of it was, the walk to and fro took up his small leisure, and prevented him from getting as far as Cheapside to buy the particular book on which he had set his heart. "One can't be earning and spending too," George said to himself; and, besides, had a capitalist's comfortable inclination to wait and choose the best market.

In the meantime James Murray had been going on very badly indeed. In the lodging-house kitchen, George had learned more about him than he had ever heard before. Now, George regularly read the *Youth's Magazine* which the grocer's wife lent his sister Milly, and its simple, moral stories fired him with a desire to do good, like their Christian heroes and heroines. He wanted to make some drunkard sober, some infidel believe, some Sabbath-breaker attend church. George did not know that he was not a Christian

himself, nor did he suspect that Christianity meant any more than these good outward things—except that there was what seemed to George a mere formula attached to his favourite stories, which, in his turn, he was quite ready to repeat, though with no more meaning than the muttering of a magic spell. He was like the poor little bird in the dark inn-kitchen, who mistook a lamp for the sun, and sang its matin at vesper-time! He could not have understood the question, “Do ye fulfil the law of Christ?” for he had not learned that there is no fulfilment of the law out of Christ. But the little dim artificial light he had he wanted to share—sure sign that a higher law was working in him than any he yet knew how to obey.

He wanted to do good to James Murray; he “talked” to him very sensibly as to his outward failures and delinquencies, and James was often seriously attentive. But George spoiled all by winding up with religious exhortations, which his unmeaning utterance spoiled as an ignorant translation can spoil the grandest original.

Oh, if the aspiring missionary had only heard his subject’s candid opinion of him.

“He’s a good enough little chap, but I can’t make out half what he means, and I don’t believe he can himself.”

And yet, never mind. Aspiration is the upward path. Desire precedes fulfilment. Let each, in whatever gibberish he can command, tell his fellow-sufferers and sinners that there is a Fountain of Living Water, and what he believes to be the best way to it. Their empty vessels, big and little, may have to wait awhile before the stream of pardoning love shall fill them. Nobody knows who shall first be filled—the last may be first, and the first last—perchance he who told of the Fountain may fill his own vessel from his who once did not even know that there was such a fountain!

George had been at his “menial” duty nearly six weeks when James Murray sauntered into the kitchen, and throwing himself into one of the chairs, announced—

“I ain’t going up to work with you to-day; and if the governors think o’ sending here to look for me, tell them to save themselves the trouble, for I’ll be off within half an hour after you go.”

“Off? Where to?” George asked in astonishment.

James laughed. “Don’t know, and don’t care,” he said recklessly. “I can’t be much worse than in prison, and if I stopped I’d be there to-night.”

“What do you mean, Jem?” George inquired kindly.

“Oh, I’ve been behaving like ‘a warning tract,’ or your clever talk, mate. I’ve gone from bad to worse. I’ve sworn and drank long enough; now I’ve been picking and stealing, and when you write my history I don’t know whether you’ll need stretch your fancy much to just finish off that I died on the gallows at last!”

“What have you stolen?” George asked, knowing the young man quite well enough to accept his plain statement as no exaggeration of fact.

“Was cleaned out last night, and one of the governors had left three shillings and sixpence on the shelf, and I took it up. Old tell-tale Cater saw me, but I said I was taking it home with me to keep it safe from the boys. I tried my luck with it and lost, and ain’t got a penny to refund with. I’m deep in debt here too, so it’s a good opportunity to clear all scores by cutting away. I’ll enlist, or go out before the mast. I’ve tried something like a decent life, and made a mull of it, and now I’ll try the other.”

All for three-and-sixpence! When a soul treads the slimy paths of sin, it takes a very little slip to slide him down that yawning precipice below, whose bottom no man knows!

All for three-and-sixpence! And George Harvey had absolutely four shillings in his pocket carefully wrapped in a fragment of that scribble which he was so modestly anxious to see at least in fair and flowing manuscript.

Honest, enthusiastic little soul! He had not yet heard of the refinements of that delicate philosophy which hesitates to use its powers for good lest it should be guilty of bribery or compulsion! He looked upon this as a glorious opportunity, and it did not cost him half the struggle to give up his earnings as it had to earn them.

“I’ll lend you three-and-sixpence, Murray, and you can take it back with you this morning,” he said; “but I can’t do it unless you’ll promise me to sign the pledge, and go to church every Sunday for three months.”

“That’s stiff conditions, my boy,” returned the other, with half a jeer; “I don’t think my respectability is worth so much.”

“Oh, yes, it is,” George urged, adding, not without shrewdness, “and did not you tell me you were to get a rise in your salary in two or three months’ time? Do you want to lose all the advantages you’ve been waiting for so long?”

James whistled. George's earnestness touched him a little, and gave him a momentary glimpse of life in a new light. Like many another, he cheapened and half-suspected the benefit that was thrust upon him.

"Where have you got so much money from?" he asked.

"Out of these boots," said George laconically.

"I daresay I should never pay you again," James remarked coolly.

"Never mind," said George.

"How can you tell I'm not hoaxing you because I know you have got a little loose tin?" James presently inquired, with a hoarse laugh.

George gave him one quick glance. "I'll take the chance," he answered.

"Can't you let us off the pledge?" James asked mockingly. "As for church, I can do that. It's a warm sitting, and it's winter already."

George shook his head. "It is drink that is ruining you," he said, with his premature preciseness. "Church would do you no good, with a gill of brandy in your head."

James reflected. And it struck him that if George lent him this money, he would have no means of enforcing his conditions. He might please him by "turning" into church sometimes, but as for the pledge, he need not take it, or, for that matter, if he did he could break it.

"You're a brick, young one!" said he. "Give us over the coin."

And George counted out his little hoard.

James scarcely thanked him, but he turned back on the kitchen threshold to say—

"I'd better wait for you to come with me to the office, else I might still cut and run, and take your money with me, without giving you my precious soul in exchange."

The two did not speak much all day; but when the heavy rattle of the presses ceased, and the men began to turn down their sleeves, and wipe their faces, George went up to James.

"I know a place where you can take the pledge. I'm coming with you. There'll be a lecture first. I told mother I was going to hear it, so they don't expect me home till late."

"You're a determined young dog," said James. But he offered no opposition. The lecture might prove "a lark," and there would still be plenty of time to "get off" the pledge at last.

In those days the Temperance movement was not the wealthy or widespread organiza-

tion which it now is. Gough was not yet born to adorn it with oratory, nor had Mathew yet consecrated it by his zeal. The noble army of self-denial had not arisen, and there were few total abstainers except reformed drunkards. Yet this simpler state of matters was not without its advantages. Temperance at the table was not then in much danger of breeding intemperance of the tongue. It had not become an element in political life, and it had few advocates except men of simple and vital piety, who were in no danger of mistaking a means for the end, and who fostered little excitement, and less self-laudation.

It was such a man who addressed the meeting that night. The plea with which he came before the people, was after this wise:—

There was One who came to live among men, and show what God had meant them to be, and, at last, to die among them, by their hands—to die for them, taking the punishment of their sins upon himself, that those who would clothe themselves in his righteousness might pass from the just wrath to the pardoning mercies of his Almighty Father. It was on the divine idea of sacrifice that he dwelt. And when he came at last to press his special plea, it was pointing to the story of the Cross, and urging "that He died in his love for thee; canst thou not do this small thing in love and gratitude to Him?"

There was a grandeur in his simple eloquence.

"For thee Christ gave up his Father's throne, and the worship of angels, and all the indescribable bliss of heaven. For thee, instead of these, He took up a frail mortal body, and became a poor despised man, who had not where to lay his holy head. For thee, He endured temptation, persecution, and treachery. For thee, He was scourged and spit upon, and mocked. For thee, He hung among the common malefactors. For thee, He fainted and bled, and died in agony.

"For his sake, can you not give up the cup that starves you and strips you and slays your wives and children? For his sake, can you not give up the glass that seduces you to workhouses and madhouses and jails? For his sake, can you not give up the fiery poison, which you will loathe as it should be loathed before you have abstained from it for a year? For his sake, O my brethren, can you not give up the deadly drug that will send you besotted to the doom He died to save you from?"

"Don't you believe in 'giving up,' my friends? Is there nobody who has ever

given up anything for *you*?" (Ay, that there is like a little Briton, thought James Murray.) "And wouldn't you hate yourself for a mean, cowardly worm, if you took their kindness and flung it back in their face?" (It is awfully shabby—of course I never meant to do it, thought James Murray.) "Then why do you do to your divine Saviour what you wouldn't do to your human friend? If there's one here who feels he hasn't a bit of goodness of his own, and that he don't even know what goodness is, you're the man that Jesus wants, my brother." (Then that's me, thought James Murray.) "Come to Him—just as you are. Put your dirty, stained life in his hand, and He will make it pure. And I, as his servant and because I love you for his sake, stand here and entreat you to come and be one of us. If it will help you to tell me your difficulties, I am quite sure Christ has an answer for them all. We want to aid you, as brothers should aid each other, and may the blessing of God be about us all."

"I'm going to stay," whispered James Murray to George. "Don't you wait. I'd rather go up by myself."

He signed the pledge that night.

He repaid George's loan in less than a month. And the next time he was called ugly names in the office, his face turned very red, but he did not offer to fight. George went with him to many an evening service and Bible reading among his new friends, but he grew often weary where James sat interested and delighted. George thought the difference lay in James's utter ignorance which made every holy thing a pleasing novelty. George became terribly afraid that such a complete change could not last, and that he should have the humiliation of seeing James fall back to his old ways. He could not understand the entire difference in his tone of thought, which was presently manifold. Strangest of all it was, to find how James was heartily ashamed of ways and characteristics which had formerly been his pride—that he no longer called arrogance and brutality "high spirit," nor mistook ribaldry for wit, nor shamelessness for candour.

Poor George, he would have only cut off the tops of the weeds, and because a wiser way had uprooted them, and sown honest corn in their place, he doubted, and was almost glad when James, by-and-by, went away, with a creditable character, to a better situation in a midland town. As if anybody was ever quite lost sight of in this little world, where, if you flee from London to Caffraria, you shall find your old next-door

neighbour's brother living in the nearest shanty! Let us take heed what we cast into the sea of life, for it will surely be thrown ashore again at our feet.

And so George's poems were fairly copied out at last.

CHAPTER II.—GEORGE HARVEY'S FIRST SUCCESS.

AND then George's life flowed on very evenly for years. He rose in his employment, and became a first-rate compositor. Many and many an one might have thanked him that in some occult way their lucubrations appeared in proof, with mended punctuation, grammar, and even sense. But they only thought "how much better it read in print."

"I would not trouble myself thus for nothing, Harvey," his fellow-workmen would say.

"In all labour there is profit," George smiled in reply. He grew more popular as he grew older.

But all through those quietly prosperous years, there ran a strong under-current of excited interest. George must have been about seventeen when he first sent a "poem" to a magazine. He did it in secret, and when he had done it, he trembled to think what an awkward revelation its return would make. For George gave his own name and his own address, too open to think of any double dealing, and too generous and unsophisticated to suspect that his lowly habitation might offer no attraction to the editorial eye.

But George need not have troubled himself about "returned MS." that time—no, nor for long afterwards. Not until his mother and sisters had guessed the mystery of his interminable copyings, and watched for the postman's knock as eagerly as he did himself.

"Do not speak to him about it, girls," exhorted Mrs. Harvey. "Wait till he speaks himself. Suspense and disappointment are often easiest borne in silence."

"But he might show his writings to us," Hatty had protested. "Because the stupid magazine people don't care for them, he needn't think we shouldn't." And it became a stereotyped form of unfavourable criticism with her.

"I'm sure George could have done better than *that*."

George actually greeted it as a step made in the right direction, when his papers began to come back "with thanks." But why need

we go into all the details of a story which in some form is as old as genius itself? Why need we tell of the sour editor, who made the poor lad wander for two hours in the dark in Hackney Fields, by scrawling over the back of his very best production, "Let the writer learn a useful trade, and forget that he had ever the folly and presumption to think of verse-making?" Why need we tell of the kind editor—no, it was an editress!—who lifted him into the seventh heaven by writing him a pretty little note (which had a deep black border), saying, "You only need patience and cultivation. You have the gift, and it lies now in your own hands. I can appreciate your poems, in spite of their technical crudeness, and they have touched me—you may guess how much, for I could not find time to write thus fully to many of my would-be contributors. They remind me of my younger and brighter self, before I had lost faith in everything but blue skies and green grass. I should like to see you, but will not, for my acquaintance would be no real benefit to you."

It made George very happy when he read it. It was the first warm grasp of a comrade's hand. Years after, when he read it again, it made him very sad; for by that time he had learned enough to read a woeful tale between the lines.

Despairing of the magazines, George collected his poems, and resolved to face a publisher. He chose one who had recently issued a little book something in the style of his own production. How it would have daunted George had he known that its author had published strictly on his own account, and was already fifty pounds the poorer for the transaction!

George left the packet of poems and a very modest letter, saying he would call again in a few days. He did so, and a smirking shopman told him that if he waited a moment, he thought "Mr. Dunbar would see him." And George sat down to wait. He fancied that a superior-looking young man, seated behind a desk, looked pointedly at him; but ere he had time even to return the glance, the shopman came back and summoned him to Mr. Dunbar's presence, warning him familiarly that, 'he would have to speak up well, for the governor was dreadfully deaf;' and with great trepidation, George entered the awful sanctum.

"Come in, come in and sit down, my lad," said a cheerful, rubicund old gentleman. "And so you write poems, do you? Bless me, you look very young! And what else

can you do beside write poems, young man?"

"I am a compositor," said George.

"That's right—that's right. A starving genius is never the best sort of genius, my boy. And I can tell you, my lad, you write a deal better for being a compositor. Says I to my nephew when I read your verses, says I, 'This young fellow has looked outside his own head;' and I can tell you, my friend, if the greatest genius doesna do that, his genius soon gets blind in the dark! And now, my dear laddie, you mustn't mind me saying that these things won't sell. If I were to publish them, instead of my paying you, I should want you to pay me; and there wouldn't be ten sold except what you bought yourself to give to your friends, who would laugh at you behind your back. And now, what did you say your name was, my boy?"

"George Harvey," faltered poor George.

"And are you with your own people? Have you still got your father and mother?"

"Only my mother," said George.

"Ah, she's a widow," observed the old man, with a kindly insight into the little tragedy before him. "And has she been a widow long?"

"Seven years," said George.

"And are you a Londoner-born?" asked Mr. Dunbar.

"Yes, I was born in Buckingham Street, by Charing Cross," said George. "We were better off before my father died."

"Harvey! Buckingham Street, Charing Cross," echoed the publisher. "I have a brother doing business in the wharves below there; surely I've heard him speak of the Harveys—something about your mother behaving in a vera honourable way about her husband's debts?"

"My mother did what was right," said George proudly.

"Yes, yes—a weel-respeckit woman—an' there were some that didna say much, that noticed a good deal. So, so. Well, my boy, if you'll take an old man's advice, what you've got to do is to work for the magazines, and the editors will tak care not to publish what folk winna read, an' they'll lick you into shape fine."

"But they won't have anything to do with me, sir," said George, laughing.

"Willna they?" answered the good Scotchman. "Ha' ye tried the *Thoughtful Hour*?"

"No, sir," said George, "I did not dare to do that, for inferior papers have rejected me."

"An' did it never strike your simple mind that your morals might be too guid for them

as well as your rhymes too bad?" asked Mr. Dunbar. "A' well, the editor of the *Thoughtful Hour* is a good man, frae my ain toon in Dumfrieshire, an' I'll gie ye a line to him. Mind, I canna make him tak your verses, and I dinna think he will tak mony; but I'll tell him to look himsel' at what you may send, and gie ye a word o' advice, when you need it, an' 'accept' ye as soch as he

can. An' when the *Thoughtful Hour* accepts, it pays. An' noo, good-day, my man; and ye needna thank me, for it's an unco' pleasure to come across a bodie whase sel', or verses either, are worth saying a guid word for."

As George, in his delight, almost stumbled along the dark passage which led from the private room to the shop, he jostled against



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the young man whom he noticed behind the desk.

"The shopman tells me you are Mr. Harvey," he said, interrupting George's apologies. "My uncle gave me your manuscripts to read. You are one of the right sort; we shall hear more of you. I am glad to have seen you."

And George went home, as if he had wings

rather than feet. If such was the foretaste of fame, what must be the sweetness of its full fruition? Ah, George, George, you cannot eat a peach without brushing its bloom away, and many a beautiful picture looks fairest from the distance. Fame's trumpet sounds well down the aisles of the past, but it often seems only discord to the ears that are nearest.





"CROOKED PLACES."

Then George dispatched a little budget to the *Thoughtful Hour*, and for four months that oracle preserved a dead silence, and George began to fear that he need only thank kind Mr. Dunbar for good intentions.

It was Hatty Harvey's duty always to answer the door, but whenever there was a postman's call George always went out of the parlour and stood on the mat. If it was a family letter he came in again with Hatty, if it was anything for himself he took it from her, and retired to the back room, and stayed there as long as he liked, sure that when he chose to join the family circle no remark would be made nor question asked. Is not such silence the very heart of confidence?

They kept it so implicitly that the mother and daughter never even said a word to each other whenever Hatty came in alone.

"He would not like to be talked over," Mrs. Harvey had decided, "and there is a fine instinct by which people always know when it is done."

They only suspended their work for a single significant glance at each other, one might say when they heard him pacing about the next room, with a strange new vehemence. They were all stitching with their usual industry when he came in, and said, with suppressed excitement, that could not pause to go through any unnecessary explanation—

"One is taken at last! They have sent me the proof and a draft. Look!"

He spread the papers on the table. Milly caught up the poem. Hatty seized the draft. But the mother's eyes were on her boy's face. It was white and sharp in its agony of triumph, with a wild, strong light in the dark blue eyes. It was as the fierce ecstasy of a dumb man, who suddenly finds voice. She had often pondered if her child really had genius—or only its terrible, treacherous simulation. That never troubled her again.

"A whole guinea! And yet I'm sure it's worth more!" cried Hatty, not in the least ashamed of her keen interest in the practical part of the affair. And why should she be? For honesty is before honour; and though man must write his poems in sounding words, God's poems are printed best in the brave and silent duties of common life.

Her voice called George down from that point of acute rapture whereon mortals are never very safely poised, to those simple facts which great raptures and agonies are only made to sanctify. He did not sharply rebuke his sister's observation as degrading to the high vocation which was opening before him. It revealed the soundness of

his nature that he was wise and sweet in his hour of joy. At the very moment of his own triumph he unconsciously felt, clearer than ever before, that life was holy and beautiful on all its sides, and that only God can rightly judge which side is highest.

"I hope I shall soon be able to make things very different for you all," he said proudly. "I've never said so before, because mere talking is no use."

"I know it is not much yet, Hatty," he went on deprecatingly, "but it is only the beginning." And then the pride of his order flushed up, and he added: "Money need not represent the value of the work. Some things cannot have money value. Fifteen thousand pounds could have been no nearer to the value of 'Paradise Lost' than the fifteen pounds that the Milton family got for it. You don't think your linnets' songs are only worth the seeds you give it, Hatty. But the seeds are all that you can give."

"But I'd be ashamed of myself if I gave it just as little as would keep it alive!" Hatty muttered, wagging her head.

"This is really worth very little," he said, taking his poem from Milly's hand. "I only wonder that they have taken it at all. I never thought less of anything of mine than I do of this poem as I read it now. Nothing more than any girl in my heroine's place must think, if she would only think it aloud."

"But you ain't a girl, and that makes it wonderful," persisted downright Hatty.

"A little appreciation makes one very humble, mother," said George to Mrs. Harvey, as he bade her good-night. "I thought there was something in me, and while I was snubbed I could assert that something! But now—I'm afraid!"

There was no sleep for him that night. Slumber never brought such dreams as he dreamed—wakeful. Those poor shillings, marked on that draft—what agonies of mental arithmetic were they not carried through! So many poems, so much money. So much money, so much improvement at home. Out of this, his very first literary earning, he must make some gift to his mother and each of his sisters. Something pretty as a keepsake, and pleasing as a present, and yet something that should spare the household purse, always so sternly absorbed. God had dropped the seed of a true poet into the lad's heart; and thus it was striking root downward and bearing fruit upward, spreading its sweet aroma through all the ramifications of his nature; not growing on the surface of his life, but drawing his life into itself.

Well, it is something in one's life when the first watchful night is one of hope and joy!

CHAPTER III.—HOW GEORGE GOT LOST IN THE SUBLIME DARKNESS.

GEORGE never "woke one fine morning and found himself famous." He worked his way on slowly and surely. Editors and publishers who were pleased with his poems, began to suggest that he might find new successes in prose. Their encouragement was not always as entirely flattering or beneficent as it might appear, since the idea generally seized them when some "regular hand" had failed them, perhaps on some subject that was already advertised, and the tyro was expected to write at a shortness of time which the "regular hand" would utterly have repudiated, except at very different prices! George knew all about it, but he had lived no glass-case existence, but an honest open-air one, and instead of being sensitive and indignant, was contented and thankful, and was, perhaps, all the more grateful to his employers, because their favours did not lie upon him as a heavy burden, but were borne between them, as cheerful mutual obligation. "George is a genius," Hatty used to say, "and yet he's as sensible as if he was stupid!"

George continued in his printing-office until more than a year after his sister Hatty's marriage. At that time he accepted the post of sub-editor and general literary factotum in the house of a rising publisher, who wanted to get as good an article as was to be had—cheap.

He had been the financial head of the little household for some time before that, and, indeed, his commencing salary was not much more than the wages he had earned among the presses—was, in fact, no more, considering the extra expenses of a changed social position.

"We can do things a little different without letting them cost much more," his mother reflected, and their changes were made by that prudent standard.

They left the homely house at Mile-end for an old-fashioned cottage at Hackney. They got this on very moderate terms, because the landlord lived next door, and was "particular," and would not take children, or a piano, or people who kept late hours. It was a pretty little cottage, scarcely larger than the Mile-end one, but with a trellis-porch, a Virginian creeper, and Gothic windows.

"Just such a quaint, genteel place as I

always thought I should like to live in when I got old," said Mrs. Harvey.

Another change on which George insisted was, that his mother should give up all work for money. They had lost their old house-keeper, Hatty, and George commanded that his mother should take her place, with the assistance of a little maid hired from the workhouse.

Milly still continued her designing, and earned a very fair female income. Then, as the Hackney cottage boasted an extra bedroom, it was arranged that Miss Brook should come and live with them. It was a plan which conferred a benefit on all parties concerned. Miss Brook put her own furniture into the empty room, and paid the five shillings a week which had been her accustomed rent for years. That made a considerable item in the rent of the Hackney cottage. At the same time, Miss Brook had hitherto been penned in her own narrow precincts, frying comfortless chops in winter, and in summer eating cold dinners and drinking milk, sooner than light a fire. Now she had "the run of the house," and lived cheaper and better by sharing the Harveys' food. Miss Brook still frowned and spoke as sharply as ever, but the Harveys never noticed it, for they knew it meant smiles and approval. George had made two or three "characters" out of Miss Brook, and had put her in two or three poems. She had such a strongly-marked self, and yet spoke so little of herself, that she was really exciting to the imagination, like some of those gaunt old Border keeps, which have survived their very names and traditions.

But George presently found that he must be prepared to attend an occasional dinner party. Flattering letters came to him from wealthy, would-be litterateurs.

Now, in his own home, at his mother's side, George Harvey had always enjoyed the very best society—that of a thoughtful, cultivated Christian woman. She had really formed her son's taste upon this standard. But connoisseurs of all kinds are at times liable to be diverted out of their better sense. Men who can appreciate Velasquez and Vanduyck have been bewitched into buying Sir Peter Lelys.

George Harvey was but young. And if there were some trials and temptations of literary life, against which his Spartan training had forearmed him, there were others to which it left him peculiarly open. The lowly printing-office, the free gibe and comment of the work-people, but served as a foil to set

forth the charms of the soft-speaking, complimentary society into which he was now introduced. At first he did not care for it at all, was only too glad to escape from it to a bread-and-cheese supper, and the simple talk at home. But after a time the poison began to work. Its sickly taste began to seem only sweetness. An appetite was forming which could be satisfied with no other food.

He began to think that perhaps public opinion in his home had grown rather too simple and direct—that perhaps life had a few interesting corners which must be measured by some rule less stern and straight than that of "Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man."

He fancied that there might be some truth in the delicate and wide views of his new friends, and that most ministers of the gospel were too "narrow." Not that all these superior people censured them for it,—the common multitude required bonds and bounds, but they were elevated above such things, as the man is elevated above scholastic discipline. It was a dainty compliment to George, when referring to his minister, they observed "how beautiful it was in him to be ready to learn of a man whom he could teach."

They never said that anything was "wicked." There were men in the "set" who had two wives, or at least a right wife and a wrong one. Their stories were whispered about as interesting secret tragedies. They might mean suffering and sacrifice and sorrow—they might mean anything but what they unmistakably did mean—sin. And yet it is wrong to say that they never said anything was wicked. Whatever injured themselves, either in fact or fancy, was unpardonable. Whatever would not be injured by them, was coarse selfishness or black ingratitude. In a word, they forgave everybody's enemies but their own. But this inconsistency was not apparent to George, while their acquaintance-ship was new.

They went into such charmingly courageous arguments. Nothing was too sacred to be doubted and discussed. "Perish whatever will not bear handling," they cried. Fancy if a burglar said so of your jewel-case!

They were so gentle, too, and tender. The women among them could not believe that the taint of sin was already in their "sweet and innocent little ones." It was quite natural and interesting that they should smash their toys, make targets of windows, and insist on tasting every dish at table. It was also "natural" that they should pull the

cat's tail, but they evidently judged her a higher order of being, for it was not natural if she turned round and retaliated. Then she must be beaten and banished.

"Well, I do believe in innate depravity," George observed (it had been their last argument), "and yet I cannot remember the least inclination to worry an animal."

At first George fancied that the re-action of their doubts and uncertainties, was but a refreshment and stimulant to his own spiritual nature. The fact was, he did not yet understand that spirituality is quite different from mere mental grasp. There were beliefs which he held the tighter for any effort to draw them from him. He was a Christian in his understanding, and it had a side-light into his heart, which otherwise was yet in darkness.

There are many people, especially those of quick and thoughtful capacity, who, born in Christian homes, can never tell precisely when first the light about them shone also from within. It may have been such a little taper at first, that though it would have shone plainly in darkness, it was smothered by the brilliance around. Often it burns so for a long time, is almost extinguished, and then its revivifying is likely to be mistaken for its first appearance.

George presently became aware of an uncomfortable change in himself. His regular prayers and public devotions began to appear wearisome and useless formalities. The Bible seemed half a dull truism, and half an incomprehensible mystery. Life looked like a tangle. The dogmas on which he had rested seemed to bend beneath him, like bodies without a living soul. What had satisfied him hitherto sufficed him no longer. He thought he needed less—he really needed more. He was like a man throwing away a precious stone as useless, because it is not yet set and polished.

Yet he had misgivings that this was not a change for the better, and wanted to hide it as much as he could, even from himself. But it would come out. It is as hard to hide a dead faith as a dead body. These acquaintances of his found it out as vultures find carrion.

"We always thought you would soon rise above the circle of the creeds," they congratulated him. "We knew you would soon be strong enough to recognise the sublime darkness, without trying to dissipate it with a farthing candle. Submit yourself to the mysteries of the Infinite. Rest assured that the Supreme Intelligence which turns the

dead leaf into manure for the next spring, will find some satisfactory use for our lives beyond the grave. Let positive science be your undeniable revelation."

George stoutly denied that he had reached any such point of enlightenment, but the others shook their heads and knew better. George still went to church; he still read family prayers,—Mrs. Harvey having long since relegated that duty to him. But he did not pray in private. Sometimes he kneeled down—dumb. Even his desk-work had ceased to be a joy to him. He did not know what to say; he had nothing worth saying to his fellows. What is there to say about a "supreme silent Intelligence?" Who is to be the perfect ideal of the Friend and the Benefactor? Who is to be the Husband of the widow, or the Father of the fatherless? In his secret heart, George Harvey felt that his questionings were going far beyond the avowals of his acquaintance. And so he was, for his doubts were sincere spiritual throes, theirs but social excuses.

But it all lay between God and his own soul. His nearest and dearest never suspected it. Only his plain-speaking sister Hatty observed to her husband—

"George always seems to me to be in a bad temper when he comes from service on Sundays."

CHAPTER IV.—THE TALENT BEARS INTEREST.

GEORGE lived on somehow, as people do live through great struggles or great sorrows. He knew now that he had lost something whose possession he had never realised before. He missed it, as the world would miss its unnoticed blessings of air, light, and water.

He could not help seeing an outer difference in himself. It was no longer easy to put aside his own books, and read aloud from some volume that interested his mother and Miss Brook. It was no longer a matter of course to postpone some purchase for himself, that he might the sooner buy some article for Mrs. Harvey, or some trifle to beautify the home. To remember birthdays seemed but a trivial impertinence, unworthy of the "stern reality" of life.

He gradually grew taciturn, and was often touchy and irascible. Mrs. Harvey feared he was working his brain too hard, and George himself tried to believe in the motherly apprehension.

He would go and sit in the Webbers' house of an evening. He did not speak much, and the good little stationer was often sorely awed by this strange genius of a brother-in-law.

But George liked to hear him talk. His simple views of life, his perpetual consciousness of a higher law, and his trustful confidence in its finalities, were to George's wrung and jaded sensibilities like a sweet fairy tale among bewildering geometrical problems. It soothed him as such, but it did him no more good, because it was a seed that fell on such stony ground as this:

"He is naturally a good man, and he is satisfied and happy because he is not very wise. He has faith, because he does not know doubt. His soul has known no struggle, no yearning. It may be well to be so—especially for him!"

George forgot that nobody knew of his own struggles and yearnings, though they might begin presently to perceive upon him the signs of defeat. We are all so apt to forget that other men's histories are not written as plainly upon their backs, as our own is, in our hearts.

Another woeful experience for George was, that as he had lost his old and merely half-mechanical faith in God, he had gained faith in godless men. He invested love and confidence in people with whom, in his old simplicity, he would have had no close personal relations. He was doomed to find that hearts, unfertilised by divine love, are too sterile for any wholesome human growth.

It is no use going into the unprofitable revelations of "the natural man" which poor George found himself suddenly forced to receive. There was one, with whom George had held many a metaphysical disquisition, and who had startled him by such views as that "surely what are called sins are merely natural developments in certain persons, since almost every particular evil trait of humanity is found, as it were, personified in some species of the animal world,"—who believed "that the world was a vast machine, bound to work remorselessly on from some uncertain beginning to some unknown end,"—who held that "prayer was a useless fiction, and free-will a mere chimera, whose nearest fact lay with those who knew they had none, and consciously surrendered themselves to the despotism of their fate."

In a little money-matter with George, this individual became involved in what looked awfully like a particularly mean and base embezzlement, for which he could find no available defence except two lies and a dash of defiance. George let him go unpunished, except by a little suspense as to whether "fate" destined him to a police-cell, and by the awful consciousness that there was at

least one person in the world who knew the measure of his "natural goodness!"

Still, George comforted himself that he had never had the highest opinion of the stability of this individual. For one peculiarity of his enlightenment was that it had made him "hail-fellows-well-met," with some whom all the while he secretly distrusted and more than half despised.

But there was one, who had been the very ideal of George's new spiritual world. He had not so much disputed the letter of religion, as insisted on its needlessness for those who walked in the spirit. He had neglected Sabbath observances because he said all days should be sabbaths. He had slighted God's ministers, only because he said that all men should be priests unto God. He had never kneeled to pray, because "every thought should be a prayer." His only doubt of scriptural inspiration was his belief in the equal inspiration of many other books. He had smiled benignly on the grand doctrine of the atonement, because he regarded it as the "artistic embodiment of that spirit of sacrifice which was the highest secret of life."

To this man there came a trial. Only a commercial difficulty, which he had no reserve to meet, because his delicate and liberal taste had preferred sumptuous luxury to the "low gratification of hoarding." And now he began to clutch at anything that might save him. No matter what it might be, he would grasp it—tear it up—if it would only check his fall for a moment. He who had despised "penurious economy," was not below claiming its results from any trustful hands. A hundred broken hearts and bruised lives were to him as nothing compared with his own broken fortune. He would take the bread and cheese from those that had earned it, that he and "his own" might enjoy the Dives' paradise of "faring sumptuously" every day. Self-sacrifice was the good and beautiful thing for everybody but himself!

George said nothing. Never one bitter word passed between him and his former friend. The bitterness was too bitter to be borne in the mouth. The fallen idol was shivered in too many pieces to be touched. Bury the rubbish.

It was just after this sad and silent burial that George sat one day in his office, blank and dreary. It seemed an empty world beneath an empty heaven.

"If there was a God who cared personally for us, I think He would pity me," George pondered.

There was a rap on the door—a strange

rap. Nobody who came there knocked with a walking-stick. George's heart gave a curious thump.

"Come in," he said.

There entered a man about thirty. A well-dressed, pleasant looking man, with very blue eyes and a humorous mouth.

"You don't know me, I see, Mr. Harvey," he said. "But perhaps you'll recollect the name—James Murray."

"I beg your pardon for coming here to bother you," he went on, as George greeted him warmly, and drew up their chairs together before the fire. "But I've never been in London since we last parted, and I've been reading you in the magazines, and I could not help wanting to say, 'God bless you,' and how glad I am that you are in a way of doing good to plenty others as you did good to me."

"I'm afraid I don't do much good to anybody else, if I did any to you," said poor George humbly.

"No mistake about me," responded James. "You know that I was as thorough-going a young blackguard as there can be in this city, and I'd never have gone of myself where I was likely to hear how to be anything else. There's a way in which it wasn't you who did me any good, sir, because it is only God who can take the evil spirit out of a man and put in a new one—just as it's only God who can make the right medicine do good to a sick man. But the doctor that prescribed the physic, and the nurse that takes the sick man to the doctor are all in it, and they all deserve gratitude and love."

"And you really are a different man to what you used to be?" George observed, rather dreamily.

"God be praised I am, sir," Murray answered devoutly; "and I may say it, for it's not to my own glory, and its best sign is that while I used not to think myself a sinner but just what was quite natural and like everybody else, now I know both what I was and what I am still, sir."

"And you are happy and doing well?" George asked.

"Yes, I married a good little woman, and we've got a pretty baby, and I'm head man in Dash and Blank's printing-office in Leeds, so we get along very fairly in our small way. Of course, it's very different to yours nowadays, sir. But if ever you're passing a night in Leeds, you must put up with us. The bedroom is nice and comfortable, and we can sleep on the parlour-sofa as easy as anything. It would be a real treat to do

it to accommodate you, sir, and we'll be hurt if you don't prove it. I'd be glad to take you into my Sunday-school class, and say to them, 'Here's the gentleman you've often heard about, that's been my best earthly friend.'"

"Have you ever met any doubters—religious doubters?" George asked, with a strong effort to appear unconcerned.

"Dear, yes, sir, lots. Some of all kinds. Some that couldn't believe, and some that wouldn't; but the first sort mostly come round at last. I've met people that didn't think there was a God, and people that didn't think He troubled himself with anything except the earth and the stars—folks who couldn't get further into the Bible than the first chapter of Genesis. I've seen people that don't think we want a Saviour. I can't say I've ever been troubled with doubts myself. You see it was only likely that most of the Jews in Jerusalem should be exercised in their minds as to whether Jesus was the promised Messiah or not, but I don't suppose the widow of Nain, or Jairus, or the man born blind, had many doubts about it. They knew. So do I."

George Harvey looked earnestly at his companion. The man seated at Christ's feet, clothed and in his right mind, could not have been more unlike the raging lunatic among the tombs than was this decent, cheery, kindly artisan unlike the profligate, artful, reckless lad of fifteen years ago. One might as well assert that a barren field had become a fruitful garden, by some force of

its own, as that such a change had been wrought without any exterior power. George knew by experience that "nature" in itself has elements of decay, but not of restoration.

He took James Murray home with him, and the simple-hearted man amused them all with the history of his old admiration for Mrs. Harvey, and his feeling that he should like to speak to her if he had a decent coat.

"I never thought to be sitting supping with you," he said. "That would have seemed too good. But God gives us a deal more than we ask Him for. Did it ever strike you, Mr. Harvey, that we should be awful poor creatures, in soul and body, if He gave us nothing more than our prayers?"

George sat in his room till late that night. His soul felt like one who has just come out of a fever, weak and faint, not fit for strong meat, and feebly grateful to resign itself to a narrow bound, and a shaded light, but yet thankful to know that its ghastly horrors are over with its delirium, and that it is still safe in a breezy world, where God's sun is shining. And into his silent heart it seemed to him that Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace be unto you. Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands: and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing."

And, on his knees, George answered and said unto him—

"My Lord and my God!"

Next Sabbath he took a class in a water-side ragged-school.

PRAYER.

"WHY wilt thou pray?—why storm with cries
His car who rides the thundering skies
And passes scaithful by?
His laws stand firm: He may not hear;
Thy life, thy death in his career
Are but as steps: He will not hear,
Though loud thou lift thy cry."

Belike, belike: yet the soft tear,
Fresh dropt upon the senseless bier,
Hath virtue, nor that small:
The sod why dost thou strew with flowers?
The dead man walks not in thy bowers,
He will not rise to sorrow's showers,
Nor feel when wreaths do fall;

And yet thou weep'st—much more may thou
Pay to the living God thy vow,
Nor fruitless pour the prayer.
Deft Logic is but Reason's tool,
Reason a child in Nature's school,
We may nor joy, nor grieve by rule,
Nor syllogize a prayer.

JOHN STUART BLACKIE.

IS THERE A CENTRAL HEAVEN?

THERE are questions of deep interest connected with the thought of the relation which our planet, which is our present home, bears to that brighter and more perfect dwelling-place to which all Christians look as their final rest, termed popularly as well as scripturally—heaven. Assuming the fact that there is such a place or locality as heaven, adapted for material beings, and therefore necessarily material itself, the question recurs again and again to the thoughtful mind—what is it? and where is it? Our Lord, as the Scripture tells us, and as we repeat in our Christian creeds, has “ascended into heaven,” not as a spirit (which, as He himself declares, “hath not flesh and bones” as He had), but as a man with a body, though not in every particular the same as ours, yet in many points identical, and certainly material, as he distinctly proved to Thomas. Whither then has He gone? to what material world or distant part of his dominions has He departed? Is it to some vast orb so far removed from our little dusky globe in the dark blue depths of space, that as we think of its distance, and endeavour to realise it to our imagination, we feel almost hopelessly separated from it, like mariners in a solitary ship in mid-ocean, or a boat’s crew cast away on a desert island cut off from all companionship but its own? Or, on the other hand, have we reason to think that there is at the present hour, as there always has been, such a real connection both physically (*i.e.* astronomically) as well as morally and spiritually between the two worlds, between this island-world called the earth and the distant mainland or continent of heaven—the home of God and his holy angels, as well as the “perfected just,” that space alone divides us physically and literally, while but the slender plank of death separates us from it individually; and that, as over that dark bridge each moment souls are spanning the gulf, they are admitted at once to its golden light and unfading glory? These are questions which, though science may throw some partial light upon them, Revelation alone can fully answer, and which it is admitted by all who believe the Bible are answered by that wonderful book in the affirmative, fully, though not perhaps as fully as our curiosity may desire, and satisfactorily at least so far as it is necessary or possible for us with our present faculties to apprehend such a subject.

Among the sciences, astronomy, however,

is the only one that can throw even a glimpse of light upon it other than the Scriptures afford; and though its testimony is indirect and necessarily imperfect, yet it is of considerable value and interest as far as it goes, serving to impart a reality to the statements of Scripture, and thus assist in confirming its truth.

That there is, then, a physical or material connection between our planet and other worlds, though so distant as to be out of our sight altogether, is the first inductive step in the testimony which astronomy affords and suggests as to the inferential existence of a material heaven.

Astronomically viewed, we perceive at once, the earth is no solitary island-world, no strange sail in the great sea of space, no mere isolated globe. Belonging herself to the sun, she is only one out of a number of a family resembling herself that are warmed by the same vast hearth-fire, and, circulating round him, are likewise carried forward with him in his more gigantic, and as yet unmeasured, orbit.

But, our solar system, as it is termed, with its family of worlds, occupying as it does a circle of at least six thousand millions of miles in diameter, dwindles to a mere point in the universe of starry space; and, amidst the millions of bright suns, and clusters of suns, with their attendant worlds, that encompass and surround us here, we find ourselves to be but a microscopic unit, small as a grain of sand in the archipelago of similar bodies, that belong to our own astral system, or nebula, as it is termed, bounded as it is by the Milky Way.

Vast, then, and inconceivable as are the distances from us, as from each other, of these innumerable suns and systems that burn and roll around us here, and without leaving the boundary of our own star system, we can at once perceive the physical relation which our planet bears to every other member of the same system, about the centre of which, or nearly so, our sun has been placed by astronomers as its normal position.

Thus viewed, it may be affirmed, everything connected with our globe bears an astronomical relation to others under analogous conditions—its size, its place, its path in the heavens, its relative distance from its own primary or sun, as well as from other suns or planets; its rate of travelling, as also other circumstances connected with the won-

drous arrangements of our globe; its diurnal or daily, as well as its orbital or annual, motion—everything has been determined, designed, and adjusted, with a view to others, and accordingly with a precision so admirable, and so plainly perceptible, that we know were any one of the conditions under which the earth, or any other planet or sun, exists, now absent or altered, chaos and confusion would ensue instead of the order and beauty maintained in the system, and catastrophes the most tremendous to contemplate would involve the universe of stars to which we belong in utter ruin.

But not only does astronomy thus inform us of our relative physical connection with the more immediate members of our solar system as a unit belonging to it, or even to the more distant suns that we see sparkling around us, and which are within reach of human sight, either unassisted or through the medium of the telescope, but also permits us to infer the mysterious connection of our world with a far more distant part of the universe quite out of our sight in fact, and beyond even the reach of the telescope. This great fact has been thus brought to light. It has been ascertained beyond question that the sun, as we have already remarked, is moving onwards in a supposed arc or orbit of vast dimensions, carrying necessarily also his satellite worlds with him on his journey; and the problem has been started for astronomical investigation, Whereabouts does the centre of this great circle lie?—*i.e.* in what direction are we to look for it? Given the arc or segment of a circle, and provided we have likewise its plane, a simple calculation will tell us where to look for the centre? As, however, little more than the *direction* towards which our sun or solar system is travelling can be approximated to, and the angle of motion or the curvature of the line in which it is travelling can be as yet little more than suggested (the orbit being so vast as to appear to us almost a straight line), while the plane of the supposed orbit is even still more difficult to ascertain, but little that is positive can as yet be affirmed about it. And the proposition of finding the exact direction in which to look for the centre of the sun's vast orbit is no easy task, and can scarcely be considered as yet fully accomplished. Different positions in the heavens have, however, been assigned for it, and pointed out by different astronomers as the probable position of the central sun or mass of matter round which our great orb and his companion worlds are

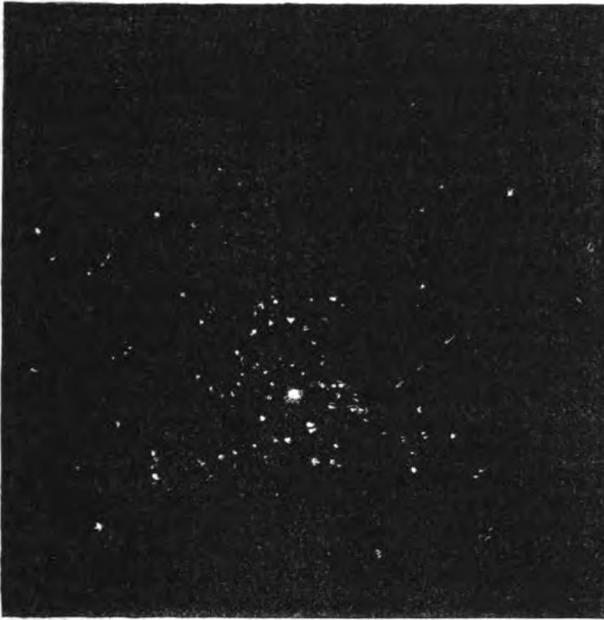
circulating. Among the eminent astronomers who have undertaken the difficult problem, Maedler perhaps stands the first. He entered upon this calculation some fifteen years ago, with indefatigable energy and industry, and at length boldly pointed to the star Alcyone (the principal of the group of the Pleiades in the constellation Taurus), as the probable actual central mass round which he moved. Maedler's theory, however, notwithstanding the credit which justly attaches to him for the magnificent conception implied in it, as well as the incalculable labour attending such a work, has not been altogether confirmed by other astronomers, some of whom assign a somewhat different direction of movement and plane, and consequently different direction wherein to look for the centre. But here it must be remembered that, after all, little more than the mere direction of the central mass could with the imperfect data possessed be pointed out. The vast length of radius or distance which lay between the sun and its centre could never be approximated without far more perfect data than we possess, or are likely ever to possess. The fixing, therefore, by Maedler, on one particular star as that distant central point or mass has not been confirmed, notwithstanding other testimony seemingly corroborative of this theory which he has adduced from the "proper motion" of the other stars in the group to which Alcyone belongs. There is no limit, indeed, to what might be the length of that invisible radius or chord of gravity which binds our primary and his family of worlds to the distant centre round which he is travelling. Supposing the direction of that centre to be as Maedler has described, and to lie towards Alcyone, yet Alcyone, distant as it is from our sun, might be but the first step or round in the celestial ladder—the first inch in the celestial mileage—the first huge mile in the celestial millions or billions of such measurements, by which infinite space is portioned, while inconceivably beyond all may still lie the outskirts or suburbs of the central mass of glory of the celestial city or world to which we are bound fast. What the power of gravity may be, or how far it may extend its influence in space, is only to be limited by its size and density; and measuring it according to the Newtonian law, and having infinity to deal with, there is no limit that we can assign to its distance any more than to its magnitude. If the magnitude and density of the body be sufficient, enough power of gravity may be put

forth to hold not *our* solar system only in its grasp, but innumerable suns and systems. One thing is certain—the magnitude of the centre which, while out of the sight of the human eye, even when armed with the most powerful telescope, still continues to hold our own sun and his family of worlds fast by its invisible chain, must be something vast and inconceivable by us.

Thus then—though the precise direction and the distance of our sun from his invisible centre is still unknown, there is little doubt of the existence of such a centre. This granted, then the physical connection of the earth is established by the same argument that connects the planet with its primary:

whatever distant point the sun may be attached to, the earth is likewise attached to that point; just as our satellite, the moon, is doubly connected with the earth and sun, so are we with the sun and the central mass to which he belongs.

One thing, then, appears evident here, which astronomy unfolds to us. We are not as a severed link in the great world of creation, we are not a mere isolated globe of matter floating, as a ship and her crew, hopelessly and helplessly in a boundless sea of space unconnected with other lands. We belong to, and are actually attached, as by an iron chain, to some other world in a distant part of the universe, far beyond our



Alcyone.

own sun, and which unglorified mortal eye has not yet seen; but the chain is *there* nevertheless, as well as the country it belongs to, and the existence of both are as much a matter of fact as the existence of America and the Atlantic cable, though both are alike invisible to us here. That wondrous wire connects the Old and the New World so as to enable the inhabitants of earth, though invisible to each other, to converse in words of lightning. The Newtonian chain of gravity in like manner connects the heavenly with the earthly; how far, notwithstanding the vast distance, a conversation and intercourse is possible to be carried on between the two countries, past experience has shown: how

H. N.S.

far, and in what manner it may be, and is still maintained, and how long it shall continue, are questions for further consideration. In the meantime something has been done by astronomy, if it has only suggested the magnificent and cheering thought, that we are not only connected relatively with the millions of suns and systems that we behold around us, but positively and physically with some vast centre out of sight, and to which all worlds and systems alike belong and render homage. What, if this should be the heaven of heavens, the very throne and habitation of God, the highest and best of all worlds, the present abode of the Man Christ Jesus, and round which, turning as on a

mighty pivot, the universe of creation and its gigantic frame-work rolls its starry face successively towards its Creator, is there anything irrational in such a supposition? On the contrary, are there not many reasons derived from other sources for thinking it in the highest degree probable? It must be allowed, however, whatever may be thought of it, that astronomy, without positively asserting it, suggests here a grand and sublime idea. But here science bids us farewell—having conducted us thus in imagination, as it were, to the very portals of the unknown regions—the celestial city above—she modestly retires, leaving us, however, not in the dark, but in the hands and under the guidance of another and “more sure and powerful” witness—and that is, the inspired volume of the Scriptures. *That* assures us not only of the reality and certainty of the existence of such a place as heaven, though it tells not its celestial longitude or latitude, but of the actual *physical, moral, and in-*

telligent connection between the two worlds—heaven and earth—established, not by gravity, but by actual intercourse of the inhabitants—by the communication which has subsisted between the two worlds, through the medium of intelligent Beings (who have visited us) of a race far superior to man, and who have passed and repassed from one world to the other, crossing the vast gulf of space that lies between with far more ease than we can now, with all the aids of science we possess, pass from one country or city on our own globe to another,—their flight resembling, indeed, in its speed more the flashing of the electric spark along the wire, that now sounds and spans the solitary depths of our Atlantic, than any mortal flight, but thus establishing beyond all question the intimate relation of this terrestrial ball and kingdom of earth with another and a grander and a brighter world and kingdom. But here we pass from the testimony of science to the domain of ancient and inspired history.

J. CRAMPTON.

(To be continued.)

OUR DISTRICT.

By A RIVER-SIDE VISITOR.

III.—BIBLE BRAIDY.



WE had not been very long in our district before we began to hear in various incidental ways of Bible Braidy, and to gather that he was an institution in the neighbourhood. In the language of the district—a very slangy language—he was a “proper old bloke;” as good an old

sort as ever stepped, and as “mum as a mute” in respect to criminal secrets entrusted to him under confessional-like circumstances. Further we were told that he was “no end of a scolar,” and could “talk like a book about almost anything; while as to reading the Bible—” and a snap of the finger, or shrug of the shoulders, generally intimated that the rest upon that point was a thing to be imagined, not described.

“Why, bless you, sir!” exclaimed the only person who went into anything like details upon the subject—a gentleman who in his day had undergone sundry terms of imprisonment,—“why, bless you, sir!” exclaimed this worthy, with a real enthusiasm, “the regular patterers as is paid for it, and as comes messing about when they ain’t wanted, ain’t a patch on old Bible, who wouldn’t take a penny for it though he’s as poor as a church mouse, as the sayen is. And as to doing good, why, there ain’t one of the regular hands fit to be mentioned in the same week with him. Not as I go for to say that the

regulars, as I call 'em, don't want to do good, or for to deny that they sometimes do do a good turn, or that they are plucky going where fevers are and the like. All the same, there ain't any one of 'em as you can name as comes within a long chalk of old Braidy, in doing good—in the Bible way I mean, you know. And cos why? Why, cos he's got our measure. He knows us. He don't come potterin' about when he ain't wanted; but when he *is* wanted he's always up to time. Early or late, fair weather or foul, send for him, and there he is, and no questions asked. No matter who the man may be; if he was the worst fellow as ever died in his shoes, he'd read to him, and pray for him, and stick to him. There's many a poor 'cross' cove about here, sir, I can tell you, as has died happy, but as would have died hard, awful hard, sir—I mean in the way of being troubled in their minds—if Bible Braidy hadn't been with them at the last. Strike me!" exclaimed our friend in conclusion, "if old Bible shouldn't be the head of all the parsons if I had the making of them! If things was managed as they ought to be, the old man *would* be a lot better off than he is—a bishop, or a school-master with a big screw, or something of that sort."

"Seeing that he can do so much good in it, Mr. Braidy would perhaps rather remain in his present position," we observed.

"Well, I was only saying what I would do for him, if I had my way," rejoined our friend. "As far as he's concerned, I dare say, he would rather be where he is than in a better sort of place, and, as you say, on account of the good he can do. I'll back him to be as square an old party as any breathing bar none; so that it's only from choice that he needs to live in a cross quarter, and, above all, in such a h—ll-hole as Barker's Buildings, for that's about what it is, though I live in it."

What we heard of Bible Braidy made us anxious to form acquaintance with him, and at length an opportunity occurred of doing so under circumstances so impressive and so characteristic of the spot in which Braidy lived and the good work done by him in it, that we will venture to relate them.

One day we had occasion to call upon an odd-job labourer. On reaching his place of abode, we were informed by his landlady that he was house-bound, by reason of an injury to his foot, and that if we wanted to see him we must go up to his apartment. We accordingly ascended to the third-floor

back room, which served him and his wife and three children as living, eating, and sleeping room. There were only two chairs in the room. He was seated on one of them, while his bandaged foot rested upon the other; so we took our seat upon the end of the bed, which stood across the window of the room. When, in answer to our inquiry, we had heard the story of the accident to the foot, and had said that which we had come to say, we chanced to glance out at the window, and beheld a scene that would certainly have been strange and striking to eyes that, unlike our own, had not become familiar with such districts as that in which we were. We could see right down a narrow street, which a single glance was sufficient to show was a "hot" quarter—a quarter given up to the worst descriptions of the habitual criminal classes. The houses were lean-to and dilapidated to an alarming extent. Broken, rag-stuffed, curtainless windows were in the ascendant; numbers of the street-doors had pannels stove in, and in two or three instances the doors were gone altogether.

It was a warm summer's afternoon, and crowds of dirty, ill-cared-for children, most of them nearly and some of them *wholly* naked, were playing about in the refuse-littered gutters and roadway. On the shady side of the street numbers of fearsome-looking men, with foreheads villanous low, were seated upon window sills, or stretched at full length upon the pavement, while frowsy, slatternly-looking women stood in groups around doorways or kept up loud-voiced conversation from opposite windows. Beer cans were circulating freely, and this was especially the case with a band of choice spirits seated on a bench outside a public-house just under the window, out of which we were looking. The whole scene was such an one as Dante might have imagined, and as we could not hope by mere words to give our readers a full realisation of its horrors—even if it were desirable that we should do so—we have simply given its leading outlines. It was a picture of most pandemonium-like aspect. The air that rose from the street was fetid, and such scraps of language as distinctly reached the ear were tainted by foul ideas, and harsh with strange oaths. After a moment's mental comparison of localities, we knew that we were looking upon the blackest spot of our whole district—that Barker's Buildings which was but too characteristically described by the fiercely condemnatory epithet applied to it by the predatory gentleman who had spoken so enthusiastically of Bible Braidy.

"This must be Barker's Buildings, then," we said, turning from the window.

"Which it *are*, sir, and no mistake," answered the tenant of the room. "It isn't often you'd find *two* such spots as that, even in such neighbourhoods as this. One of 'em's *one* too many, for if you'll excuse me saying so, sir, if ever there was a devil's own quarter, Barker's Buildings is it. We're most of us a rough lot hereabout, and a good many ain't particular to a trifle how they knock out a living. We don't draw things very fine, but all of us out of it are quite agreed that Barker's Buildings are something awful. You ask any of the police whether any of them would venture into it single-handed. It would be about as much as their life was worth if they did. There ain't a worse lot out than the Buildings' gang. They say themselves that they are good for anything from pitch and toss to manslaughter, and from robbing a church to killing a man; and, there's no mistake about it, they are. There's some of them that actually *are* laid by the heels at this very present time for stripping a church roof of lead."

At this point there arose a great hubbub in the street, and looking out of the window, to which the labourer also limped, we saw that the carousal of the band of worthies outside the public-house had been rudely broken in upon. A stalwart woman was brandishing her clenched fist in the face of one of the men. In her excitement she had pulled the fastenings from her hair, which floated about her in grim disorder. Her face was heavily flushed, her eyes flashing, and her voice, trembling with passion, rose loud and harsh—

"Sugar-Bag is in for it now," said the labourer at our elbow.

"Sugar-Bag!" we echoed.

"Sugar-Bag is her nickname," he explained; "she works at the sugar-bag making, and is one of the very few of the Buildings lot as does do anything in a honest way. She's very quiet and inoffensive as a general thing, but her husband was sentenced to two years for a wharf-robbery, and she thinks, and as far as that goes, so do others, that it was through 'Fly' Palmer there he was taken; but she had better leave him alone."

The woman did *not* leave him alone. For a moment she seemed cowed by his manner, but only for a moment. Merely stepping back just so far as to be out of the reach of his arm, she began to rail again. Amid a volley of abuse she repeated her accusation of his having "rounded" on her Bill, and

insinuated that she knew what would send him to the gallows.

This insinuation seemed to sting "Fly" Palmer, for the last words had scarcely left her lips before he was on his feet again. This time he followed her up as she retreated. She became terrified, and turned and ran. Still he followed, and she had got but a short distance down the street, when he overtook her, and hit her such a heavy blow on the head that she fell, stunned. For a few seconds the fallen woman lay; then she rose hastily to her feet. She stood looking round her in a dazed kind of way for a moment, with her right hand pressed to her side; then with a passionate rapidity she swept back the hair from her face, and dashing forward, struck Palmer on the breast. A loud shivering cry, half sob, half groan, burst from his lips, and the next instant he sank to his knees, and, after swaying twice to and fro, fell helplessly forward with his face to the ground. The whole street was instantly in an uproar. Some men came forward and gently raised him in their arms, and, as they turned his face upwards, we could see that it was drawn with pain and ghastly pale.

"This is horrible!" we exclaimed, impulsively rising, and putting on our hat; but the labourer, laying a restraining hand upon our shoulder, said in a tone of friendly remonstrance,

"Excuse me bein' so bold, but if I was you, sir, I wouldn't go near; their quarrels are like man and wife's—best settled among themselves. Any one as goes between them is only likely to offend both. Beside, that sort of thing ain't so partic'lar out of the way in the Buildings, as it would be in any decent sort of neighbourhood. The bag-making hands carry a knife for cutting their twine, and having it handy, she's let him have it. It's the way with the women among 'em when their roused. Whatever comes handy they'll use. They often smash a jug or bottle over one another's faces; and as to a clout over the head, why, they think nothing of that. I dare say Mr. Palmer ain't very much hurt, and any way, sir, what could you do if you went round; they're all in an uproar, and would only think you in the way."

This last consideration had already occurred to ourselves, and, yielding to its cogency, we sat down again. In the meantime the wounded man had been carried into the house in which he lived, and a few minutes later a doctor arrived. He soon left, and immediately after, a woman wringing her hands and moaning aloud came hastily out of it and up the street.

"Is he much hurt, Poll?" asked another woman in a tone of sympathy, as she approached the window at which we were placed.

"Done for! done for!" she exclaimed in a voice made shrill by agony. "He says he knows he's going, and the doctor won't contradict him, won't say a word, only shakes his head. But there; I can't stop, I'm going for Bible Braidy. Joe's that troubled in his mind, they can scarcely keep him down in bed, and all his cry is for old Bible."

She rushed off as she finished speaking, but presently came slowly back, and seeing the woman who had spoken to her still standing in the road-way, she thus broke out:

"Oh dear! oh dear! Whatever shall I do! Braidy's out, and face Joe again without him I daren't. Do you know, does any one know, where the old man is?"

And as she asked the question, she turned from side to side with a look of wild appeal in her eyes. Acting upon our impulse this time, before our labourer friend could do anything to prevent it, we leaned from the window, and having attracted the woman's attention, asked, "Is the man really dying?"

"O yes, sir, I'm afraid he is," she sobbed; "and he knows it, and he knows he ain't fit to go, and it's come on him so sudden. He's past the law doing anything to him; so it don't matter who knows it now. He's got a deal to answer for—as much as a man can have, and he's taking on dreadful. He wants some good man to come to him—some one as'll read to him, and say a prayer for him. Will you come, sir?" and she raised her eyes to ours with a beseeching look.

We answered that we would come round at once; and, putting on our hat, we set out with all speed possible.

On getting round to the nearest corner of Barker's Buildings we found the woman waiting for us. She greeted us with an exclamation of thankfulness, and led the way towards the house, which we had nearly reached when we were brought to a standstill by the announcement that old Bible had been found, and was hastening to the spot. Even among the "dangerous" classes there is a feeling of kindness to one another, and it had now been at work. Unbidden and unsolicited, a number of men, on hearing the woman's exclamations of disappointment, had hurried away in different directions in search of Bible Braidy; and one of them now returned in breathless haste to say that he had found him, and that he was "a coming along as fast as ever his game leg would let him."

A look of relief came over the woman's

troubled countenance, immediately followed by a look of embarrassment. We understood the meaning of the latter, and hastened to observe, "You had better wait for Mr. Braidy; he will be of greater service than we can hope to be."

"Well, he's used to the ways of such as Joe," she said, and turned her gaze anxiously towards the end of the street by which the messenger had intimated that Braidy would enter it. In a moment or two he came in sight, and impulsively we started forward to meet him. He was a man of middle height, stoutly built, large headed, heavy featured, with cleanly shaven face, and his grizzled iron-grey hair closely cropped. He walked lame with one leg, and on that side leaned heavily upon a walking-stick; and he was attired in a long, loose, rusty-looking coat, dark trousers patched at the knees with some material a shade lighter, and a low-buttoning, double-breasted waistcoat, which freely displayed his blue check shirt, and high, old-fashioned stock. A poor-looking man enough, and, at a distance, a commonplace-looking man; but, face to face with him, a glance was sufficient to show that he was *not* commonplace. The broad, high forehead, the great brown eyes, soft and liquid as a woman's, but still bright, unwavering, and straight-glancing, eyes to "look the whole world in the face,"—these, and the generally thoughtful, and modestly self-assured expression, gave the beholder assurance of a man with "something in him."

This was the impression instantaneously made upon us as he looked up at us as we confronted him on the pavement of Barker's Buildings. Turning and walking with him, so as not to delay by a moment his mission of grace, we as briefly as possible explained to him how we came to be there, and that we were now going to withdraw.

"No, don't go," he said. "This is no time to bandy compliments; I believe that I *will* be the fitter instrument here, but you too may be able to say a word in season; and any way, you may take my word for it, that this poor dying sinner would sooner see a man like you at his bedside than any of his companions."

We felt that it was no time to bandy compliment, and simply answered—

"In that case we'll come, then."

The crowd round the door of the house in which "Fly" Palmer was lying silently parted to led Braidy through, and we entered together. The wounded man lay on a wretched bed, one end of which was sup-

ported by bricks, the legs having at some time been knocked off. He was lying back, panting after a struggle with the two men who stood one on either side, ready to restrain him should he again "take on wild," while his wife sat at the head of the bed, rocking herself to and fro, with her hands over her face. It was evident at a glance that Palmer was dying. The face was pinched and deadly pale; around the mouth it was already growing livid and clammy, and *the* rattle could be distinguished mingling with his laboured breathing. Gradually the breathing grew calmer, and he sank into a dozing state; but the troubled spirit would not be at rest. "Don't be a fool," he muttered; "pawning's a risky game—awkward questions asked, stuff stuck to, and all that. Sell to the regular melters," he muttered on, after a pause; "their price *is* small, but they're safe, and safety's a thing we must pay for."

He was silent for a brief space, and then with a shudder and start he awoke, and the woman eagerly seized the opportunity to say, "Here's old Bible and another good gentleman come now, Joe."

"Thank God for that!" he murmured earnestly, giving a quick glance round him. As his eye rested upon us he muttered some expression of thanks, then, turning to Braidy, he motioned him to his bedside; and, obeying the signal, the old man advanced, and kneeling by the bed allowed Palmer to take his hand in both his.

After lying still for a few seconds to gain breath, Palmer, slightly raising himself on his elbow, exclaimed, "O Bible, old man, I'm thankful you've come. I was beginning to think that I should be left to die without any one to say a good word for me, and I ain't fit to say one for myself; I've been trying to pray and I can't."

"Oh, Braidy!" he went on, looking into the other's face with a haggard anxiety painful to behold, "it's domino with me; I knew it was as soon as I was hit. I shall go out with the tide, and it'll ebb in an hour. Is there any hope for me, Braidy?—any at all?"

"You're in the hands of God, Palmer," he answered, softly and solemnly, "and He is a merciful, a loving God, a God whose greatest desire and happiness is to forgive even the worst sinners, if they will ask him; to save them if they will only let him."

"Then there is hope?" he said, questioningly, as he sank back on the bed.

"Yes, there is hope and salvation for all who repent and believe," answered Braidy, in the same solemn tone; "who repent of

their sins, and believe that—" and briefly, but clearly, kindly, and in language suitable to the understanding of the dying man, he explained the essentials of Christian belief. "Believe in this all merciful God," he concluded, "and seek his mercy through the Son, who He gave to suffer for our, for *your* transgressions. Do this and there *is* hope for you. The promise of the Lord is that, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, and Christ himself has told us that there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repents."

From sheer weakness, Palmer had closed his eyes, while Braidy was speaking; but, watching the expression of his face from where we stood, we could see that it grew calmer, that hope was *dawning* upon his sorely troubled spirit. Still there were signs of doubt and terror, and presently, when there had been silence for about a minute's space, he suddenly raised himself in the bed again, and, gazing into Braidy's countenance with the painfully beseeching look already spoken of, broke out—

"But I've been *such* a bad lot, Bible—such an awful bad lot, I'm afraid there can't be any hope for *me*. Don't go for to deceive me now, Braidy; is there really any chance for me?"

"The mercy and goodness of the Lord is boundless, Joe," answered the old man gravely, "none can be bad enough to be beyond his forgiveness, if they only sincerely believe and repent; therefore there *is* hope for you. You heard" (Braidy had already partly told him, partly read to him the story of the crucifixion), "when the dying thief on the cross prayed our Saviour to remember him when he came into his kingdom, Jesus answered him, 'To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.' And that is the answer which, in his holy Word, the blessed Bible, God gives to all who sincerely pray to be taken into his kingdom. 'Knock,' he says, 'and it shall be opened;' and it is by prayer, Joe, that you must knock at the gates of the kingdom of heaven. Pray!"

"But I can't pray!" the other exclaimed in a voice of agonized despair. "I told you I tried and I couldn't. I had a notion I used to know 'Our Father' when I was a kid, but I couldn't think of a word of it; will you say it for me?"

Reverently bowing his head and clasping his hands, Braidy, in a low fervent tone, repeated the Lord's Prayer; Palmer lying back with closed eyes, occasionally repeating the words after him.

After the prayer there was again a brief silence, which was broken by Palmer's speaking as if in continuation of thought, and in a voice that had grown palpably weaker, he said—

"Oh yes, I see! Forgive them that trespass against us. Braidy, I *do* forgive poor Sugar-Bags from the bottom of my heart, and I 'ope as they wont do anything to her for this business."

"I'll tell her what you say," Braidy answered, and then Palmer, who was evidently sinking, fell back once more too exhausted for further speech. Braidy, who all this time had been kneeling by the bedside, now rose to his feet, and holding in his right hand the well-worn Bible that he had taken out of his pocket, stood beside us. Silently we both of us watched the countenance of the dying man, over which there again began to creep the expression of terror and doubt that had rested upon it when we first entered. Gradually it intensified until the agony of mind that it indicated giving what was, under the circumstances, an almost supernatural strength, Palmer once more raised himself on his elbow, and convulsively grasping Braidy by the arm, on his stepping to the bedside again, he hoarsely exclaimed—

"It's no use, Bible; I can't believe that there can be hope for such an out-and-out bad lot as I've been. The Bible only spoke of a thief; but I've been worse." As he spoke a shudder ran through his weakened frame, and for a space his utterance was choked by sobs.

"I can guess what you mean, Joe," said Braidy soothingly; "but even that would not place you beyond hope. As I told you just now, the mercy and goodness and forgiveness of the Lord is *boundless*. He will forgive even *blood-guiltiness* where the repentance for it is sincere. To despair is to doubt his mercy. However bad you may have been, there is hope for you in that mercy."

"O Bible, old man, you have taken a load off me," exclaimed Palmer, sobbing again, but now rather joyously than despairingly, "and Braidy," he went on, in a tone of fervent assurance, "though I was never took for it, I have suffered—no tongue could tell how much."

He paused for a moment to gain breath, and then, getting his mouth close to Braidy's ear, he resumed in a hoarse whisper—

"I knifed him, and he turned his eyes on me as he fell, and the look in them has haunted me ever since. Hundreds and hundreds of nights I've seen him glarin'

at me out of the dark, till it druv me mad a'most, and I'd have put an end to myself only I hadn't the pluck. But I thank God now that I hadn't. I wouldn't have had this chance then, and I *do* begin to feel happier, Bible, now that I am getting this off my mind and you still say there is hope."

"There is hope," said Braidy, "but, Joe, my poor fellow, remember the end is near."

"I know, Bible," he answered, his voice now barely audible, "but I must make a clean breast of this now I have began it. He was a sailor, a darkie. We had cleaned him out, and he cut up rough, and talked about bringing the police. That was what did it; we had a lot of stuff in the house at the time as would have transported us if it had been found, and when he tried to break his way out, swearing that he would bring the blues, I let him have it, and he scarcely lived two minutes after he was hit."

As the other sank back exhausted, a shudder shook old Braidy's frame, and for a few moments he stood incapable of speech, but controlling his feelings, he took the dying sinner's hand, and in a gentle voice said—

"It was a foul crime, Joe, but remember, 'though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow.' There is a place in heaven for *all* sinners, who seek it by true penitence and prayer—pray, Joe, pray, for the end is very near with you."

"Pray for me, I can't pray," he moaned.

"I will pray for you," answered Braidy; "but you too can pray, the blessed book here has provided a prayer for you—'God be merciful to me a sinner.' That is your prayer, Joe; a prayer that sincerely uttered or thought is never turned a deaf ear to."

With a last effort of strength the dying man clasped his hands together, and fervently uttered the grandly simple prayer thus taught him. He tried to repeat it, but his arms fell helplessly by his side and the words died in his throat. Seeing this, Braidy knelt by the bedside again, and in homely language earnestly prayed that the soul then passing might be saved alive.

When he had finished his prayer, no sound was heard in the room save the half-stifled sobs of Palmer's wife, who with a true affection had up to this point kept mute her grief, in order that it might not distract the attention of the dying man. He seemed to hear her now, for he put out his hand towards her, and she took it in both hers. Braidy held the other, and thus he lay, the faint flicker of life still remaining in him visibly waning. Once or twice he seemed to

be bracing himself for some last effort, and at length there came from his lips in a barely audible whisper:—"Braidy, you've helped to save my soul.—Good-bye.—God be mer—" the last word died away uncompleted, and in a few minutes the great change took place.

Thus in the solemn presence of death, by such a death-bed as that of "Fly" Palmer's, we first made the acquaintance of "Bible Braidy." We had seen him engaged in the mission to which for years he had devoted himself, and in which we could now unhesi-



tatingly believe he had done great good. What we had seen made us anxious to cultivate the friendship thus commenced, but it will easily be believed that on passing out of the house of death neither of us felt much disposed to "chat." Scarcely a sentence

had passed between us when we reached his own threshold, and there with a warm grasp of the hand we left him, having simply arranged that we were to give him a call in some more cheerful time—and we did give him a call, and as time passed on many calls.

MINISTERIAL SUCCESSION.*

*And Moses stripped Aaron of his garments, and put them upon Eleazar his son: and Aaron died there in the top of the mount: and Moses and Eleazar came down from the mount.—NUM. xx. 28.

IN these calm, almost cold, words is told all that man is to know of an event full of interest, full of mystery, full of awe.

In that year 1452 (as chronologers say) before the Christian era, a life is brought to its close, which, but for one other life beside it, would have been unique in wonder.

That old man who has gone up into Mount Hor, under Divine direction, to die, is God's High Priest; the first of a long line, the only one that God ever consecrated, to stand between Himself and His chosen people, in the things of religion and of the soul, until He should at last come, who is the End of all Revelation and the Antitype of all Priesthood.

His life has been long and eventful. For eighty years, and we know not how many more—for he was the elder of the two illustrious brothers—he had been one of Egypt's bondmen. The tradition of hope, which had cheered the death-bed of Joseph, had become dim and misty, as the weary years rolled over an oppressed and suffering people. At last a call, strong but secret, bids him go forth towards the desert to meet a messenger and a message from God. The bearer of it is a stranger. For forty years an exile; for other forty before them the inmate of a king's court, unknown to and ignorant of his own. Yet he is his brother: and upon those two men is laid a burden such as has no real parallel in history; first the deliverance of a nation from the midst of another nation by terrible signs and judgments, and then the education of the ransomed race into the stewardship of God's oracles of law and promise for the Church and the world of all lands and times.

Brethren! the Bible is all truth, and its very heroes are seen compassed with infirmity. This old man, so illustrious in work and office, has no exemption from the failings and faults and sins of the fallen. The personal records of him are in large part records of this character. There is a mark of inspiration here. I pray you to give heed to it. Aaron is shut out from Canaan for a fault, for a sin. He is to die in this mountain because, in impatience, in irritation, in unbelief, he had been concerned in smiting a rock to which he ought but to have spoken. It was a disobedience. That there was faith even

in the disobedience is no excuse for it in the sight of God. Judged as man judges, it was a little sin. It was not the greatest of the sins even of this one life. But with God "great" and "little" have no place in the estimate of transgression. Here, in the sight of Israel, a precise direction had been disregarded: the wonder-working rod had been appealed to, as though the calm commanding word were insufficient: and the sentence, solemn and stern, is pronounced upon both the brothers, the lawgiver and the priest of Israel, "Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them."

The lesson of "severity" lies on the surface of the record. Surely we make much too free with the letter of God's commandment. We think nothing of smiting where God has said, Speak. If there be a general good intention—alas, even if there be not—we say to ourselves, perverting the Scripture, God will not be extreme to mark. Breaking the letter, we may yet make up for it from the spirit. Surely these things were our example, and are written here, read this day for the first time as a chosen Lesson in our Churches, for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

Yet I think that there are two other lessons here taught us, not equally obvious, yet not less true.

One of these is the lesson of love. See how God chastens without disowning. Did God resign, renounce, the charge of this life, because He must punish? Nay, the Father's voice speaks still concerning it, and the Father's hand still directs. I cannot understand that reading of the Old Testament which sees not in it the God of the Gospel. Easy had it been for God to give up that rebel child, that oft-chastised yet unchastened son. Yet He does not. It is God who corrects yet forsakes not. It is God who says, "Take Aaron, and bring him up into Mount Hor; and he shall die there." It is God who says, later on, concerning the other leader of Israel, "Moses my servant is dead:" my servant still, though he is dead, and though God, dealing in one point more sternly with him, had sent him up into Mount Nebo alone to die there.

The other lesson is the lesson of death.

It is the fashion to say that the language of the Old Testament is cheerless about death. I cannot see it. These deaths—if we might for a moment use the speech of men—these deaths for small sins seem to be eloquent as to the insignificance of death. They seem to say, The life that is seen is but a fragment of the whole life. It may be thou hast forfeited thy place here. God must call thee up into some mountain, or fling thee into some valley of humiliation, that thou mayest die there. Yes, but thou art His still—and when He has humbled thee and crushed thee here, it is but that He may make thee shine before Him as the stars for ever.

So then, under God's direction—forget not that—the aged High-Priest must go up into that mountain-top—go, as a condemned man; go, to pay the debt not of original but of personal sin; go, and die there. His brother shall go with him: he has another year of life: he has been the direct voice of God to the other all these years—he shall be so unto the end. And his son shall go with him: he is to be his successor: he is to take from this scene the impress of life's charge and of life's end: already he has seen two brothers slain as in a moment for offering strange fire—now he must see a father die, die for a sin, and yet die cared for, die forgiven, loved, immortal. These are God's lessons for him—surely they are engraven upon his heart for ever! And all Israel is looking on: sees the High-Priest, in his garments of full state, those garments for glory and beauty for which every minutest direction had been issued from Sinai, as proving the typical use and meaning; sees him rise step by step up the mountain side, and knows wherefore he is gone. How must some hearts have smitten themselves in that great concourse; hearts which knew themselves the cause of this chastisement, of this bitter yet most patiently-borne privation! God keep us all from the sight of that death-bed which our hands, our sins, have made—or to which we have added that sting, which is sin!

Nothing is more pathetic in Holy Scripture than that selflessness which God requires in His servants; that absorption of natural feeling in the one higher, which is the perfection of the self-control and the self-forgetfulness. Aaron himself had been enabled to rise to it, when he saw his two sons cut off before him, forbidden to mourn, forbidden to bury them. I know nothing more keenly wounding to hearts that can feel, than that apology of Aaron, in the day of his bereavement, for

some omission of which he and his surviving sons had been guilty in the precise rules of the sanctuary. He had held his peace in the morning; he had let more distant relatives perform the father's office of burying: the deep anguish only betrays itself in that one brief clause in which he appeals to his brother's pity about the neglected sin-offering, "And such things have befallen me!"

And now it is the turn of that brother to take his part in bearing the burden which God's ministry lays upon them that are privileged to exercise it. Now he must strip his dying brother of the beautiful and costly vestments of his priesthood. He must array in them a new Priest, who is to carry on God's work before a younger generation. And when the sad and solemn office is ended, he must turn back, with that other, to the thoughts and acts of the living, till he also shall have finished his course, and be ready to rejoin his brother in the Paradise of the just made perfect.

Yes, made perfect. Made perfect, through much discipline and much correction; by many a fall and many a rising; it may be, by an embittered life; it may be, by a premature death: perfect, not in the spotlessness of a sinless innocence, but in the robes made white, and the heart eschewing its own wickedness.

Such, brethren, is life—as the Word of God interprets it.

The garments of ministry, secular, sacred, personal, are stripped from one and put upon another. We wear them but for a lifetime. They were another's before us: they shall be another's afterward. There is a succession in these things: we do well to recognize and to give heed to it.

There are some forms of ministration which suggest succession. Those garments which are emblematical of office—the judge's ermine, worn only on the judgment-seat; the bishop's lawn, put on with prayer and benediction, in midst of the ceremony of his consecration—speak for themselves as to the disrobing. The wearer had a predecessor, shall have a successor, in that ministry. He is but the life-holder: less than the life-holder; for decay of strength, decline of vigour, may further abridge the tenure of that charge, towards God and man, which the vestment of office typifies. There must be that stripping of which the text speaks; that putting off that another may put on. Let him live in the foreview of that day! God makes not our differences between the sacredness of two ministries. Moses the judge ranks in Scrip-

ture above, not below, Aaron the priest. Would to God that there were that heart in us, to feel the sanctity of all office, the Divine source and right of all power! never to say, This office is secular, and a worldly spirit will suffice for it—and that office is sacred, and to the holder of it I will transfer every demand of disinterestedness and high principle and a good conscience! Would that we might follow the example, lately before us, of a distinguished judge, living to a late old age with eye undimmed and natural force unabated, of whom it is told that the Bible was the companion of his circuits, and Sunday his day of days, holy indeed to the Lord and honourable—because he felt himself to be the steward of a high trust, and determined to render his account of it with joy and not with grief!

Brethren, we are all God's ministers, and to feel it is to consecrate life. No profession, assuredly, exercises a more God-like office than that which undertakes to execute justice between man and man, and even to bear the sword, not in vain, against the soul that doeth evil. That profession binds itself to be religious. It declares itself to be on God's side in this warring, battling world: woe to it if it makes its familiarity with evil an excuse for forgetting the soul and the judgment!

We hold but for a few short years these ministries, these priesthoods, of duty and service. Soon we pass, and others succeed us. Soon will another voice be in the ears of another generation, and he who now speaks to you from this place the words of life will be silent, will be forgotten, for ever. None the less is the responsibility great for him and for you. These garments of office, sacred or secular, descend, not mechanically, but with an inheritance of influence, to the successor. Each one of us, charged with any trust, may make it, must make it, easier, or more difficult, for the next holder, to serve God in it, or to forget Him. We all know how the expectation, the demand, the requirement, of goodness, tends to foster and to create it; how impossible at last it becomes for any but a good man to undertake a particular office, which once perhaps involved no such necessity—but it pleased God to breathe into one man a new spirit, and the very place which he filled on earth became sanctified beyond desecration. So might it be with every office in the State and in the Church. It is the greatest crime that can be committed, to debase, to demoralize one. It is the highest Christian ambition to carry religion, which is the love of God,

into one new department of earth's living activity.

Might it be so, that, in this one Church, of peculiar, of exceptional, of unique responsibility, there might be, Sunday by Sunday, the stirring of one new life, one new devotion! With what strength might God's work be done in England, if but a few of us His worshippers were impregnated with the sense of our responsibility! if we indeed felt ourselves to be His ministers, whatever the name or the nature of our calling! if we deeply pondered with ourselves day by day the hour of the unclipping and clipping upon—the work for which we must give account, and the eternity which shall be according to the things done in the body!

Behold in one view the littleness and the greatness of man.

The littleness in space and time. One generation goeth, and another cometh. Earth is a speck, and time a moment. If we would write our celebrity on earth, we write it in sand, we write it in water. Old age, failure, contempt, obliterate as we indite.

But, view life as a trust—view office, view work, view character, view being, as a priesthood—and all is ennobled, all consecrated.

Say to yourself, I am God's priest—I wear His ephod and His crown, and the inscription on that crown is, "Holiness unto the Lord"—then you are great; great above kings, who know not a hereafter; great above hierarchies which would shine in God's stead: your light is God's light, and the world shall be the brighter for it.

But, perhaps, brethren, you say to me, Mine is no priesthood. Mine is a very common lot on a very common earth. I see no sacrifice that I can offer. I am dust and ashes. You stir in me a sort of hope, but it has no reality and no substance. Tell me what you mean. I am a very common man, and I understand not what is that higher thing to which you call me.

God grant that this be the question, this morning, of many hearts! For, indeed, it is the question which is rare, not the answer which is difficult.

Yes, you are a priest. Take to you the holy garments—for you are God's priest. St. Peter says so, the Apostle to the Hebrews says so, in words. It matters not how poor you are, or how ignorant, or how lowly: if you are a Christian, you are a priest. You may go forth to-morrow to keep an office, or to sweep a street—and you have a priesthood, if you are a Christian. A priesthood that is yours but for a while: it must pass

into other hands, and you must die. Still the world may be the better for you. The next occupant of your house or of your place may be a better man because you existed. You may raise expectations which he must satisfy. You may kindle an altar, which he, for decency's sake, must keep burning.

Succession is a beautiful thought. Moses stripped Aaron of his priestly garments—it was to put them upon Eleazar. Wash your robes, and make them white in the blood of the Lamb—and another must wear them. This is a succession, not of man, but of God. The very stones cry out, if your successor shall hold his peace.

Brethren, I would not deceive you with vain hopes. There is a condition. You are a priest if you are a Christian. Without this you cannot be. Come to Christ; wrap yourself in His robe, wash yourself in the water, touch yourself with the blood of His purifying, His propitiation—and you are a priest. But dispense with Him—try to offer your own sacrifice, try to wear your own robe of office—and you are none. The fire of your altar will sputter with a false flame: look round, and it is gone out.

Come to Christ, yourself, first of all. See yourself vile; see yourself helpless. Say to

Him, Be my Righteousness—be my Strength. None that trusted in Him were ever confounded. None that lived inside Christ were ever left alone on their death-bed, or condemned in the judgment. Be His witness. Be His priest. Faults, backslidings, sins, sever not, necessarily, from Him. He is very pitiful, and of great mercy. Aaron sinned—Aaron made the idol calf—yet the Intercessor prayed for him, and he was forgiven. Aaron murmured against Moses—Aaron smote the rock to which he should have spoken—Aaron was debarred from the land of promise—Aaron was stripped of the holy garments—yet Aaron was God's priest and God's saint. God presided over the death—God has him in His holy keeping—God will raise him at the last day.

So be it, holy brethren, with you and with me! When we die, may God watch over us, and may the one intransferable priesthood—the priesthood which knows no change, because it holds the very keys of hell and death—spread its robe and its tabernacle over us! In the day of days, may we hear that voice saying, Well done! and may we awake from the dust of death into the joys which are at His right hand for ever!

C. J. VAUGHAN.

FEMALE PREACHING.

THE subject of public preaching by women is one which has frequently created much perplexity, discussion, and division in the Church, both in earlier times and in our own day. It may not be unfitting to devote a short paper to the subject, and in doing so, to look at it as calmly and impartially as possible.

That some, perhaps many, of the Christian women at Corinth were in the habit of addressing public assemblies of the Church at the time when the Apostle wrote to it, is undeniable. The words of 1 Cor. xi. 4, 5, are conclusive upon the point: "Every man praying or prophesying having his head covered, dishonoureth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head; for that is even all one as if she were shaven." The contrast of the two verses renders it impossible to suppose that the Apostle is here putting a merely supposititious case. Women must have prayed or prophesied as well as men. Of the fact, also, it is clear that these words contain no condemnation; nay, they

seem to allow the practice in the case of the one sex not less decidedly than in that of the other. If the Apostle says that a woman, when she prays or prophesies in public, is to avoid doing it in a particular manner, the inference is not an unnatural one that the act itself of doing it is not condemned.

Further, it is at once to be admitted that special instances of public prophesying on the part of women are to be found both in the Old Testament and in the New. In the former, we have those of Miriam, Deborah, and Huldah, three in number only, it is true, in a space of time extending over several thousand years: but still enough to establish the fact, that for by far the most remarkable function of his ancient religious economy the Almighty found women suitable as well as men. In the New Testament, again, we have the four daughters of Philip, "which did prophesy" (Acts xxi. 9).

Once more, ability to address to a public assembly lessons of divine truth, may be possessed by woman as well as man. Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton tells us of "the great

and astonishing display of mental powers" exhibited in the ministry of Priscilla Gurney.* It will surprise no one that it should have been so. That most powerful element of all eloquence, the heart, is certainly possessed by the weaker in even a greater degree than by the stronger sex; and the same thing may be said of many of the other qualities that constitute no mean part of the power of a persuasive speaker, vivacity and rapidity of thought, fertility of illustration, expressiveness and play of countenance, sweetness and flexibility of voice. It would be a strange thing to deny, that alike in natural suitability, at least in many particulars, for the task, and in that higher suitability which comes from the full reception of the gifts of grace, woman may not, in very many instances, be as much qualified for the work of public preaching as man.

Are not these considerations, then, enough to settle the question without further argument? They would be, did we not possess express teaching of St. Paul upon the point. We have to turn to it and to try to estimate its force. There are two passages with which we have especially to deal.

The first of these is 1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35. "Let your women keep silence in the churches; for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home; for it is a shame for women to speak in the church." Nothing apparently can be clearer than this passage. It is not by incidental allusion, or by inference from words employed by the Apostle when speaking of another subject, that we learn his mind; "Let your women keep silence in the church," "It is a shame," or, rather, "it is uncomely, indecent," "for women to speak in the church." In reply to this, however, attention is called to the word "speak." There is no allusion, it is said, in this word to public preaching. It refers only to ordinary conversation, to the use of words with which the women of Corinth were in the habit of interrupting the service of the assembled Christians, to asking questions,† to what would be more properly

expressed by "babbling," or even "wragling." The object of the Apostle, therefore, is not to forbid preaching or prophesying on the part of women, but to condemn foolish, inappropriate, ill-timed talking. There is no foundation whatever for this criticism. The Greek verb translated "speak" in the passage quoted by us, is used again and again in the New Testament of speech in its most sacred forms and most formal utterances. No doubt it refers, when distinguished from another verb translated in the same way, to the act of speaking itself, rather than to the distinct and connected substance of what is spoken. Yet even then, the substance of what is spoken is not lost sight of. It is rather that that substance is viewed mainly as it falls upon the outward ear, whereas in the other case, it is viewed mainly in its power to penetrate the mind.

"And He spake many things unto them in parables." "Therefore speak I to them in parables." "Then spake Jesus to the multitude and to his disciples." "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, we speak that we do know." "For He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God." "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world." "Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect, yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world that come to naught. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory." "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." "And I turned to see the voice that spake with me." (Matt. xiii. 3, 13; xxiii. 1; John iii. 11, 34; viii. 12; 1 Cor. ii. 6, 7; 1 Peter iv. 11; Rev. i. 12.) In all these instances, to say nothing of very many others, taken almost at random from different books of the New Testament, the verb translated "speak" in the passage we are considering has the same high and solemn meaning. It never in itself suggests the slightest idea of frivolous or empty talk. It is as sacred a word as any that could be used. The attempt, therefore, to fasten upon it a lower meaning entirely fails. Nor can it be said, with any better show of reason, that the connection of 1 Cor. xiv. 35 with the verse immediately preceding, proves that the word is to be understood here at least in the sense of "asking questions" with a view to being instructed and edified. The

* The whole description is so interesting that our readers will do well to doubt welcome its being quoted in a note. "I have listened," he says in one of his letters, "to many eminent preachers, and many speakers also, but I deem her as perfect a speaker as I ever heard. The tone of her voice, her beauty, the singular clearness of her conception, and above all her own strong conviction that she was urging the truth, and the force of the utmost importance—the whole constituted a species of ministry which no one could hear, and which I am persuaded no one ever did hear, without a deep impression."—*Life*, c. vii.

† The argument thus often used is as old as Barclay in his *Apology for the Quakers*. "Neither think we," he says, "that of Paul, 1 Cor. xiv. 34, to reprove the *inconsiderate*

and talkative women among the Corinthians, who troubled the Church of Christ with their unprofitable questions, any ways repugnant to this doctrine," viz., that women may preach. The italics are the eminent writer's own.—*Apology*, Proposition 10.

true connection proves rather the very contrary. The progress of the Apostle's reasoning is from the greater to the less. To his statement that women were not to speak, in the sense of teaching in church, it might perhaps have been replied, "May they not ask questions in order to be themselves instructed by the answer, if they may not speak to instruct others?" The reply is, "No; they may not do even that; 'if they will learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home.'" The same conclusion may be drawn from the place occupied in the chapter, as a whole, by the injunction to silence with which we are dealing. It can hardly be regarded as the introduction of an entirely new topic. It follows closely on the general subject of prophesying or preaching in open Christian assemblies, and the order of the argument leaves it hardly possible to suppose that we have here anything else but a fresh limitation of that gift of prophesying, which had already been limited in other ways in the verses going immediately before.

The conclusive consideration upon the point, however, is contained in the ground given by St. Paul himself for his injunction. It is that women were not permitted to speak in the churches because they were to be "under obedience," as also the law said; because, even in cases where a genuine desire for instruction would have led them to break silence, "their own husbands at home" were the proper persons for them to appeal to. Nothing can show more clearly what the speaking referred to means. To suppose that it can be "asking questions" is to destroy the whole force and meaning of the passage. That would have been the very best proof that women could give that they felt themselves to be "under obedience," instead of being the contradiction of it. It would have been an illustration of humility and teachableness, not of presumption, or of a desire to step out of their proper sphere. The Apostle evidently felt that the subordination of order in which God had placed the woman to the man, a subordination to which he often alludes, was inconsistent with the former's taking upon her the position of a public teacher. That was a position of authority, of command. It could not be rightly filled unless the duty were discharged with "all authority" (Titus ii. 15); and to appear in public clothing herself with this, and exercising it in reference alike towards her husband and other men, was not woman's part.

The second passage claiming our attention

is 1 Tim. ii. 11—15: "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in child-bearing, if they continue in faith, and charity, and holiness with sobriety." The meaning of the precept here is as clear as in the former case; and the contrast between the "teach" of ver. 12 and the "learn" of ver. 11 more especially shows that not one species of teaching alone, which might be designated by the word "teach" used technically, but every species of public instruction, everything opposed to "learning in silence" is prohibited. Again, too, as in the passage in Corinthians, the injunction given is backed by reasons, and there is no want of plainness in the statement of them. The order of creation is first referred to as indicating that a certain order in the relation of the sexes to the work of life should be observed, and that the burden of that work belonged to man. The order of the fall is next noticed, where the great deception of the tempter was practised upon Eve, a proof, the Apostle would seem to say, that the impulsive nature of woman, perhaps even the greater unsuspectingness and more ready receptivity of opinions urged by others that distinguishes her when compared with man, might make her a too easy prey and a too ready exponent of views inconsistent with the truth. Lastly, the true and proper sphere for woman is pointed out. It is the family, the home. We should be disposed to render the words "she shall be saved in child-bearing," "she shall be saved through her child-bearing," that is, with no direct, although there may be a distant and indirect, reference to the birth of Jesus, she shall be saved through the filling aright in faith, and charity, and holiness with sobriety, that sphere of wifehood and motherhood for which she is specially designed. It is there that she is to excel, there that she is to shine, there that she has a task to perform not less important than the task of the public speaker, and rewards to win not less valuable than the rewards that wait upon him when he is successful. At all events that is her sphere. To address promiscuous assemblies in a public manner is to leave it. It is to claim, by the very act of doing so, a right to exercise authority over the man, whereas "the head of the woman is the man," and therefore the Apostle

can only say that no form of public teaching is within her province.

Such, then, are the two classical passages in the writings of St. Paul on the point before us, and it seems impossible to entertain any doubt as to their meaning. Even were the injunctions contained in them less clear and decided than they are, the reasons upon which these injunctions are grounded hardly leave room for controversy. No one was more alive than the Apostle to the elevating influence of the gospel upon the female sex, or to the importance of the change it had introduced in the position of women. With all the strength of the deep convictions of his nature, he felt that woman was made by it the true companion and helpmeet of man; that her spiritual relation to God was not less near and intimate than his; that her standing in Christ as a redeemed immortal spirit was as high; that, where Christ has been put on, "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is *neither male nor female*," for all were one in Christ Jesus (Gal. iii. 28). But it is one of the most characteristic parts of the Apostle's teaching, a part nowhere more strikingly illustrated than in the First Epistle to the Corinthians, that he always recognises an order of things the foundations of which are laid in nature and providence, and which Christianity confirms instead of abrogating, elevates and sanctifies instead of destroying. He applied this principle in the case before us. It was his conviction that the spheres of male and female life were different; that man was by nature fitted for public, woman for private, life; and that Christianity could not and did not reverse an order appointed by God Himself, and stamped by Him upon the whole constitution of human things. Believing this to be "nature" in the highest sense of the word, he could not suppose that the Spirit of God would act otherwise than in harmony with it; and had any woman, therefore, pleaded that she had received the gift of public prophesying, he would, by his own gift of "discerning of spirits," have pronounced her mistaken, and would have enjoined her to seek another and a private field within which to serve her Lord. So thoroughly persuaded was he of this, so deeply does the persuasion colour the whole tone of his writings, that it is absolutely necessary to interpret the words of 1 Cor. xi. 5, "every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head," in harmony with it. We must suppose that he has here the single point of

the wearing of the veil in view; and that, inasmuch as women were actually praying and prophesying with uncovered heads, he hastens to the condemnation of a practice so offensive to his notions of propriety, without taking time, at the moment, to condemn another practice equally objectionable, and reserving his opinion of it till he should have to deal directly with the whole subject of spiritual gifts.

We have said that the language of St. Paul leaves no doubt as to its meaning. It may be well to add that no doubt has ever been entertained with regard to it in the Church. Women were indeed permitted by one of the early heretical sects to preach, to become presbyters, and even bishops, but the Church Catholic always condemned the practice. "As to women," says Bingham,* "whatever gifts they could pretend to, they were never allowed to preach publicly in the church either by the Apostles' rules, or those of succeeding ages." It does not, indeed, seem as if there had been often occasion for the Church to pronounce upon the point, but her voice in later ages has been the same as in the earlier. To take one recent example. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States issued the following deliverance in the year 1832:—"Meetings of pious women by themselves for conversation and prayer, we entirely approve. But let not the inspired prohibitions of the great Apostle, as found in his Epistle to the Corinthians and to Timothy, be violated. To teach and to exhort, or to lead in prayer in public and promiscuous assembly, is clearly forbidden to women in the holy oracles." Nor have the views of that Church changed since then. In the spring of the present year considerable excitement was caused in Brooklyn, New York, by the fact that one of the Presbyterian ministers there had permitted a female preacher, well known both in America and in this country, to appear in his pulpit and to preach. The matter was brought before the presbytery, which, with only one dissenting voice, condemned what had been done; and overtured the General Assembly "to adopt and transmit to the presbyteries such rules as shall forbid the licensing and ordaining of women to the gospel ministry, and the teaching and preaching of women in our pulpits, or in the public and promiscuous meetings of the Christian Church." The overture went up, and the General Assembly at once referred the petitioners to the judgment of the

* "Antiq.," Book xiv. § 5.

General Assembly of 1832, already quoted by us, "which expresses the judgment of this Assembly."

It need hardly be said, in conclusion, that nothing either in the language of St. Paul, or in that of the Church in later times, is to be understood as implying that all the more private labours of Christian faith and love are not as appropriate to woman as to man. To preach or exhort in meetings of her own sex gathered together for mutual edification, to teach in the Sunday-school, the zenana, or the family; these, and such-like labours, are in no respect inconsistent with apostolic precept or Church order. They are in perfect harmony with the former, and they are distinctly encouraged by the latter. In them women may easily find a sufficiently important and, at the same time, a peculiarly appropriate sphere of usefulness. It is not necessary that they should preach. There are innumerable other ways in which they can equally serve their generation and promote their Saviour's glory. Their earnestness and zeal can readily enough discover other channels in which to flow. Ability to discharge a particular function does not necessarily imply that it ought to be dis-

charged, so long as general considerations show that that function is assigned in Scripture to a class to which the possessor of the ability does not belong. All the conditions of the case, and not one or two only, must be looked at, when we would determine the course that we are to pursue, and the place in God's general order of things that we are to fill. Isolated and exceptional instances too, such as the four daughters of Philip, must not be argued from. We need a general principle and a general rule to guide us, if all the members of the body are to work harmoniously, and God is to appear not as "the author of confusion but of peace." There are even many circumstances in which the restraining of gifts is not less illustrative of Christian excellence, and not less promotive of Christian good, than their exercise. Women have only to consider what the world, what the Church, would be if every woman who is capable of being trained to preach with effect were to regard that as a call of Providence to do so, and they will hardly fail to acknowledge the divine wisdom which forbids their making the attempt, and points them to other fields of Christian labour.

WILLIAM MILLIGAN.

THE HIGH CALLING OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS.

"I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect."

LORD, dost Thou care to have my soul
Before Thee in the light—
As Thou art, true and pure and whole,
As Thou art, wise and right?

Hast Thou indeed so high an aim
For one who looked so low—
A way above the reach of shame
Wherein my heart may go?

Then fill the fulness of my gaze
From that sure sight of Thine,
Which girds the sinner with Thy praise,
And makes his life divine.

Thee only shall Thy servant claim,
And where Thou art to be,
His power Thy own Almighty name,
And all his springs in Thee.

Watch me for this amid the fear
That time must yet fulfil;
Watch me through hopes that disappear
At Thy redeeming will.

Thy purpose in me shall not fail
With my declining breath;
Thy thought is that which shall prevail
Against the bars of death.

The thing that dieth, let it die;
Let that which goes depart;
But keep me seeing with Thine eye,
And thinking with Thy heart.

A. L. WARING.



AGAINST THE STREAM:

The Story of an Heroic Age in England.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE SCHONBERG-COTTA FAMILY."

CHAPTER I.—INTRODUCTORY.



One who has not tried can imagine what a pleasant thing it is to be, undeniably and consciously, an old woman.

I mean, of course, literally, not symbolically.

To have the whole landscape

of life behind you, and below you. To see, now and then, indications through the mists and shadows, why the path wound here through barren, empty wastes, and there through thorny thickets; in one place scaled recklessly the perilous rocky steep, in another crept in weary windings along monotonous slopes it had seemed easier to clear at a bound; or why, just there, it broke off in a sudden chasm, which at the time threatened to end its meaning and waste its work altogether. To catch some explanatory hints of a training of eye and nerve for higher work hereafter; some illuminated glimpses of fellow-travellers, to be succoured just at that perplexing turn, and nowhere else. To have the long uphill all but over, and to find "the upland slopes of duty" all but merging in the "table-land of glory," as they do, not for the exceptional hero only, but for all who follow the footprints of the Master's feet, if the Master's words are true; if heroism means, as He showed, not exceptional achievement, but self-rendering obedience; and glory, as He is showing now, not some vague repetition of earthly pomps with a larger than earthly audience, but the expansion and illumination of every faculty, in a life fuller than the in-

tensest life below, for a service higher because nearer Him.

To watch such explanatory broken lights stealing over the past that reaches back so far;—to catch the dawn of unbroken, satisfying light on the future, now so near. Rest here, in the acquiescence in powers enfeebled, unequal to fresh enterprise, that have done their work and can undertake no more, save such stray quiet kindnesses as may come to us demanding to be done; rest there, in the hope of powers renewed, so that their exercise shall become once more a joy, such as it was to move or breathe in childhood.

A little faint insight through the learning and unlearning of the years,—through their tenderer tolerance, and larger judgments, into the patience of Him who has been teaching and long-suffering through the ages. A strong and ever-growing trust, through some discords resolved, and some despairs clashed into hopes; through some misunderstood things explained, and some wrongs righted or turped into sacred instruments of martyrdom, through much forgiven and something overcome—in the purpose of Him "who willeth not that any should perish," not because sin is a mere passing disease of the childhood of humanity, or a mere passing discord of the harmonies of the universe, but because "He willeth that all men should repent." A bright and ever brightening hope in a heaven which shall be the seed-plot of many heavens, through that Death which is the seed of infinite life.

To find the "great multitude no man can number," the "majority" to which we go, no longer an overwhelming dazzle of supernatural light, a crowd of unknown unindividualised angelic faces, but the blessed company where the dearest eyes wonder and smile, and the most familiar voices are heard, in that speech at once so tender and so high we know not what better to call it than song.

These things are worth waiting for, worth growing old for, worth having this world emptied for.

Can I say that?

Not always; not most healthily, I think, in moments of ecstatic foreseeing, but in those moments, more frequent, when it is given me, in some simple ways, to fill up

the measure of their service who have gone before, and so to feel that, after all, this world is indeed not empty to me, though my best have gone on out of sight.

So vividly they stand before me, those old times, now that the morning mists and the noon-day haze are over, and the mists of night have scarcely come; so clearly do the old voices sound back to me in the quiet, especially from the earliest days, and so different is the world whence they come from this around me now, that I feel attracted to sit down and picture them, with just as little effort as if I were not making pictures at all, but simply tracing outlines on a series of mirrors, and transforming them thus, by some magic, into a series of stained-glass windows.

So it seems to me.

But then, of course, I always see the clear living mirror behind my outlines; and how far the stained glass represents it to others I cannot know.

It is worth while to do it, for myself at least, for I have lived through one of our country's heroic ages, and, as it seems to me, have seen some of the heroes not very far off.

And, in looking back over my life, if there are any principles which have been its joy and strength, and which I could wish to see more the joy and strength of others, they are these.

Christianity is to me, and ever has been since I learned to live by it, not so much a fresh mystery, as a revelation of mysteries—a "mystery shown;" not a clouding, but an unveiling; not a new riddle, whose glory is that being the divinest it is the deepest, but a solution of many riddles, although indeed not yet of all.

The world and its great history are full of darkness; society and our own little histories are full of darkness, and much of this Christianity has left unconquered and unexplained.

But at the heart and centre of all is not darkness, but light; not only a mind infinite and incomprehensible, but a heart that loves and speaks; not a subtle setter-forth of riddles which humanity has to solve at its peril, or perish, but a patient Teacher of babes, to whom His human creatures are dear; not an inexorable medical examiner testing candidates for appointments, but the Physician healing the sick; not the Sphinx, but the Word.

Truth obvious indeed, and at the root of all Christian theology (is not the absence of it practically Atheism?), yet from which it seems to me most Christian theologies are

for ever departing into labyrinths of our own making, and ever needing to be recalled.

And flowing from this is another principle, which has strengthened me to live and hope. The light, and not the darkness, are meant to conquer, in individuals, as in the whole. Human character is not immutable, like the instincts of animals, but corrigible and perfectible;—perfectible in the best to the end, corrigible in the worst to the end;—capable of radical change, capable of infinite growth.

Again, truth most obvious, if Christianity is true; yet one which in the apparent fixedness of character in all men after early youth, and the apparent invincibility of small faults in good men, in wrongs from others, in struggles with myself, I, at least, have not found it easy to hold; which, indeed, I should have found it impossible to hold, but for constant recurrence to that first great truth which is its source.

Faith in God, unbounded; and, for that reason, hope for men unbounded also.

Are these things so easy to hold in a world where the chaos of a French revolution can whirl on for a century without evolving a creation?—where the Church of land after land, and age after age, has succeeded too often in silencing its noblest men?—where a Las Casas originated the slave-trade, and the abolition of slavery has not at all events resulted in a planter's Paradise of grateful, industrious labourers?—where a century of philanthropic efforts leaves our English legislation powerless to lift off the accumulating weight of pauperism, and a millennium of Christianity leaves English Christians powerless to stem the increasing flood of intemperance?—where in our own little worlds all of us have seen the race not always won by the swift, nor the battle by the brave?

Do we not need in such a world a faith in God which, whatever is doubtful and whatever is dark, leaves it not doubtful that "in Him is no darkness at all?"

Do we not need a hope for man that has its root deeper than in any man, or in any history, even in Him who loving most has suffered most; Who "underwent and overcame;" Whose life was serving, Whose victory was in being vanquished, Whose reigning is serving, Whose reward for the service of His own is to serve better, Whose work in the midst of the throne is the old familiar shepherd's work of "leading" and feeding, Whose triumph in the day of His joy will be to "gird himself, and come forth, and serve?"

And this leads me to the third living principle of my life;—belief in a heaven which is

not a contradiction, but a completion of true Christian life below; in a Master Whose promise is, not a rewarding of seventy years of toil by an eternity of luxurious repose; nor an avenging of seventy years of abasement by an eternity of exaltation; nor a compensation for seventy years of service and suffering by an eternity of triumphal pomp and regal state; but a training by the numbered years of imperfect work here for an eternity of blessed work, unhindered and unwearied; by seventy years of gradual deliverance from the bondage of self, not for an eternity of the gratification of self, intellectual or spiritual, but for an eternity of the only liberty worth having, the Liberty, not of the Rights of independent atoms, but of the Duties of a mutually dependent brotherhood, in the presence of the Father whom all obey, and on whom all depend; the glorious Liberty of Love, the necessity of whose nature, like His who is its source and end, is to give, and in giving, before and in all its gifts to give itself, giving and receiving in that endless interchange which ensures growth, and which only is worthy to be called life.

A belief I have found not without practical importance: since earnest and foretastes of our promised inheritance are sure to be coveted by the way, and it makes not a little difference to our practical life whether we consider the truest symbol and foretaste of heaven to be the contemplation of toiling cities from suburban paradises, or the succouring and serving the poorest creature toiling in those city streets.

If I have had any power in my life to "lift up hands that hang down," to revive now and then hope for humanity in some veterans (to whom I have been as a child), worn-out with the disappointments of many victories which have failed to accomplish all they seemed to promise; or, in some fallen creatures, worn-out with the despair of many defeats, it is to such simple and obvious principles as these that I owe it.

And yet, how vain to think we know the springs of the influences which have moulded us, or through which we have acted on others; so subtle are they, so simple, so subtly combined, so finely distinct!

Deeper even than its deepest principles is our religion, rooted not in a principle, but in the Person we adore; and, since the divine history is ever deeper and wider than all the theologies and philosophies drawn from it, to me, doubtless, as to all, from the wisest to the simplest, all true power to live, or to help to live, has come from Him Who, while

in Himself revealing the Father, understood and saved the "sinner" who washed His feet, hoped in and saved the disciple who denied Him, loved and saved the Pharisee who "persecuted Him," Whose presence makes heaven, and must make a heaven like Himself.

We may review or analyze our life into principles, as we analyze our food into alkalies, salts, and acids; but no chemical combination of alkalies, salts, and acids yet invented will keep us alive.

Principles must, after all, be rooted in affections: life can only be nourished by life.

CHAPTER II.

"Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,
With light upon him from his father's eyes."

SUCH Recollections of early childhood with me are all too soon broken in upon.

Yet to me also the world began with Paradise. I can dimly recall such a zone of tenderest sunlight, such a sense of being watched and delighted in, and brooded and purred over, and played with; such a golden time of kisses and coaxings, and tender foldings up at night, and laughing wakings up in the morning.

And then, succeeding it, a time of silence and darkness and cold; of being hushed and kept quiet because Something which had made the sunshine of the home was gone, and Something else which needed that lost sunshine more than any had come, and must be cherished and watched and kept alive with such artificial warmth as the world can make for motherless babes,—leaving at the moment little warmth and light to spare anywhere for me.

A dark confused chaotic time, "without form, and void;" in looking back, I can scarcely tell whether it lasted days, or months, or years; a time when God had made for me no lights, greater or lesser, to divide the light from the darkness.

So my first associations with my brother, my own brother Piers, who was afterwards the life of my life, were rather of something subtracted than something added, rather of a great loss, than the great gift he was.

I think we shall find it thus with many of our best gifts, often.

After this comes first into my recollection a pervading and overshadowing memory of Clothes.

Before, it was like being a bird or a flower. But connected with that dark chaotic time comes a sense of being in a state of existence where one had always to carry about Things to be taken care of, which one was in some

vague and uneasy way identified with and responsible for, and which the people in the nursery who loved one most, felt to be in some sense of more importance than oneself, and yet the very nature of which appeared to be that the influences which were pleasant to their wearer were pernicious to them.

It was, I suppose, the form in which my spirit had to struggle into the consciousness of matter,

"Obstinate questionings,
Blank misgivings of a creature
Moving about in worlds not realised."

How many of the lessons incident to the "shades of the prison-house" came to me through my Clothes!—through that portion of the material world which was to me so essentially part of the "Not Me," and was evidently regarded by those around me as an integral portion of the "Me!"

I can remember now the delighted sense of freedom with which, one fine Sunday afternoon, I had crept, unnoticed, out of the garden door, with my faithful companion, our great black Newfoundland dog, Pluto, up the green hill outside the garden wall to the edge of the brook beyond, and was enjoying at once the joys of liberty and of tyranny in making him plunge into the water and fetch me a stick as I had seen my father do. I remember now the half-remonstrant, half-condescending way in which the grand creature yielded to my little imperiousnesses, and then, landing his freight, shook himself in a storm of sparkling drops over me and my new frock.

And I also remember a certain calm philosophical interest (which ought in any consistent biography to have presaged a genius for scientific investigation) wherewith I was observing that the drops did not penetrate my crape, but lay on it, round and sparkling,—when nurse burst upon us with baby in her arms and a wail on her lips.

"Bless the maid! what will she be after next? Miss Bride, Miss Bride, you contrary child, how can you be so unfeeling as to forget your new crape, and your blessed mother, and Sunday, and everything, and romp about like a beggar's brat with that great brute of a dog?"

A speech which left me in such a bewilderment of images and injustices that I was too perplexed to cry or to defend myself, until the dog, his affections getting the better of his tact, shook himself in a rapture of welcome over baby and nurse, and thereby drew on himself a blow which sent him away whining in his inarticulate way; whilst I, tear-

fully protesting that Pluto was not a brute nor I a brat, and that I had not forgotten Sunday, for father had only just given me my Sunday gingerbread, was dragged down the steps of the dear old garden, from terrace to terrace, whining in my half-articulate way.

And I also remember to this day my father standing at the door of the summer parlour, which opened on the garden, welcoming me with open arms, caressing and comforting me, and saying that "Clothes did not matter at all if I would only be his own dear little Bride, and not cry."

But Clothes did matter, as I knew too well in my feminine experience, and as nurse protested, "How should master know about Clothes, poor dear soul, who had neither to make nor to mend, nor to starch nor to iron? Men, the wisest of them, always talked as if clothes grew upon children like fur upon kittens."

They mattered, indeed, so much to me, that I had never any difficulty at all in receiving the narrative of Genesis connecting Clothes with the fall rather than the creation of man, as a most rational explanation of the nature of things, being already quite convinced from my own history that they could never have been originally intended as essentials in any beneficent scheme of the universe.

Only, Piers and I used in after years frequently to lament that the primitive institution of skins had not been adhered to.

Also, I suspect, Clothes had much to do with that next step which made so great a change in our lives.

I have little doubt it was a sense of his incapacity for contending with the difficulties springing, not from the characters of his children, but from their Clothes, feminine and infantine, with all the feminine care and attendance incident thereunto, that induced him to place at the head of his house the discreet and sober-minded gentlewoman who became our stepmother; clothes, I mean, in the larger sense,—conventionalities, customs, proprieties.

The reign of Clothes certainly did not cease with my stepmother. Only the signification of the word extended. Conventionalities, customs, proprieties, all the ritual of life, these were her standard measures, her household gods, her sacred Scriptures, or at least her tradition of the elders, which brought them down to practice; her Talmud if not her Pentateuch. With most of us, I suppose, our practical commentaries are unwritten.

On the Upper Olympus, doubtless, with

her as with others, sate enthroned the serene far-off orthodox divinities, but by the hearth were acknowledged two presiding powers, one deprecated as the root of mischief, and the other honoured with daily incense and libation. Her evil genius was Enthusiasm ; her protecting divinity, Moderation.

To understand the Bible or anything properly, she would have considered that every text should be underlined with "Let everything be done decently and in order," and, "Let your moderation be known unto all men."

With her, sin was doing anything too vehemently ; heresy, believing anything too intensely ; justice between contending parties was thinking every one equally wrong ; charity, thinking every one equally right ; the Christian warfare an armed neutrality ; truth, the residuum after the extraction of all extreme opinions ; paradise, the place where all exaggerated ideas and characters are either absent or kept quiet.

At least such was the impression she made on me in the exaggerations of my childish imagination ; for hers was a moderation which always tempted me into extremes, and it is only later that I learned to be just to her. She was as kind as any one can be without sympathy, as just as any one can be without imagination. She adhered as faithfully to the golden rule, "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them," as any one can do who has no conception of the differences between men, between the "they" and the "you," no idea of the patient study of circumstance and character which the true fulfilling of the precept involves.

In later years, moreover, we grew to understand each other better ; as she and I both learned, I trust, something from each other, and more from life.

And in earlier years, I can see now, if not the good she did me, at least something of the evils from which she kept me.

It is good for us all to have some ice in our lives. It makes the air fresher, and restrains the enthusiasm which is meant to enrich the summers and middle levels with living waters and life-giving soil, from overflowing too early in the spring-time on the higher levels, and so evaporating in mists of sentiment, or being lost in marshes of vague good intention.

Much fond and foolish talk there was, no doubt, in the nursery, when it was announced that Mr. Danescombe, my father, was about to marry Miss Euphrasia Weston.

Faltering exhortations were addressed to me by nurse as to the duties of our new relationship to the good lady who was coming to be our "new mother," congratulations whose compassionate tones made me interpret them into condolences. For children, like dogs, read speech as if it were music, by tones rather than by words.

The only words of her exhortations which made any impression on me were those terrible promises of a "new mother." To me they were what to a devout Jew might have been the promise of a "new God."

In those days the French words, vulgarised by bad nursery pronunciation into papa and mamma, which would be so intolerable if they were not hallowed to two or three generations by the lisping of baby lips, had not yet been introduced into England, or at least had not penetrated to our social level in our little country town. There was, therefore, no convenient intermediate conventional term, expressive rather of position than relationship.

And the sacred name, mother, was not, in my Protestant childhood, distributed in the liberal manner since the fashion among any benevolent ladies who undertake the charge of young girls, good or naughty. In those days women only became mothers through a mother's anguish and joy.

To me "mother" meant one only incomparable love, one only irreparable loss ; love which had loved *me*, me as I was, not my clothes, nor my beauty in me, not my clothes, nor my behaviour, but me, her little, helpless, longing, clinging Bride ; loss which had left my childhood, consciously or unconsciously, one long empty craving, "feeling after if haply I might find" wings to brood over me, arms to fold me like hers.

And now nurse seemed to expect me to transfer that dear lost name in this easy way to an unknown quantity, as if it meant nothing, like a nonsense nursery rhyme ; as if life meant nothing but a "make-believe" play with dolls.

I could not have done so even to an old doll. Yet to remonstrate with any one who could have had the want of perception to propose such a thing was, I instinctively felt, as useless as trying to explain the mysteries of property to Pluto.

I cried myself to sleep silently that night, in one of those unutterable agonies of childhood. Happily childish agonies do not drive sleep away !

And the next morning I awoke and began my vain tears again, but made no moan or

complaint, until nurse finding I did not get on with my bread and milk, began one of her half-caressing, half-querulous remonstrances.

"What ails the child? Miss Bride, you are getting quite beyond poor old nurse. And so no doubt others have thought. Maybe the new lady will manage better."

Then I broke out into one gasping sob, and said, "Must I call the new lady Mother?"

"Sure enough, child, sure enough! what would poor dear master say?"

"Did father say that?"

"Who would make so bold as to ask him? Never mind, poor lamb, never mind; what's the name? The *name's* nothing."

To me the name was unutterably much. But I was consoled by perceiving that it was plain nurse had no sentence on the matter from my father; and I secretly resolved to ask him myself.

To me the name was everything. To use it falsely was, I felt in some dim way, to bring a lie into my life, or rather to sap all significance out of the words falsehood and truth, to make all language, all sacred words and names lose their distinctive meaning and become mere interchangeable hollowneses. That is to say, this is what I now know my instinctive revulsion meant.

The very next time that I sate on my father's knee, and could get my face well hidden on his breast, with desperate courage I began—

"Must I call her Mother?"

His hands trembled as they stroked my hair, and his lips as he kissed me, and I could hear that his voice was half choked as he said—

"Who, little Bride? What does my darling mean?"

"The new lady," I said, without lifting my head.

He put me down, and paced hastily up and down the room; and then he said, in what seemed to me a very cold and absent voice, "I will ask her."

But then again suddenly he seized me in his arms and pressed me to his heart, and I felt his tears as he said—

"Little Bride, my darling little Bride, you are not afraid of me? I am only bringing some one home to take care of you and baby."

And so he fully believed, my poor father. Bewildered by the advice of some and the gossip of others, and the well-meant querulousness of nurse, and the various feminine and infantine incomprehensibilities of baby and of me, he was bringing home this sage and

sober-minded new lady who talked good English, which nurse did not, and was a good economist, which he was not, to preside over his household, his children, and himself, to provide us with costumes and catechisms, with clothes, intellectual, moral, and material.

I am not describing typical relationships or characters. Relationships and characters are not to be so easily classified into types. Second marriages are as different as first marriages, and stepmothers as different as mothers or mothers-in-law. But our country town was not a normal community, nor was mine a normal life. And this was my experience.

The next day my father kissed me very tenderly when I went to bed, and said gravely—

"Miss Weston does not wish my little Bride to call her anything that is not strictly correct. You may call her Mrs. Danescombe. She would like it."

I felt so relieved, and so grateful to the new lady for the relief, I could almost have welcomed her. I suppose a dim hope came to me that she would after all understand me.

A week after that my father went away for a day or two. In those days wedding journeys had not been introduced. He was married in the neighbouring town where Miss Euphrasia was staying, and the next day he brought her home, and we were summoned to greet her.

She stooped down graciously and gave me her cheek to kiss; and she spoke in a high-pitched caressing tone, supposed to suit the infantine taste, to Piers, and made a movement as if she would have taken him in her arms and kissed him. But she seemed to find her dress a little in the way. She wore a drooping large-brimmed hat with a feather, and ruffles and lappets and laces in various places, and I believe she felt shy with the child, which he with a child's instinct of course perceived; and concluding she had no right or possession in him, he turned from her with a little pout, and a little quiver of the lips to me.

I saw her colour rise a little, and I felt rather than saw a slight uneasy frown on my father's face. I knew that things were going wrong; and then all at once something motherly seemed to wake up in my own heart (I do not know what else to call it), a dim feeling that I was not there to be taken care of, but to take care of other people, of Piers and father, and even in some sense of Mrs. Danescombe. And I folded my arms around my little

brother, and stretched out his little hands and mine together towards her, and then I seemed to feel father's frown relax to a smile, and in a moment we were both caught up and half smothered in his arms, and enveloped in a comprehensive embrace in which Mrs. Danescombe was in some way involved.

Then afterwards father hastily left the room, as if he had finished the reconciliation scene in a play, his sanguine nature quite satisfied that all was going right; and Mrs. Danescombe, after bestowing a toy on Piers, and a new London doll on me, was quite content to leave Piers to my guardianship, whilst she smoothed herself down before the small cut Venetian glass in the oaken frame over the old high-carved chimney-piece.

And I remember sitting in the window-seat with my arms around Piers, altogether grave and happy with that new feeling of motherliness. We did not touch our toys, but sate gravely conversing; so that when father returned, cheerily rubbing his hands, he looked a little disappointed to see the new gifts neglected, and said to me half reproachfully—

"Does not my little Bride care for her beautiful new doll?"

How could I? I, who was feeling wise and matronly as if I were the mother of the human race, and had the world on my shoulders, himself included!

Besides, what strange ideas he must have about dolls! Was a new doll to be made acquaintance with and taken to one's heart in a moment?

However, I took up the doll, and began to behave to it with great politeness.

And Mrs. Danescombe drew near us, and made sundry efforts to "amuse" Piers by jerking the angular wooden puppet with which she had presented him, by means of internal strings, into various mountebank attitudes, which were intended to be funny.

I remember now the sense of grave wonder and pity with which I contemplated these futile attempts at entertainment, whilst Piers continued to gaze steadily into her face, with serious, undeluded eyes, evidently concluding that she was quite too old to play, and that the whole thing was a piece of very ineffective dramatic performance. I think the courteous complaisance with which little children receive our imbecile attempts to amuse them very remarkable; they who are never taken in, who are themselves actors of the first-class, by instinct, living in a perpetually varied drama as gloriously independent of vulgar necessities of scene-painting as an

Athenian audience; they to whom any few square feet of earth where they can be let alone are an imperial amphitheatre, and two chairs a hippodrome, and a heap of chips a fortune of theatrical properties.

Piers, I am sure, took in the whole futility and absurdity of the situation; but he also understood that the new lady meant well, and, like the little king he was, from time to time he vouchsafed her the patronage of a smile, and even condescended to imitate her movements with the puppet.

Little king that he was! My little king, whom I would serve with all I was and had, and guard and cherish, and pet and honour, and keep the world warm for; and be his interpreter, his queen, his slave!

That night I asked nurse if I might say my prayers beside baby's crib, instead of at her knee. The wonderful birds and flowers on her chintz petticoat had always been a hindrance to me, and also her snuff-box, and I so often had to begin all over again.

At first she seemed rather hurt at the request; but then I began to cry, and pleaded that baby looked so dear; and she consented, and called us "Poor innocents!" and began to cry too.

Piers was asleep, one little arm under his round cheek, flushed as it was with sleep, and the other little fat hand clenched like a wrestler's, and thrust out over the edge of his cot. My prayers must have been a mysterious ritual to me, scarcely "in a tongue understood of the people." No one had ever explained them to me. I do not remember ever expecting anything to come of them, except some vague harm to some one if they were left out. What the words were at that time I cannot even tell. There were no Sunday-schools in our town; nurse was very ignorant, and I am sure she could not read. Not improbably they were the Lord's Prayer and the invocation to the Four Evangelists, long afterwards not disused in the district. And my theology was, doubtless, neither definite nor broad. It certainly, however, included a belief in Something that could hurt Piers and me, especially if we were naughty, and in the dark.

But mysterious, indeed, are all little children's prayers!

Who knows the "tongues of angels!" Who knows the mystic, unutterable communion there may be between the Father of spirits and those little ones whose angels always see his face!

"Exiled children of Eve," little royal strangers, whose wondering eyes have not

yet narrowed their range to our mortal vision, —whose free, fearless, questioning thought is not yet fettered to our mortal speech,—who knows the delicate, aerial touches that come and go along those strings the world's rude hands have not yet swept? Who knows the moment when the Father who fell on the prodigal's neck and kissed him, clasps to his heart those little ones who have not yet

wilfully left the Father's house? what kisses, what consecrating touches are theirs?

Who knows, since God is love,—not primarily the Infinite Mind that speaks to us by works or thoughts, but the Father's heart that speaks to us by loving,—what divine touches, real as a mother's kisses, tender as the soft pressure of her arms, rest on the little ones?



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Not only on a few score of exceptional little Galilean children were the sacred Hands laid, in those three years' which made visible the eternity of unseen Divine love.

Nor is it only a few Jewish fishermen who have misunderstood the love of the Master for little children,—the babes,—the creatures we call speechless and unconscious.

Is it not rather *we* who have become blind,

and speechless, and unconscious? blinded by the countless small glitterings, and the countless vain prying of this world; robbed of heavenly utterance by its empty chattering and bitter contentions; made unconscious by its drowsy charms, of the realities of life and death, and love, of the capacities for sorrow and joy, deeper even than sorrow around and within us still, whether we know it or not,—

as they are around the little children we think unaware of them?

Who knows how little the wisest of us know, or how much the simplest?

I know not, indeed, what passed in my heart that night, or what words passed my lips. But I remember my cheek resting on my little brother's cheek, and the dear little hand unclenching itself and resting on me, and the sleepy eyes opening for a moment on mine, and the parted lips sleepily lisping my name.

And I remember lying down in my own little bed afterwards, so still and happy, and warm at heart, feeling not so much that I was brooded over, or needed it, as that some kind of wings had unfolded in me, and were brooding over Piers, and keeping him safe and warm.

That was, as far as I can remember, the way God began to teach me; by filling my heart with that great love which was just a little feeble image of His.

THE FUTURE OF THE WORKING CLASSES.

II.—GOD OR MAMMON?

FEW things have troubled some men more during the last half-dozen of years than the thought of the International Society. On the principle, we suppose, that objects looming through the mist look larger than when seen through a clear atmosphere, it has frightened many persons out of their propriety, as the great bombshell destined to explode in ruin to Europe. For our own part, utterly though we dislike it, we do not see much cause for such fears. According to Mazzini, when the French section was believed to number members by the million, and to have money enough to stock a bank, it actually contained but six hundred and sixty-six members (an ominous number, we admit!), and it was in debt to the amount of four hundred and forty-six francs. We can hardly help comparing it with the organization which Augustus Comte set in motion for supporting in the first instance himself, and thereafter the Comtian religion in the great countries of the civilised world, under a magnificent hierarchy of priests, high-priests, and presidents, whose revenue for the first year, when it came to be summed up, amounted to the splendid total of four thousand francs!

But small comparatively though the dimensions of the International have been, and smaller still the sections into which its members are now divided, its very existence is a striking fact. We believe that in certain respects, the first conception of its formers was good and even great. The English Exhibition of 1862 brought together many intelligent working men from England and from France. It seemed to them that by mutual conference and co-operation, the working men of the different countries of

Europe might help one another to elevate their condition. They wished to see their order raised to a condition in which they would have more freedom, more leisure, more political influence, more education, more opportunity to exercise their minds, to cultivate their affections, and to turn to account capabilities that had hitherto been wasted, stifled, lost. A great International Workmen's Society, pursuing these objects on a Christian basis and in a Christian spirit, would have been a noble institution. Unhappily, however, the movement took a different direction. Almost the first action of the society, when it became organized in 1864, was to declare that the source of all political, moral, and material servitude was the subjection of labour to capital, and that the one great aim of the society must be to secure the *economic* emancipation of the working-classes. Thus, in the most specific terms the society declared as its very basis that a material evil—a misadjustment of labour and capital—was the cause of all that unduly depressed the working classes, and that a material remedy—the extrication of labour from being under capital and its being placed alongside of it—was the grand cure of all their disorder and suffering. As the view thus taken of the cause of the depression was extremely narrow, so the means proposed for rectifying it seemed little calculated to draw out those higher capacities that had hitherto lain dormant among working men. Practically, the International was founded on materialism, pure and simple. It recognised no living God, ruling the universe, whose aid must be sought in the endeavour to obtain justice for the labourer, and freedom to fulfil the higher purposes of life. It proposed to guide the enslaved host

from Egypt to Canaan, not only without the presence of the Lord or of his angel, but as if such an idea were a mere childish superstition. And what has been the result? It is not easy to get at the exact truth in reference to a society whose proceedings are secret, but it is well known that some sections of the International have declared war against religion, against property, against patriotism, against marriage, against God. The banner of naked atheism has been held aloft. It has been affirmed that when Robespierre declared, after his experience of the revolution, that some religion was necessary for man, and when, accordingly, he instituted the worship of the goddess of reason, he was guilty of a weakness, and that he made a mistake. Everything of the kind is a pernicious sham; material interests are the only reality, the only thing therefore for which it is worth while to contend.

These sentiments have horrified many respectable members of the International, who did not advert at first to the connection between them and the purely material basis on which the society was founded. To their honour be it said, the English members have not been submissive servants to Carl Marx, the ruling spirit of the society, who, probably in consequence of this, has found it necessary to remove its head-quarters from London to New York.

To the honour, likewise, of Joseph Mazzini be it said, that he spoke out most emphatically against the materialistic basis of the society. What may have been his own personal relation to the Christian faith, is a point on which we have no satisfactory knowledge, but on which his language gives us an unfavourable impression. His own plans gave a prominence to political changes which we have no intention to indorse. But he saw as clear as daylight that it was absolute madness to attempt to rectify the disorders of society, elevate the life of the labouring man, and benefit the world at large, without any regard to a Moral Governor, to a moral law, to human responsibility, to the unseen world, to the kingdom of God. He saw that any movement which rested on no better basis than materialism would infallibly degenerate into a wrangle over mere interests, would develop in the working classes nothing better than selfishness, would excite in them a fierce pugnacity, unmitigated by the amenities with which other classes are wont to soften the aspect of their quarrels, and would issue in an anarchy, like that of the Commune, in which everything would be ruined and nothing

built up. The last months of his life were spent in preparing a warning to the working classes against following an *ignis fatuus* which could only land them in the morass, and delay indefinitely the elevation of their order.* He complained especially of the impetuosity of some of his own countrymen, who had no power to remove the visible evils of their country, and who conceived themselves bound to avenge their impotence by decreeing the abolition of God! Thereon they went to work to inspire their people with the spirit of sacrifice and martyrdom, by teaching them that human life was nothing more than a series of mechanical acts, dependent upon material forces and foreign impulses; that immortality was an illusion, and that man was naught but dust, and to dust he was destined to return!

"Thus," he summed up, "with no Authority to guide it; no conception of a State; with neither God nor common faith; neither country nor property; the republican banner we have hailed as the insignia of a new world and crown of a new epoch . . . would be transformed into the paltry flag of certain individuals or nuclei of individuals, owning no restraint save their *interests*, no law save the caprice of the hour, and no hope beyond the triumph of an hour. Mankind, broken up into a multitude of communes . . . would gradually sink to the mere vegetative existence of serfs attached to the soil, or chained within the narrow workshop whence they derive the necessaries of physical life; and ignorant or indifferent about all things else."

It is true that in England we have got certain atheistic lecturers who are full of the very spirit that Mazzini so strongly deplored. We cannot but think, however, that this wild atheistic spirit is foreign to British workmen, and that very few of them would expect, under such leadership, to be guided to a land flowing with milk and honey. But there are many things to incline the working masses in the direction of materialism, and to induce them practically, though not, perhaps, theoretically, to disregard religion in any shape as a leading factor in the great work of elevation. There is the natural carnality of the human heart—the blinding influence of the god of this world; there is the erroneous but prevalent notion that religion calls on us to disregard all that pertains to this life as of no consequence whatever; there is often the distraction caused by contending sects and parties in the Christian church; there is the

* See *Contemporary Review*—July and September, 1872.

want of home-coming power in the public services of the sanctuary, as if they were framed and adapted for a different class of minds; and there is a certain reserve towards the clergy, even the best and kindest of them, as if they would willingly improve the condition of the working classes in any and in every way, except only the way of independence which they so eagerly crave.

But all these considerations only render it more imperative on the working classes deliberately to face the question of religion, and to determine, as wise, calm, and sober-minded men, what relation to it is best fitted to promote the elevation of their order? As *individuals*, they have a question to settle that comes much nearer to the heart and conscience: but what we speak of here is the bearing of religion not on the soul of the individual, but on the condition of the mass. We know that "religion" is a very vague word, and we do not choose it as the best; but we shall come to something more definite before we close.

Let us suppose, in the first place, that the struggle of the working classes is solely for material benefit. They think themselves entitled to more wages and to shorter hours of labour, to more consideration in the community, to more influence in the Legislature, to a more potential voice in the management of the great national interests. Let us suppose that the attainment of these things is their goal, beyond which they do not care to look or to go. What will be the effect of this aim on their own spirit? As a whole, it cannot be ennobling. It may, indeed, be ennobling in the case of those, if such there should be, who, disregarding their own interests, devote themselves with a pure heart to advance those of their less able brethren. But, as a whole, a continuous struggle for mere material interests has a bad effect on character. It leads to a great development of selfishness. It genders a spirit of overweening regard to personal benefit that begins with indifference to the interests of employers, but by-and-by tells against neighbours, relatives, and friends. It wears out forbearance and generosity. It paralyses the martyr-spirit. And as it shows little or no generosity, it comes by-and-by, when its interests are at stake, to have not much regard for justice. And then, up rise sectional jealousies and animosities, and bitter, bitter is their breath. Have we had no illustrations of this? Are children as ready as they used to be to contribute to the support of aged and infirm parents? Is

the process of "rattening" one that would have ever been heard of if the working man's heart had not been subjected to perverse influences? And what are we to think of the moral education of the man who blows up his neighbour's house with gunpowder, or throws a bombshell through his window?

It is only religion that can give such elevation and dignity to the movement of the working classes as to check this deteriorating influence, and substitute a better and nobler. Our Lord has taught us that a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the good things which he possesseth. Under the influence of his teaching, the struggle of the working classes would be a struggle, not for mere material benefits, but for the means of fulfilling more efficiently and more generally the higher purposes of life. It would be a movement for enabling the masses to reach the condition in which they should be most useful and serviceable, and be able to do most to make the spot which they influence better and brighter than they found it. It is noble to struggle for a position where one may work with more free heart and more unfettered limb—work with mind and soul as well as with *thaw* and *sinew*—work pleasantly and prosperously with employers, overseers, and all—contribute more to the comfort of aged parents or of a beloved partner—give to one's children a better education, throwing their minds more open to the influence of what is best and noblest in the records of all time—lighten the burdens of the afflicted, encourage upward efforts in the young, promote self-control and industry in all, and diffuse that blessed Gospel which is so gloriously adapted to secure these and a thousand other equally noble ends. A movement of this kind, instead of developing selfishness and its odious brood, develops the qualities that secure affection and respect. Its reaction is as beneficial as its direct results. It is twice blessed—it blesseth those for whom the struggle is carried on, and it blesseth him who carries on the struggle. But it can derive its inspiration from no other source than Christianity. It is our Lord who teaches, "He that saveth his life shall lose it." To be always struggling for our present interests is the way to lose all that is desirable in life. An object beyond ourselves, or at least beyond our material interests, is necessary to high success. We are to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and other things will be added to us. The present aims of the working classes are too much of the earth, earthy. Let them aim

higher for themselves, and for their order, and for the world; in that case, the material benefits for which they are so exclusively concerned will come to them as the secondary and indirect results of far higher things.

Let us now ask the thoughtful working man—member of the International, mayhap (but not an atheist)—to look at the matter in another light. You are engaged in what you regard a great struggle, affecting the welfare of by far the largest class of society. You consider that that class has hitherto been in a state of serfdom, and you wish to raise them to the position of free labourers, and civilised, educated men. You wish to place labour and capital more on a level with each other, to secure more respect for the voice of labour, and to protect the labourer from being regarded as an inferior being by those who form opinion and govern the community. Right or wrong, it is a great aim. It amounts practically to a revolution. Now, the question is, Is it to be expected that so great a change will be carried out altogether irrespective of the great Ruler of the world? If the world has a Supreme Ruler, is it not reasonable to believe that He has some mind and purpose in connection with this proposed change; must not the control of the whole movement, indeed, lie with Him, and would it not be well to consider what his will is in the matter? He may, indeed, leave men to carry out their plans in their own way, as He left the Israelites to attack the Canaanites after the order had been issued to turn again towards the sea. But in that case, what can be expected but defeat, chastisement, and mortification? They may gain their material ends, but at a sad cost; at the cost of much bitter alienation between class and class, and at the cost of much deterioration of their own character. But let us make another supposition. In a godly, filial spirit, the mass of working men, and pre-eminently their leaders, look on the advantages which they desire to secure as things that are now in God's hands, and would not desire to have them, except as God's gifts, and with God's blessing. Consequently, they go about the obtaining of them with a deep and earnest regard to his will. They will take no measures which He may not be expected to sanction. They will ask his guidance and his blessing on every step of their progress. They will commit their way to Him, they will do right, and trust to Him the issue. If this were the prevailing spirit of the working class movement, how much more sweet and musical would be its progress, and how much

more sure of the highest blessing the final consummation!

If now we desire to know something more of the methods of the Lord of Providence, whether for elevating a class unduly depressed, or for curing the evils of society generally, let us listen to the voice which comes from the Apocalyptic throne, "Behold, I make all things new!" It has pleased God to connect with One Name, and to commit to One Hand, the entire reconstruction of the world. This, undoubtedly, is the Christian doctrine, and it must either be wholly true or wholly false. If true at all, it is wholly true. If it be true that the Son of God lived on earth in human form, that all the light and life of the Godhead dwelt bodily in Him; all the healing virtue, all the restorative efficacy of heaven; if his death was the penalty of man's sin; and if, when He rose, the whole honour and power of the universe were given to Him—if all this be true, it cannot but be true that He is the centre of all renewal, that, apart from Him, no part of the process of restoration can ever go on. Not only is there no other name under heaven given among men whereby, in the highest sense, they must be saved; but there is no other whereby any part of the disorder which sin has brought into our world can be healed. Either this is true, or the whole story of Christ is a delusion and malignant fiction. Either He is the rock on which your house will withstand the wind and the rain, or He is a mere pretender, who makes your case more pitiable, lulling you into a false security by professions as empty as the air, and dooming you to a disaster all the more terrible because you looked so confidently for peace and blessing at his hands.

Unhappily, we live in an age when the darker supposition regarding Christ does not lack its advocates. Men may tell us that they are weary of hearing of Christ, and the emancipation of humanity through Him. "Have we not had eighteen centuries of Christ, and even in Christian countries what is the result? Don't we hear Mr. Carlyle denouncing the society even of Christian England as a cesspool of all abominations, a bottomless pit of lies and shams and shoddy? Don't we hear Hindus from the headquarters of heathendom, challenging our archbishops for talking of *their* darkness, and pointing to things among ourselves, that whatever may be the lowest depths of heathendom, show in Christendom a lower still? And is this broken reed—this name of Christ—the charm to which we are to trust for curing us of our

wounds and bruises and putrefying sores? Nay, but we know better; we abjure a spell that has lost its virtue; and however bitter the battle, we will fly to arms and fight to the death for our rights and privileges!"

Dear friend, your voice sounds of impatience, and impatience is not the tone of wisdom. If there be one thing more than another incumbent on you in your present position, it is to be calm and deliberate, to study well the lessons of history and experience, and never let the irritation of impatience cloud your vision. Have you, then, made yourself acquainted with the state of the masses under Greek and Roman civilisation, or under that of Egypt, Assyria, or Babylon? What think you of the labouring poor in Mahometan countries? Have you compared the India of two hundred years ago with the India of to-day, and seen how much it has been improved even by the faint reflection of Christianity that has come upon it through British rule? Have you noted the fact that it is under a corrupt form of Christianity that the evils you deplore are at their worst, and that in proportion as Christianity is like the Christianity of the early ages, the condition of the people is greatly better? You complain of the slow influence of Christianity. It is good enough, you say, but it is too slow; we need something that works faster. We say, if you depend on anything that works more rapidly than Christ will keep pace with and sanctify, you will one day know which is the broken reed. But remember, Christ does not require you to sit still with folded hands when you have wrongs to be remedied, or unjust burdens to be removed. He bids you take up your bed and walk. But He requires you to be a fellow-worker with himself—to invoke his Spirit and seek his blessing. And the very reason why Christ works so slowly in such matters may be, that you and others are so little in the spirit of conferring with Him, and trusting to Him; it may be requisite that you should be taught *wherein your strength lies*, before you are called to raise the shout of victory.

And if there be so much in the great Person who is the Alpha and Omega of Christianity to win your confidence and awaken your gratitude, it is only as second to Him that you have cause to trust and value the great Christian Book. Besides its surpassing benefits to the individual, what boundless obligations do the labouring masses lie under to the New Testament! What is the great bulwark that has kept them

from being utterly swept away by the tide of pride, selfishness, and ambition, that has been rolling against them age after age? Is it not the doctrine that all men are the children of one family; that the souls of all are equally precious; that the redeeming love and grace of the Saviour are alike for high and low; that the meanest and most despised of human beings are not insignificant in God's eyes, for do not the angels watch for the soul of the poor beggar whose sores are licked by the dogs at the Rich Man's gate? Even the broken spray, as it has dashed on the poor over the bulwark, has been bad enough, but what if they had been exposed to the full roll of the sea? They have been given in thousands as food for cannon; they have been sent to sea in crazy vessels, they have been entombed in mines more perilous than the crater of Vesuvius; they have been lodged in dens where fever and pestilence for ever lurk; they have been treated as machines that could not be supposed to have feelings; even under a somewhat paternal régime they have been spoken of as animals, who, it was satisfactory to think, had food enough in their bellies, and wool enough on their backs! How little could the children of labour have stood up against this spirit had it met with no check or opposition! But against this spirit and on behalf of the obscurest child of humanity, there has rung out the voice of the Bible proclaiming that all men are brothers, and that each man is immortal! In that coarse frame there is lodged a soul that can never die, fitted, if God's grace comes to it, to shine as a star of heaven, doomed, if it be neglected and lost, to feel the pangs of an undying misery. The Christian doctrine of the soul, what a bulwark it is for the poor! The Christian doctrine of redemption, too, and of the kingdom of heaven, that has no respect of persons, where there is neither Jew nor Greek, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond, nor free, but all are one in Christ Jesus. And then, as showing the respect due to labour, there is the example of Jesus Christ, the carpenter's son, and of the fishermen of Galilee, and of the chiefest of all the apostles—a man of learning and of culture, but who was not ashamed to work with his hands. These are facts, and they are facts of marvellous power, and in the ages when the masses were isolated and helpless, it was such facts as these that were their only protection. And though now they have learned to unite, and to find a new strength in union, and therefore perhaps may think that they are not so dependent as their

fathers were on these moral bulwarks, is it not true: that it is from such sources that the spirit must come which will sweeten the breath of society, and bind all classes in loving brotherhood? Are we to be ever fighting for our rights, and in a hard, proud spirit, defying those from whom we have wrested them? We may scowl upon the class above us, and having no pleasant dealings with them, persuade ourselves that the grapes are sour, and that they are not worth our minding; but deep in our hearts there may be found a suppressed yearning for a more loving relation; and if, at some unlooked-for moment, there come to us a pleasant experience of a sweeter feeling than we gave them credit for, it may be a little aperture through which we perceive a whole world of enjoyment which might be had but for the bitter jealousies that estrange those that were meant to be friends. Christianity is the only power that can really fuse society into a homogeneous mass. Under any other system the various classes will be in a state little better than that of armed neutrality; entrenched in their respective strongholds, and shaking their fists, or even gnashing their teeth, at any who shall dare to trespass on their domain.

We own that it is in no very satisfactory mood that we contemplate the present attitude of the working-classes toward religion, especially those of them who are most forward in economic movements. They do not seem to have much faith in Christ, and they do not seem to set much value on the personal interest and guidance of God. If we are right, it is a serious error, and it must result in disappointment and defeat. There can be no doubt, however, that the working classes contain a very great number of pure and earnest Christians. Very probably such men take little part in the plans and movements now in operation. Their deeper feelings are engaged in other work. But the economic revolution rolls on with such a mighty volume, and constitutes such a crisis for their whole order, that it is high time for them to consider what they can do to purify a movement which carries such issues, whether for weal or woe. There has been a fiery heat and hardness about it that does not indicate much of a heavenly presence. There would be a softer sky and a balmier air if only the cry were going up from them, "If Thy presence go not with us, carry us not up hence."

W. G. BLAIKIE.

THOUGHTS BY THE WAY.

I.

THE higher a man rises above the beast, the greater his sympathy will be with it. The nearer the brute, the less pity for it. That is—Give the nature range on one side, and you extend it on the other; elevate it, and you soften it. This balance completes itself in a true man on both sides, and exists infinitely in God. How false and shallow, then, the view that God's greatness excludes us from his sympathy!

There is an originality of natural genius, but there is also an originality of a very plain understanding which has gained insight into God's Word through the teaching of his Spirit. And frequently, the plainer the understanding the more original is the product, as the teaching of God's Spirit is uncoloured and undiluted—*achromatic*, as opticians term it. We meet it in the humblest natures. It is the originality of the *heart* as distinguished from the *mind*. "A new heart also will I give you."

It is worth remarking how much the *poco piu*—the little more—will add to a whole

character. Two men may seem to have equal elements of intellectual power, but there is an indescribable somewhat in the one which gives a flavour to all he is, or a direction to all he does, and which makes him diverse from the other, or opposite. *Mood* is the passive form of this difference, and *purpose* is the active form. It is like the perfume of a plant, or the amalgam in a conglomerate stone, and confers on the man his individuality. By the first of these, the perfume of character, we are guided in our likings; by the second, the purpose of character, we determine our moral judgments. To have a true friend we require both.

When God's grace pervades a man, it gives a new and higher individuality, having its resemblance to the above. There is a fresh fragrance and a higher aim which take possession of the natural, and consecrate them. This individuality is exceedingly beautiful when it descends on what is already fair; and it is with peculiar regret we have sometimes to say, "One thing thou lackest."

J. KER.

IN REFORMATION TIMES:

Some Glimpses of Life at a Great Era.

PART I.—A SCOTCH SCHOLAR.

CHAPTER VI.—A DIFFERENCE AND A RECONCILIATION.

DUNDAS was in many respects a born schoolmaster; his notion of teaching involving the exact performance of appointed tasks with prompt obedience; failure or negligence being expiated by speedy punishment. In the infliction of this punishment Dundas was scrupulously just, but at this period of his life, in the comparative absence of softening influences he was in danger of falling into occasional violence, alternating with the hearty kindness which could lead him, like another great scholar, to take a little lad "between his knees" to warm him in the circle round the hall fire, and not to hesitate to carry the same little lad on his back when the boy grew foot-sore on a walking excursion.

One morning, young Walter of Brieche-side had exhausted his tutor's not very extensive stock of patience by impudently producing a thesis, which bore such plain marks of sloth and carelessness, that its simple production was little short of an act of insubordination. Dr. Thomas did not go about the bush, but beat the lad severely as the students in the colleges were beaten without fail in similar transgressions; and, when Walter showed no symptom of contrition, but behaved like a young rebel, his determined master was proceeding to beat him again.

In the meantime, however, Walter's brother William had carried the tale to Jenny Dalrymple, and Jenny, who was an ally of the boys as well as of their tutor's, on some excuse or other, fluttered into the gallery to which Dr. Thomas's room led, and where for the advantage of space, the execution of justice had taken place, and was about to be repeated.

Jenny craved a word with the tutor, who came and spoke to her, ruffled and irate even where she was concerned, because she had interrupted him in the discharge of a disagreeable duty—and the more disagreeable it was, the more certain Thomas Dundas was of doing it. He came forward to her, bearing the rod still in his right hand; while the dour culprit, a broad-shouldered boy of ten or eleven years, stood raising his shoulders, putting out his lip, and contemplating with a mocking expression, the instrument of torture.

"Gie him nae mair. Let the bairn gang; he is but a bairn," pled Jenny.

"Bring up a child in the way he should go," quoted the dominie with emphasis, but giving way a little at the beseeching woman's face, and the soft grasp on his arm.

"Forby," Jenny was foolish enough to add, not knowing when to stop or how to leave well alone, "he's saftly nurtured, and neither Brieche-side nor the leddy his mither will care for him being dealt wi' just like a common wean."

"Say you sae, Jenny?" exclaimed Dundas hotly; "I admit no exemption in pupil of mine. Gentler blude demands gentler deed. What's gude for Peter is gude for Paul. Come on, sirrah, take your chastisement like a man, at least;" and making a lounge at young Walter in order to inflict a blow, he miscalculated the distance, and came across the lad's cheek, causing it to tingle with pain, and driving the sufferer to an outcry in which the younger brother joined lustily for sympathy, while a fiery weal rose where the stroke had descended.

"Oh, you cruel man, I'll never speak to you again. You'll not pay thrice or you'll pay me," protested Jenny in a tumult of passionate pity and resentment, throwing herself between Dundas and Walter, and clasping the boy in her arms, and crying over him.

"I did not intend to strike there, nor to strike sae hard," apologized Dundas, relenting on the instant, and becoming pale with mental pain and shame.

"What signified what you intended," cried Jenny, "when you see what you did?"

"Let me alone. What business is it o' yours, Jenny Dalrymple?" questioned the young victim in an extremity of petulance and ingratitude, more aggrieved than soothed by Jenny's caresses, and struggling to free himself. "I'm no sair hurt, nor will I roar like a bull segg as Wully is doing, for a paik from him or ony man."

"You see what you've done," insisted Jenny, withdrawing from the scene with feelings outraged on all sides; "you've fallen out wi' me as well as wi' Watty, and you've caused him to fa' out baith wi' me and wi' his brither, and made the laddie twice the Turk he was afore—I hope you're pleased wi' your work."

Jenny was more speedily and surely brought to a penitent frame of mind than was young

Walter. She waylaid Dundas on his way to supper that night, and down-cast and contrite, begged his pardon, and offered to beg it again in the presence of his pupils. "For I did despite to your lawful authority, sir, nor did you deserve sic contumaciousness at my hands, you wha hae been like an elder brither to me, sin my mither deed and we two forgathered here. I hae spoken to the lads already and tried to show them how wrong we a' have acted to our best friend, and they're thinking better o't,' I trust; but I'll do penance if you will, Dr. Tammas, and ask your grace before the bairns to serve as an example."

"Tut, tut, Jenny, I was na free frae blame; the auld Adam had got hold o' me by the lug and the horn, and in my fury I micht hae done the lad some hurt, God help baith him and me! I too have gotten a lesson, and I pray that I may lay it to heart. But what is a hasty word between friend's? The bairns ken that you're but a woman and I'm but a man, an' mark you, Jenny, I'll never strike again when you bid me hold my hand."

CHAPTER VII.—THE HIGHER CALLING.

IN a year Dr. Thomas Dundas, having the good fortune to be named to the mastership of the grammar school of Lithgow, took in wedlock Jenny Dalrymple. He was not unabashed at the adoption of such a step by a scholar—a departure as it was from old rule and precedent which, however vigorously he might condemn them in theory, still unconsciously coloured his practice in life. He was inclined to make excuses for his marriage, as other reformers made excuses for their natural grief at the death of their children. He tried to persuade himself that it was done in the humanity of affording Jenny a shelter, and of withdrawing her from her dependent position at Briecheide, or in the possibility that in his taking orders, he might repeat Martin Luther's active protest against the celibacy of priests. But it was an older, sweeter obligation which impelled Thomas Dundas—that God had given the first woman to the first man; and in pursuance of the natural order, Jenny Dalrymple pleasing Thomas Dundas, he could not choose but seek her for his portion.

Jenny went and dwelt with old Mistress Dundas and Giles, who had professed the Protestant faith in due time with all Scotland, their home being still the old Port-House of Lithgow. Jenny was sweet and provoking

too, at times—fond, and faithful, fitfully capacious and exacting withal, while she was

"A creature breathing thoughtful breath,"

growing always wiser and better by God's grace, as she travelled in God's fear, on the great common journey.

It might have seemed that old Mistress Dundas had not improved, since the testiness of age had taken the place of the caution of mature worldly wisdom, but that would only have been because of her infirmity while the grain of mustard seed in the kindness becoming ever more tender, was sending out the shoots still hidden, which would yet be spreading branches in the pure air of heaven.

Giles, likewise, who had in the end managed the house and in-fields for her mother in her brother's absence, proving a boon and a mainstay to the family in which she had originally been a torment, had loved the power which she had learnt to wield honourably, and wondered superciliously that her wise brother should have brought home a weak enough girlish wife whose fair face had appeared to Giles her chief recommendation.

But Thomas Dundas was the centre of these conflicting influences, and the unquestioned head of his household. He could evoke order from disorder, and bring conflicting forces into harmony, because he was a king and priest there, and his women were his fellow-subjects under the great King, his fellow-worshippers under the High Priest, and did not doubt that Thomas Dundas was ordained to be their ruler and teacher in his house and theirs. Thus above, beneath, and around the family in the Port-House was a firmament of truth, love, peace, which spread more widely, and at the same time brooded more closely over them as life advanced. Small grudges and petty offences gradually dissolved and disappeared, as if they had been but idle shadows, while the truth, the love, and peace were the substance and reality.

Seed-times and harvests had dawned and waned on a land marred by strife, since Thomas Dundas had settled as the head of his father's house. The troubles of the country had not touched him and his closely, though the Dundases had been thrilled like others by such terrible public news as those of the ghastly murder at Kirk o' Field in February, and the ghastlier wedding at Holyrood in May. The tidings were followed by those of the battle of Carberry Hill with its royal criminal and prisoner, the escape from the castle in Loch Leven, and the piteous

thought of that queenly lass, to whom Lithgow had given birth, a wretched, defamed woman, still in her flower, riding sixty miles without rest, for dear life, and driven to complain that she had been forced to drink sour milk, feed on oatmeal, and be "three nights like the owls;" and when all was done, fain to fling herself desperately on the pride and pity of her rival kinswoman and queen.

Later still, and Lithgow, the Dundas's native town, had been the theatre of a grievous tragedy when Regent Murray—the one righteous man, as men go, among his peers—had been shot down like a dog in the long street by the assassin, Hamilton.

At last John Knox had laid down his burden of worn flesh, dreading fresh days of darkness for the reformed Kirk from the acts of aggression and spoliation persisted in by the state and the nobility. The man who, chained in the French galley, had called the image of the Virgin "a pented brod," and desired to try whether it could swim; who had stood alone in Mary's ante-chamber amidst the dazzling influences of a court, bearing flouts and jeers, in order to assert the cause which was the cause of right to him, was gone, with his many virtues and his faults, to the Saviour in whom he trusted. He left Scotland under a succession of feeble and fierce regents for a helpless infant, in the unsettled anarchy of a new régime, with no rights, whether of Kirk or State, clearly defined; but with the Kirk inclined to dictate to the State, and the State willing to dissemble and defer to the Kirk; while the State kept the Kirk so low in its exchequer, from which the forfeited revenues of the great old abbeys and monasteries had been abstracted by powerful hands, that the ministers who did not follow other professions were exposed to the risk of actual starvation, no tithes being paid sometimes for long periods of years.

It was at this date that Thomas Dundas proposed to add to his labours and obligations by taking priests' orders. He would not be profited by it in a secular light, and, on the contrary side of the argument, he would render himself more amenable to the powers that were established, he would be more conspicuous and obnoxious to those who differed from him, and he would be more tempted to provoke their enmity by executing his commission and vindicating his rights. He had been for years content to walk backwards and forwards, in his gown, and carrying his hour-glass between the Port-House and the grammar-school, to rear

II. N.S.

scholars. He had issued no "blasts" against prevailing abuses and prominent offenders since he became a schoolmaster and a family man; but now, as a regular minister of the town, he would be called upon to speak and write on all occasions; he would be subject to the rules of his superintendent (in some respects a substitute for a bishop); he would be required to attend presbyteries, synods, and assemblies, and become mixed up with their deliverances, and answerable for them—the serious business and strong measures of the day. As a consequence, he would distinguish himself in debate; incur praise or blame—the blame often enough preponderating; he would be summoned to answer for his opinions before the Regent, the Council, the Parliament, and be imprisoned or banished, while his household fell to wreck and ruin, and his family—parted from their head—struggled wearily, and perhaps sunk and perished in the *mêlée*, with the hapless family of many another patriot. What marvel that there was a loud remonstrance and an approach to a revolt on the part of his women, when wantonly, as it seemed to them, he devoted himself to the threatened danger.

The family were gathered in one group round Thomas Dundas one autumn evening, when the cruse was lit betimes on the supper-table. Mistress Dundas forgot that her daughter-in-law had taken her own way, and departed from her elder's example in the dress and diet of the children. She plucked at Jenny's sleeve, and pulled her down beside her on the settle, that she might be the surer of commanding the support of her son's wife in the family council. Jenny, for her part, cast into oblivion the fact that Giles had been prone to undervalue her few accomplishments acquired in the Montpellier convent. Jenny, as she now sat with one child in her arms, and another holding fast by her apron-string, craned her neck to whisper into Giles's ear—

"Oh, Giles, you wha hae the gift o' the gab, speak up, for I can just hold out the bairns to him and greet."

"Why go ye to weep and to bræk my heart?" cried the beset man, quoting Scripture in the constant fashion of the time.

"Ye dinna ken when you are weel aff, my son, Tammas," protested the quavering voice of his old mother. "Ye winna leave weel alane. But you were aye masterfu' and camstary, since you but to be a responsible scholar instead of a canny wool-kaimer, like your honest faither. Wae worth the day!

I needna mind, I'll no be lang wi' you to be mixed wi' the rout; but gin you took thocht for your mither, and honoured her as you're bidden', my chap, you would ken that she might like to see your face wi' her failed een—the last thing, and to be avised that your hands would lay her grey head i' the grave."

"He that loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me," urged Dundas with a groan.

"Gin it were for power to do what you've gotten to do better and more boldly, Tam," insinuated Giles, "I would say naething, though you put that in a balance, and your hame and your folk in anither, and forsook the last. You mind when you departed a brisk laddie for France, I bade you come back a cardinal, or an abbot. Siccan ane might hae had a voice that he daured lift, and an arm that he could wield to purpose. But what can a puir minister say or do that will better the condition o' Kirk or nation? And how is he certain that when kingdoms and Kirks are reeling, his faith will not fail him, and the auld infidel cry o' the auld heathen schools will not come to his tongue, 'What is truth?' and close his lips; while his wavering voice dees out in the roar o' the conflict? Then the man is branded for ever as a coward and traitor. Sic recantations hae come to pass, Tam."

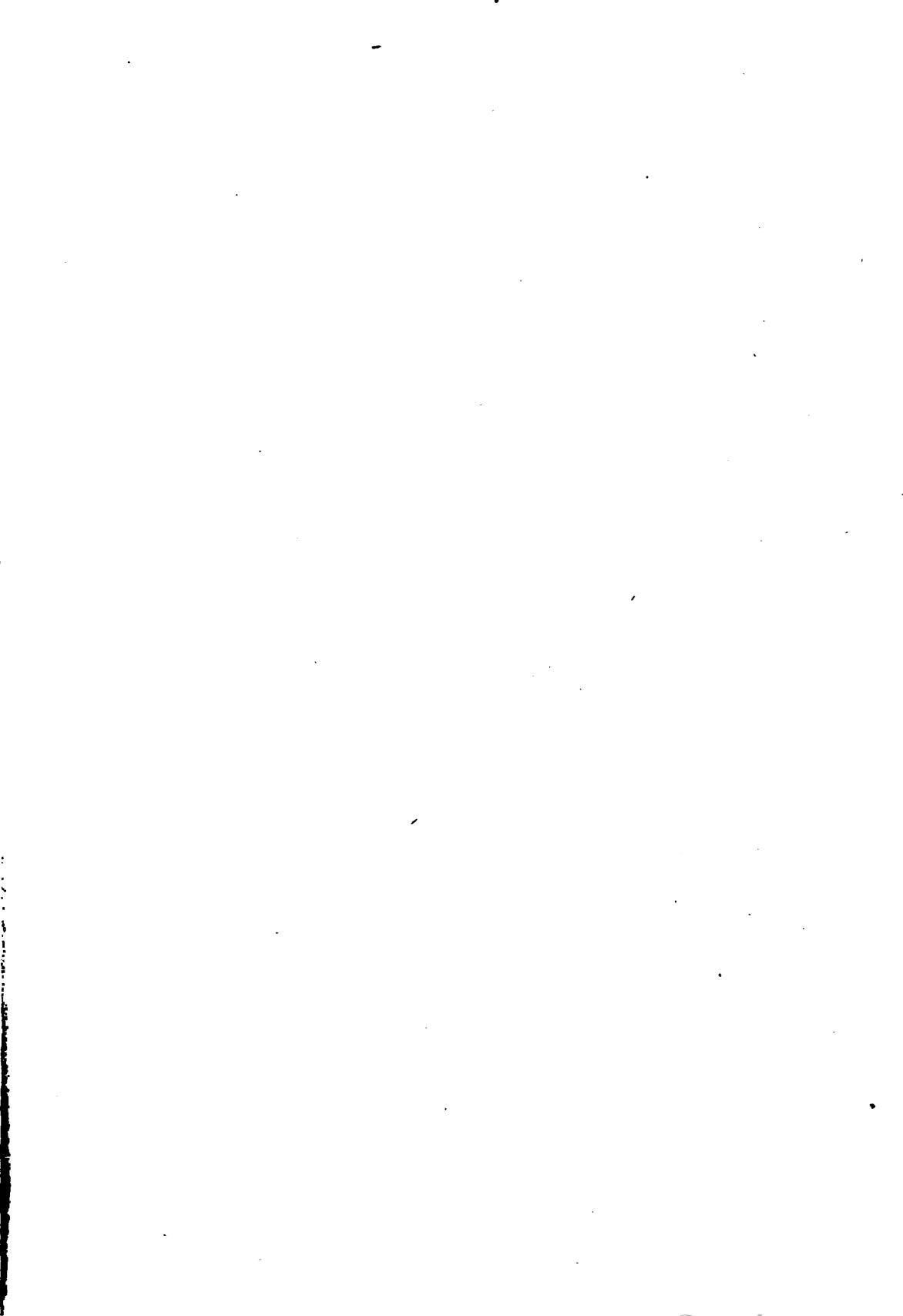
"Alake! alake they have, Giles, and that you should remind me o' them! But the weak things o' the world are chosen to confound the mighty. 'I hae prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not,' was said to a man who gaed out into a wilder storm than this I have to face, and he won the day at last."

"Ither men think first o' their wives and bairns," Jenny reproached her man passionately; "but you are taking this step as gin you had nane belonging to you. What have I or they done that we should be sae lightly held? I hae never murmured, though you were up to your een in books, hardly sparing time to notice when we donned new mantles or kirtles, or to gie us your cracks, or attend us abroad to the Exercise, or the Weaponshaw."

Dundas took lighter ground in answering his wife; he spoke to her with humour shining through the moisture in his eyes. He maintained that she had been frightened by hearing that the Assembly had passed a law by which the reverend body condemned in the apparel of ministers' wives, as well as of ministers, any "vagaries of velvet on gowns," any "superfluous stocking," "all kinds of light and variant hues in clothing, as red, blue, yellow, and sich like, whilk declares

the lightness of the mind;" all "wearing of rings, bracelets, buttons of silver, gold, or other metal;" and enjoined that "their hail habit be of grave colour, as black, russet, sad grey, sad brown, or serges, worsted camlet, grogram, lytes, worsted; and sich like." He vowed that ere Jenny had been taken for his marrow, she should have come bound like Lord Ochiltree's daughter, John Knox's spouse, to carry his wallet for him when he grew weary, if the two were destined to play the part of gaberlunzies in that bonnie France, which they both kenned weel, or in the Low Countries. He had never till now fully gone in with Master John in his quarrel with "the Regiment of Women," but at last he saw the force of it.

Then, suddenly breaking down in his pleasantry, Dundas looked round wistfully on the old room in the Port-House, where he had pursued his gambols and conned his tasks with all his might when he was a boy; where he had sat at the head of the board in the master's chair and taken his ease after the day's darg was done, entertained his friends, exchanged confidences with wife, mother, and sister; watched the gambols of his children in their turn, read his book, prayed his prayers, wrestling in spirit with the Almighty. The house-place—the abode of three generations—was very home-like to its master. He had long ceased to miss the glorious blaze of sunshine, the grand and varied features of Languedoc landscape, as well as the precedence which France had over Scotland in civilisation and refinement. Besides, Scotland was fast becoming another Scotland, outwardly as well as inwardly. Floorcloths, Venetian glass and china in the buffets, Scotch edited and printed classics on the book-shelves, were only a few among many improvements. A "Sang Schule," instituted in Lithgow as in every larger town in the kingdom, was frequently heard in melodious practice in the Port-House; purer French than that of Languedoc was spoken freely within the rude walls; the bookman had visitors of his own kind, and he was instructing his little son so that the boy might, in time, read the chapter at family prayers on such ceremonious occasions in the original Greek or Hebrew. Thomas Dundas gazed on the whole scene, with the white gleam of a bountiful harvest moon shining broadly on the window-panes and the opposite wall, while the red glow of the fire and of the cruise on the supper-table warmed the immediate space around him. He looked in turn on his old mother, and on his sister, who was twisted





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in body, but sharp in mind, and on his comely wife and children, and he hid his face in his sinewy hands, and appealed to the women in accents so reproachful that they were almost bitter.

"Do you, Jenny, and the lave really think that I canna' count the cost, or that I dinna heed that I would cast on the waters a' which makes life worth gin there were any remeid, gin Scotland and the Kirk didna want ilka true man since the truest has gane hame?"

The women sat dumb with consternation, scarcely venturing to glance—awed and shocked as they were—at the agitation which they had helped to provoke in so brave a man.

At length his old mother rose from her seat, tottered to his elbow, pressed her shrivelled lips to the swollen veins on his forehead,—a solemn caress, such as she had not given him since he was a bairn.

"Gang your ways, Tam," she bade him; "you have my love and blessing. Thank God, your ways were aye honourable ways. He will cover your head. Gin I fail to see my son's face on earth, I'll hail it ere long in heaven—my bonnie man."

Giles bent forward to her brother in eager atonement. "I rue my words, Tam. Nae furrow that the plough turns can be spared. What though it works laigh down and in the

dark? The stane that the builders rejected is made the head o' the corner. I was ever pridefu' an' cankered, and you were noble frae the beginning."

Jenny hurried her child into its cradle, and hung upon her husband's shoulder. "Never mind, my ain gude man, forget a' I said. I was beside mysel, I forgot mysel, as you ken I was aye fain to do. You ken best—do your wull. I'll be ower prood and blythe to cross the seas, and bear your wallet, gin I'm granted the propyne, or I'll stay ahint and fend for the bairns, and lippen you to your Maister, in the gude cause, for halesome faring and a glad meeting again. Dinna fear ony mair for the bairns and me."

Thus the old scholar's women gained faith—in him, in themselves, in their Lord and King—to send out one of the giants in these days, to play his part and do his duty among his fellow-heroes, whether his duty carried him into turmoil, frays, assassination, lodgings in the Tower of London, or strange banishment—and it was pretty certain to produce one or other of these results. But it was the good cause of the Reformation, and it must conquer, let who would see the conquest. The real bourne, however obscured, was "the high lands" of heaven, as the sublime object, however blurred, was freedom, spiritual and political;—the glory of God, and the good of men.

THE WIDOW'S POT OF OIL.

2 Kings iv. 1—8.

VERY abrupt and striking were the transitions in the life of Elisha. At one time we find him far away from the haunts of civilisation in the desolate mountain regions beyond the south-east shores of the Dead Sea; at another domiciled in the prophet's chamber of the rich Shunammite's house, amid the smiling corn-fields of Samaria. Now he accompanies the armies of Judah and Israel, and is the honoured counsellor of the allied kings; and anon he is engaged in the humble task of a teacher in the school of the prophets at Gilgal. Yesterday he wrought a stupendous miracle which supplied the wants of a whole army, and was the means, more than the sword of Jehoram and Jehosaphat, of subduing the rebellious kingdom of Moab; to-day he works a miracle for the relief of a poor and friendless widow, to save her sons

from slavery and herself from starvation. In this respect Elisha is a type of the faithful Christian minister, who has to pass through scenes as chequered, and transitions in their own way as sudden and remarkable,—who, abstracted from common interests and habits, and lifted by his unworldly character and mission above all human precedences, is debtor alike to the rich and the poor, and becomes all things to all men, if by any means he may save some.

To the widow, whose case we have to consider, Elisha stood as the representative of the compassionate Saviour, before whom all the world's glory pales, and whose presence alone can, without disturbance to the order of society, equalise all human ranks and level all their conventional distinctions in the dust. She was in circumstances that made her feel with peculiar painfulness the

gradations of rank and the vicissitudes of life. If we are to believe the voice of tradition as expressed by Josephus, she was one who had seen far better days, being the widow of Obadiah, the lord high-chamberlain of Ahab. While her husband lived she breathed the atmosphere of a court, and was nourished in the lap of luxury. But when he died she seems to have been reduced to the utmost poverty. That world which had smiled upon her in the days of her prosperity, now, with characteristic fickleness, turned its back upon her. Her friends forsook her, and refused to help her. She was plunged into debt, contracted in order to obtain the barest necessities of life. Having nothing of any value in the house, the hard-hearted creditor, in lieu of payment, threatened to take and sell her two only sons as slaves, which, by virtue of one Jewish law and the extension of another, he had the power to do. It is true that the period during which slaves could be held in Israel was mercifully limited by the year of jubilee, and that year, which would break every fetter, might be near at hand; but nevertheless, in her position, the enforcement of the law even for the shortest period could not but be felt as a grievous calamity. On account of these trying circumstances, her case was one that peculiarly warranted the interposition of Heaven. But she had another claim still, beside that of her wretchedness, upon the sympathy and help of Elisha. Her husband feared the Lord while he lived. He was the son of a prophet, and cherished the deepest regard for the person and the work of those who filled that sacred office. If he was, indeed, Obadiah, the steward of Ahab—and there seems no reason to doubt the Jewish tradition which thus identifies the husband of the widow—then the sacred story informs us that during the fierce persecution of the prophets of Israel by Jezebel, he took an hundred of these prophets, and, at the peril of his life, hid them by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water during the whole continuance of the famine.

Let us look for a moment at the beauty and significance of Obadiah's devotion on this occasion. Most interesting is it to find that while beyond the confines of Israel, the widow of Zarephath was sustaining the prophet of the Lord by the barrel of meal that wasted not, and by the cruse of oil that did not fail, Obadiah, in the court of Israel—in the very centre of that wickedness which had brought the curse of desolation upon the land—was sustaining the hidden prophets of the

Lord by a zeal that never tired, and a patient tenderness that never wore out. We see the hand of God in both these parallel incidents; in the one as clearly as in the other. The replenishing of the widow's barrel of meal and cruse of oil that supported Elijah was the doing of the Lord; the maintaining of the love and devotion in Obadiah's heart, whereby in the midst of almost insurmountable difficulties and innumerable dangers he failed not, for three years and a half, to support the hundred true prophets under his care, was also the doing of the Lord. The one was a specimen of God's working in the field of nature and providence; the other was a specimen of God's working in the field of the human heart; and both are wonderful in our eyes. How striking a proof of God's care for His servants do these two co-related examples afford! There was a curse of drought and famine upon all the land; thousands came to want, and probably perished; but Jehovah's servants were preserved, and had enough to eat and drink. An unclean bird and a heathen widow—a Baal-worshipper from Jezebel's native country—ministered to the wants of Elijah; a courtier, a servant of Ahab and Jezebel, ministered to the others.

Obadiah's devotion on this occasion may have greatly encroached upon the provision which he may have been making for his family after his death. He may have spent upon the prophets of the Lord what he meant for his own wife and children. That the expense of feeding such a multitude for such a long period must have been very great is at once apparent when we consider that food was all the time at famine prices; and also that in order to convey this food to the hiding-places of the prophets he must have employed many servants, paid them well for their work, and perhaps even bribed them to conceal it lest it should come to the ears of his mistress, and prove fatal to the prophets and to himself. Like Joseph in Pharaoh's court, like Daniel in Babylon—the upright and pious chamberlain in the palace of Ahab did not take advantage of his opportunities of enriching himself; the officers of eastern monarchs have often done. On the contrary, he spent his fortune in benefiting the needy, and died poor. On this ground his widow might well appeal to Elisha for assistance. If he who had given at the risk of his life and with the loss of his substance bread and water to the starving prophets of the Lord, might now in the persons of his representatives, in great straits, expect a prophet's reward.

Elisha willingly acknowledges the claim. He is filled with pity for the poor broken-hearted widow. He recognises in her case features of resemblance to those of the widow of Zarephath, whom his great master befriended in her time of sore need. But her circumstances are more pitiable still. The widow of Zarephath was in all likelihood a common peasant woman, who had never known any reverses of fortune, and her extremity, when Elijah met her, was the common fate of all, for the famine was sore upon all the land of Syria and Palestine, the chief centres of Baal-worship. But the widow of Obadiah was reduced from affluence and high rank to penury and social degradation. She was one whose lot is a thousand times harder than that of those who have always been poor; and her extremity of destitution was exceptional,—it happened in the midst of plenty—she was the one poor among the many rich. Further still, the widow of Zarephath had her son with her to share her last meal; but the widow of Obadiah was about to suffer the loss of the only compensation which God had left to her—she was about to be separated from the objects of her love and left alone. Her two sons were about to be sold into slavery to pay her debt. It was this last hardship that caused her cup of misery to overflow—that drove her a suppliant to the feet of Elisha. Who knows what terrible privations she underwent without complaining while she had the company of her sons to cheer her! But when they were about to be taken from her, she could no more hide her suffering. She must get help, else she will die.

Elisha's first question to her evinced a wonderful knowledge of the human heart, and of the best mode of dealing with poverty and suffering. Instead of volunteering to give her aid at once, as most persons would have done, carried away by an overpowering impulse of compassion at the recital of the tale of sorrow; like a wise and judicious friend, he inquires how far she herself has the power to avert the threatened calamity—"What hast thou in the house?" His assistance must be based upon her own assistance. He will help her to help herself. And this is the only true way to benefit the poor. By reckless and indiscriminate almsgiving, by wholesale gifts of money, we run the risk of pauperising the objects of our charity. Our assistance should therefore be of such a nature as to call forth the resources which they themselves possess, and to make the most of them. However small these resources

may be, they should be used as a fulcrum, by means of which our help may raise them to a better condition. The first question which we too should ask the widow or the destitute is—"What hast thou in the house?" No help from without can benefit, unless there be a willingness of self-help within. Of course such a mode as this of administering charity is more troublesome, and requires a greater expenditure of time and self-denial, than the plan, which is far too common, of throwing a dole to a beggar to get rid of his importunity, and to save ourselves the annoyance of his wretchedness. But putting him in the way of helping himself will be truer charity than any gift of money.

The widow of Obadiah had nothing in the house save a pot of oil. Was this oil grown by Obadiah during his lifetime—the last of the produce of his olive-yard? In all likelihood it was all that remained of the once extensive property of Ahab's steward. Out of this last pot of oil—the sign of her uttermost poverty—Elisha furnished the source of her comfort and happiness. Like Elijah, who made the handful of meal and the cruse of oil already existing an un-wasting provision for each new day's want; like a greater than Elijah, whose miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes took its point of departure into the supernatural from the common barley loaves and fishes before him, so Elisha in the case of Obadiah's widow made the produce of nature and of man's labour the basis of his wonderful act. In the fables of all nations we are told that a magician, by a mere wave of his wand, or by pronouncing a certain charm, produces at once wealth and luxuries that had no existence before. Aladdin rubs a ring, and immediately a genius appears, and at his command provides a rich feast for him out of nothing. He rubs an old lamp, and at once a gorgeous palace rises up before him in substantial reality, created out of the formless ether around. By putting on Fortunatus's wishing-cap the lucky possessors of it can get anything they want, and create things unknown before. But there is nothing like this in the miracles of the Bible. The prophets and godly men of old were no such magicians as these. Their most wonderful works are in beautiful accordance with the wise laws of labour and economy which pervade the ordinary arrangements of life. Even the miracles of Christ, which approached nearest to creations out of nothing, rested upon a fulcrum of existing materials, by means of which their supernatural leverage was exerted. We nowhere

read that He created anything which had no existence before. Such a miracle would have been contrary to the analogy of His whole work of redemption. Jesus on earth was a Redeemer, not a Creator. He came for the purpose of removing the curse of sin that lay upon the old world, which He had created once for all, and which He had pronounced very good; and not for the purpose of making a new world. He came to make all things new—not by a new creation, but by the purification of the old; and the miracles of Elijah and Elisha, as well as of St. Peter and St. Paul, were all wrought for the same purpose, and in conformity with and anticipation of this glorious *restitution of all things*.

The Gospel miracle which most nearly resembles the multiplication of the widow's oil by Elisha, is the miracle of the loaves and fishes. In both cases the properties of the articles remained the same, and their substance only was extended. In both cases the point of departure and the completed result of the miracle were articles in familiar use among the people. Elisha simply multiplied the common olive oil of the widow into the common olive oil of the country, neither better nor worse. Jesus simply multiplied the common barley loaves and fishes of the fisher-lad into the common barley loaves and fishes which formed the ordinary fare of the disciples. In both cases the miracle was based upon the ultimate result of man's labour. The oil in the widow's pot was the juice expressed, out of berries gathered, from trees planted, grafted, and tended by man's toil and skill. The bread in the fisherman's possession was baked by man's hands, out of barley sown, reaped, gathered, threshed, and ground in the mill by man's skill and labour; the fishes were equally the produce of human industry and special knowledge. These examples show to us that even in miracles man must be a fellow-worker with God in subduing the earth, and in removing the limitations and disabilities of the curse. And this idea is further illustrated by the command laid by Elisha upon the widow to furnish vessels for the miraculous oil. "Go borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, even empty vessels; borrow not a few; and when thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and shalt pour out into all these vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full." This procedure is exactly similar to that of the disciples in distributing the loaves and fishes to the multitude—to that of the servants at Cana in drawing the

water and bearing it to the governor of the feast. To common sense these actions might seem absurd; and, therefore, men were enjoined to do them in order to prove their faith in God—to show that they could have implicit confidence in His word, even in regard to things which might appear contrary to reason and experience. In these actions men prepared themselves by the miracle wrought within them—the triumph over natural unbelief and the objections of reason—to believe in and to benefit by the miracle about to be wrought without. They heated the iron as it were which the hammer of Omnipotence was about to strike and to mould for His purposes.

The widow of Obadiah might well be astonished at the command of Elisha. If she had stopped to reason about the procedure required of her, she might well hesitate to undertake it. Taking a common-sense view of the matter, of what use would it be to borrow as many vessels as possible from her neighbours? What answer could she give them if they asked her what she meant to do with these vessels? Would they not laugh at her if she told the prophet's message, and ridicule the utter folly of the whole story? Would she not seem to herself playing at a child's game in pouring her pot of oil into the empty vessels? Did any one ever know of any good coming of pouring oil from vessel to vessel? The quantity could not possibly be increased by the process. The pot of oil would still be only a pot of oil, though spread over a thousand vessels; and yet, in spite of all these apparent absurdities and impossibilities—in spite of all the objections of reason and common sense, the widow hastened to obey the prophet's command. She stumbled not because of unbelief. Her faith triumphed over all difficulties. She had implicit confidence in Elisha's word, although she knew not what he was about to do; and in this way she proved herself to be a fit subject for having the miracle performed for her. She fulfilled the condition upon which alone a miracle can be wrought—"Believest thou that I can do this?"

It is a significant circumstance that the prophet should have commanded the widow to shut the door upon herself and her sons, when she poured out the oil into the vessels. There is a reason for, and a meaning in, every detail of the Bible miracles; and doubtless the design of this apparently trivial injunction was to secure to the widow the privacy and calmness of mind necessary for the performance of the miracle, and for its producing the

full and proper impression upon her own soul. If she had left the door open, the neighbours doubtless, moved by curiosity to see what she would do with the vessels she had borrowed, would flock around her, and sadly discompose her mind by their laughter, their sneers, and their unsuitable remarks. Reverence, stillness, and solitude are needed for the miracle, and therefore the door must be shut, and the unsympathetic world must be excluded. It is not in the crowd that God works his wonders in nature and grace—it is in the lonely place, to the solitary individual. Who is it that sees the grander revelations of nature, but he who turns his back upon the human multitude, and seeks communion with her alone in the sanctuary of her hills and desert-places? It is to Moses, the solitary shepherd who led his flock to the back of Horeb, and turned aside to behold the great sight, that the burning bush appeared. It was before Elijah in a cave, in the same wild, lonely region, that the terror and the mercy of Jehovah passed by in the whirlwind, the fire, and the still small voice. We must enter into our closet and shut the door, if our prayer is to be indeed such a communion with our Father who seeth in secret, as will transfigure us into His likeness, and make us, when we come out into the world, strong to do and bear all His will. In two of the mightiest miracles of Jesus we see strikingly manifested the different treatment given to humble reverence and to rude unbelief. The boisterous crowd of hired mourners were put out of the house of Jairus, and they saw not the mighty miracle which Jesus did. If they had not laughed Him who is the resurrection and the life to scorn, they might have obtained such an outlook into the life beyond the grave in that house, as would have enabled them to laugh death to scorn. While, on the other hand, we read that when Jesus touched the bier of the widow of Nain's son, the bearers stood still. They were struck by a sudden consciousness that they were in the presence of One who had a right to stop them, even in their progress to the tomb; and they waited silently and reverently for what He might say or do; and they had the unspeakable privilege of witnessing the mighty act which would in future change for them the shadow of death into the morning.

But, besides being necessary in order to prepare the widow of Obadiah for receiving the benefits of the miracle, the solitude and secrecy which Elisha enjoined were significant of the mysterious character of the miracle

itself. It was withdrawn from sight. It was silent and unimaginable. It was veiled in the same obscurity as all creative acts—as all beginnings. It was out of darkness and in darkness that the world was created; and it is in darkness that all the natural processes that approximate most closely to creations take place. The seed germinates, or, in other words, multiplies itself in darkness; animal life begins in the mysterious secrecy of the womb; formless matter crystallizes in the sunless caves of the earth into more than the glory of living flowers. Who catches the exact moment when the evening star first twinkles in the transparent blue? Who has noticed the unfolding of the full-blown rose from the bud? God's arm wrought unseen for Israel in the bosom of the dark cloud which rested over the Red Sea all the night; and in the morning the dry path was revealed between the crystal walls of water. The veil of darkness concealed the falling of the manna from heaven; and the dawn only disclosed it as it whitened the tawny sand of the desert around the tents of Israel. We cannot trace beginnings, or behold creative acts; they are hid in the secret place of God's thundering; they are kept beyond all our researches in the hiding-places of God's power. Verily God hideth himself—shuts, as it were, the door upon all his origins and commencements, and leaves us baffled outside. Science, and religion, and all life bring us back to an unfathomable mystery—a closed door, whose magic "Sesame" no human being can utter.

How great must have been the astonishment of the widow when, pouring into the first vessel a quantity of oil from her pot, the vessel filled immediately after the first few drops; and the same thing happened as she passed from vessel to vessel, each filling to the brim as soon as she poured a little from her own store into it; until at the end, pouring the last remaining drops into the last vessel, her own stock of oil and the supply from heaven failed together. She could not understand the extraordinary occurrence, though it took place under her own hand. The process by which the oil was multiplied we, too, labour in vain to conceive. We cannot explain the phenomenon by the observation of any known laws; and yet in truth the miracle is not more strange, save in the rapidity with which it is effected, than that which is every day going forward in nature in those regions where the olive-tree grows. You sow the seed of an olive-tree; that seed contains a very small quantity of oil. It grows and becomes a

tree, and produces an immense quantity of fruit; so that from the little drop of oil in the small vessel of the seed, you have thousands of vessels in the shape of the berries, each filled with oil. He who makes the olive-seed in the course of a few years, or the olive-tree every season, to prepare and extract oil from the scanty soil on the arid rocks, and the dry burning air in which the tree delights to grow, concentrated, in the miracle in the widow's chamber, the slower processes of nature spread over months and years, into the act of a single moment. Of course the natural process does not explain the miracle, but it is a help to our faith. The one sheds light upon the other. The miracle teaches us that the natural process is not the result of an impersonal law or of a dead course of things, but the working of our Father in heaven; while the natural process in its turn shows to us that God in the miracle is working in the line of the ordinary events and dispensations of His providence.

Awestruck and filled with amazement, the widow went and told the man of God what had happened. She asked for counsel in the strange and unexpected emergency. She needed assurance of the reality and permanence of this marvellous good fortune. The oil might vanish as mysteriously as it came. She did not know what to do with it. How calmly the prophet receives her! He is not astonished at what she tells him. He knew what would happen. And does not this show a wonderful amount of faith and confidence in God on the part of Elisha? Does it not impart a striking confirmation to the truth of the words, "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him." Elisha told the widow to sell the miraculous oil and pay her debt with the price of it, and use what she could not sell as food for herself and her children. This feature of the miracle brings it into close relation with the gathering of the basketfuls of fragments by the disciples after the feeding of the multitude, and the preserving of the fragments for future use in daily life, when no miracle would be wrought for them. Just as the manna blended with the corn of Canaan, and the fragments of the miraculous loaves took their place among the common daily bread of the world, so the miraculous oil took its place among the common stores of the merchant, and served its purpose in the homely uses of every-day life. A price was set upon it, and the oil-merchant could not distinguish it from his ordinary stock. The miracle goes no farther than is absolutely necessary. It does not permanently enrich

the poor; it provides only for the temporary necessity. The help of Jesus stops at the point when the diseased or disabled man, by being cured, is able to come up with his fellows and keep pace with them in providing for himself. The miracle blends with common life. How strikingly does this wonderful incident show to us that we must be fellow-workers with God *throughout*, from first to last, in our own deliverance and blessing. How wonderfully it illustrates the whole Divine economy of grace, under which we are enjoined to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, seeing that it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

Thus, in a most interesting manner, was the bread cast upon the waters found after many days. The widow proved in her experience the truth of the Saviour's words—"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy;" or, as the phrase should be translated literally, "Blessed are the olive-givers, for olives shall be given to them." Obadiah had poured the oil of his bounty into the afflicted heart of God's servants; and God's servant, in return, gave his widow the oil of joy for mourning and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

I might make many practical uses of the widow's pot of oil, for it is full of significance, but I prefer turning the incident into a parable, and using it as an encouragement to prayer. We are all in the condition of the poor widow; we are destitute of everything and are ready to perish. But God is far more tender and considerate to us than Elisha was to the widow. If we have but the feeling of want, but the desire for God's help, that very want or desire will be to us what the pot of oil was to the widow—the source of an abundant supply of all that we need. If we come to God with the longing of our hearts for His salvation, He will come with the fulness of His Godhead, and supply all our need according to the riches of His glory in Christ Jesus. If we provide vessels, God will furnish the oil with which to fill them. For our own little oil, He will give us overflowing measure; for our feeble desire, He will do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think. Let us borrow, then, many vessels; let them be empty, nothing of self in them; and let us lay them before Christ, and He will fill them to the brim with the oil of His grace. Gethsemane, the place where He suffered the last agony, means a press for olive oil. From that oil-press of sorrow He will provide a sufficient supply of the oil of gladness for us.

HUGH MACMILLAN.

THE DEFORMED CHILD.

[“Since our two last articles on London Charities appeared, we have found in a volume of ‘Religious and other Poems,’—by Amanda M. Edmond, a highly gifted lady,—published in Boston, U.S., one called ‘The Deformed Child:’ and this we here present to the readers of the SUNDAY MAGAZINE as a suitable, admirable, and touching appendix to our pleas on behalf of Cripples and Cripples’ Homes.”—THOMAS GUTHRIE.]

CHILD.

MAMMA! the children look at me
 Whene'er I try to play,
 And smile and whisper when they see
 That I am not as they.

We rambled not an hour ago
 Upon the green hillside;
 I cannot run, mamma, you know,
 But oh! how hard I tried!

Yet I was forced alone to sit
 And see them hurry by;
 I could not help but minding it,—
 You know the reason why.

We tried to catch the butterflies,
 On pinions fleet and free;
 I fell, mamma, and scarce could rise;
 They would not wait for me.



I saw them turn and see me fall,
 I heard them laughing too;
 And so I left them, one and all,
 To come and sit with you.
 I know that strange my form must be,
 Unlovely too; but, oh,
 'Tis hard to have them laugh at me,
 When God has made me so!
 But in the world above, so fair,
 Where no diseases sway,
 Will angel children love me there,
 Or turn, like these, away?

MOTHER.

Oh no, my child! weep not, for thou
 Shalt be like those in heaven;
 A crown of light to deck thy brow
 To thee shall there be given!

A form most beautiful and bright,
 Beyond the fairest here,
 Too dazzling for a mortal's sight—
 Too pure for sin's dark sphere.

The sorrowing child her eyes upraised ;
Grief's keenest pangs were o'er ;
Upon her mother's face she gazed,
And smiled, and wept no more.

The days of summer, bright and brief
On rapid wings flew by,
And with the autumn's fading leaf
The child lay down to die.

And soon around her early grave
They came to weep in vain
Who, 'mid their childish pastimes, gave
Her gentle spirit pain.

O ye who sport in life's glad morn,
The Hand that moulded you
The little ones ye dare to scorn
Hath wisely fashioned too !

Let not one harsh, unkindly voice
Or look to them be given ;
So may ye o'er their graves rejoice
With hope to meet in heaven.

'Tis but the mortal part ye see
That moulders 'neath the sod ;
The soul most beautiful shall be
Before the throne of God.

HENRY LAWRENCE.

SECOND PAPER.

HENRY LAWRENCE'S visit to England had been remarkable for more than the development of his higher nature, and winning the trust of such a wife. He had, as was his wont, gone to school again ; this time, with the Royal Engineers. His Addiscombe training and artillery experience had given him scientific tastes, and he thought he could not spend his sick holiday better than in mastering the Trigonometrical Survey. In this he showed no little foresight. If our Indian administrative system lacked one thing above all in the fruitful period of Lord William Bentinck's government, it was a survey and righteous assessment of the land. In a country of which the Government is sole landlord, deriving half its gross revenue from the soil, the very root of economic prosperity and political contentment lies in a detailed settlement with the peasantry and the large landholders. About 1830, the experiments of half a century had resulted in the conviction that thirty years' leases, based on a careful survey, would alone prove fair at once to the public treasury and the agricultural classes. A Bengal civilian, still revered as Robert Mertens Bird, devised and applied this system to the North-Western Provinces, training a school of young civilians and soldiers, of whom Thomason and Henry and John Lawrence were the most distinguished. Henry Lawrence had just mastered the native languages, and got into the Horse Artillery, when, in 1832, his brother George, then on sick leave at Simla, obtained an interview with Lord William Bentinck, which is thus described : "Well, what have you come for ?" asked the Governor-General. "Nothing for myself." "What then ? I can tell you, you are the

first man I have met in India who wanted nothing." The request was that Henry should be appointed to the Revenue Survey. It was done, and the artillery lieutenant became the ablest subordinate of Bird, showing him how to triple the out-turn of work every year, and training many who still fondly look back on him as the man who not only taught them their profession, but gave them for ever a high ideal of both work and belief. For five years Lawrence and his wife lived in camp, surveying almost every field in the districts—each larger than Yorkshire—of Moradabad, Futtchgurh, Goruckpoor, and Allahabad. Arakan had taught him war, and to understand the British soldier. At home he had learned to sound the depths of his own nature and to educate himself. On his return he had mastered the native languages and the technicalities of his profession. And now he knows the people and how to govern them, as he lives in their midst. He is at last equipped to be a ruler of men, though he is only thirty-two. And he is wanted, for the Army of the Indus is assembling.

In August, 1838, when completing the season's survey of the fields and villages of Allahabad, he was officially informed that the 2nd Brigade of Horse Artillery, to which he belonged, was under orders for active service. After he had joined his battery, it was determined that his brigade should remain behind with the army of observation at Ferozepoor. This made him only the more eager for political employment. The famous Bengal civilian, George Clerk (since known in this country as Sir George Clerk, Governor of Bombay, and still member of the Council

of India), was political agent at Loodiana, and required an assistant to administer the little barony of Ferozepoor, which had lapsed to us four years previously. Lawrence was delighted to receive the appointment on a smaller salary than he had previously enjoyed. His wife's first act was to propose to the American Presbyterian Mission at Loodiana the establishment of a branch in the new station. In reply to her offer of aid, the Rev. John Newton, the same venerable missionary whose invitation to united prayer, twenty-one years afterwards, was so generally welcomed, concluded his letter to Captain Lawrence with these words: "I should say that Mrs. Lawrence's sentiments about differences of denomination have my cordial sympathy." On this, the equally catholic and evangelical Edwardes remarks: "Yes; there is nothing like a heathen land for drawing Christians together. Differences about bishops look very small under the shadow of an idol with twelve heads." In Ferozepoor, thus consecrated, Henry Lawrence worked for three years, doing with all his might on a small scale what he was so soon to be called on to effect for the whole of the Punjab. For, six months after his appointment, Runjeet Singh died at Lahore, and he virtually became Runjeet Singh's successor. When the old Lion of the Punjab passed away we lost a faithful ally, and the kingdom was given up to anarchy. But before we could respond to the call for our interference, ending ultimately in conquest which we had not sought, and in annexation which we had honestly deprecated, we had to atone for our iniquitous policy and military incapacity in Afghanistan. It was due to Lawrence's ceaseless toils in Ferozepoor, through which the Bengal troops passed, and to his after labours at Peshawur and in Afghanistan itself, that the atonement was not more difficult.

Our vacillating policy for the third of a century, our sacrifice of Persia contrary to treaty and to our own interests, the weakness of the weakest Governor-General ever sent to India, the headstrong selfishness of his councillors both in England and in India, and the senility of inexperienced generals, all culminated in the disasters of the Kabul War. When the great Napoleon—first by himself, and again in alliance with Russia—sought to wound England through its Indian empire, by encouraging Zemân Shah, the Suddozye ruler of Afghanistan, to invade India, we formed a counter-alliance with Persia in the year 1800. Our policy then was precisely that which in recent times public opinion

forced on Lord Lawrence, and which was so heartily adopted by Lord Mayo. It was the "buffer" policy; that of so supporting the strong *de facto* powers all along our border as to enable them to keep back invaders from the north without our direct interference. Afghanistan was against us at the end of last century; but Persia, far more powerful than she is now, was only too eager to work with us. The danger from Napoleon passed away, and the Afghan Suddozye, Zemân Shah, became a pensioner in our own territories. The mayors of the palace in Afghanistan, the Barukzye family, had turned out the royal Suddozyes, and were represented by the ablest ruler Asia had seen since Timour, Dost Mahomed. With France and the Suddozyes thus removed, it was clearly our policy to maintain our alliance with Persia, so as to prevent Russian aggression, and to be friendly with Dost Mahomed, who had overturned our Afghan enemy. We followed the opposite course. We allowed Persia to be swallowed up bit by bit by Russia, contrary to our treaty, and for failure of duty we submitted to the humiliation of paying Persia heavy compensation. This was the act of George Canning, who, like all English statesmen except Pitt and Palmerston, was indifferent to our interests in the East, though at one time about to go out as Governor-General. In Afghanistan, we rejected all the advances of Dost Mahomed, and adopted the cause of the Suddozye *rois faibles*, to whom we had given an asylum at Loodiana. This was the act of the late Lord Broughton, when president of the Board of Control, and of Lord Auckland. Thus Persia and Afghanistan alike were thrown at the feet of Russia. It is too late to save what is left of poor miserable Persia. The "buffer" policy, adopted in 1868, may yet preserve Afghanistan, while strengthening the new potentate, the Ataligh Ghazee, or Attila, who has ruled over Kashgaria since 1864.

By the tripartite treaty which the English, Runjeet Singh, and the Suddozye king, Shah Soojah, signed at Lahore on 20th June, 1838, and by the mad proclamation of war which Lord Auckland issued from Simla on the 1st of October thereafter, the die was cast. The Bengal and Bombay forces slowly made their way through the passes, Ghuznee fell to young Durand's powder-bag, and the puppet king was enthroned in the Bala Hissar of Kabul. Dost Mahomed was captured and sent to Calcutta, where he drove with the Governor-General's family on the course, and astonished the public by daily at sunset

getting out of his carriage to pray towards Mecca. But now incompetent generals were used to avenge an evil policy, and an inevitable attempt to retrench the enormous expenditure in a foreign country, which we were forced to occupy indefinitely, resulted in the assassination of our leaders and the massacre of our forces. Yet, apart from these leaders, never had a country been served by a nobler set of officers, who became the victims of a war which in their hearts they condemned. Major-General Colin Mackenzie, C.B., still lives, and serves in India, as if to show at once how long the greatest services may go inadequately rewarded, and that the race of Puritan heroes is not yet extinct. Of the same type is Colonel Haughton, C.B., who, narrowly saved at Chareekar, now administers the steaming swamps and fertile knolls of North-Eastern Bengal. To his hardships in Afghanistan, of the captivity in which he is the historian, Sir Vincent Eyre added his triumphs in the Mutiny campaigns, and he now rests on his laurels. These and others, like Generals Macgregor and Troup, are still spared in a green, albeit scarred old age, that the youth of our country may see of what stuff the men were made who have built up our Indian empire. But how many of the Afghan heroes are with the mighty dead!

Henry Lawrence struggled hard to be in the thick of the disaster; but Providence, as we now see, kept him back to train him for the founding of a later school of officials—that of the Punjab, and for the toils of the Oudh rebellion. Poor Lord Auckland was superseded by the impetuous and sometimes fickle Lord Ellenborough, whom Durand, the young soldier that had blown in the gate of Ghuznee, tried to keep straight when his secretary. It was then that Durand first learned to admire the kindred spirit of Lawrence, and, with all the vast influence of a Governor-General's private secretary, helped to push him on. The troubles in Afghanistan made it necessary to send Lawrence to Peshawur. Supports had to be pushed up to relieve Sale and the illustrious garrison of Jellalabad. The resolute Nott, with Sir Henry Rawlinson, had refused to evacuate Kandahar. But the first relieving brigade was placed under another incompetent leader, who was told to ask the demoralised Sikh government of Maharajah Shere Singh for guns and auxiliaries. The result may be imagined. Only George Clerk's influence at Lahore obtained the orders for this Sikh force, and it was many months before even Lawrence's tact and energy at Peshawur

could atone for the general's inefficiency, or induce the Sikhs to assist. The tide of disaster turned when, neglecting the claims of senility, the Government selected General Pollock to lead the avenging army to Kabul from the Bengal side, while Nott advanced from Kandahar. That General—who so lately died full of years and honour a Field Marshal—was fain to take Lawrence on with him from Peshawur. The Khyber Pass was forced on 5th April, 1842, Lawrence playing his guns from the heights to the admiration of beholders. Slowly did Pollock advance up the dreadful eight-and-twenty miles, only to find, when, on the 16th, he reached Jellalabad, Sale's garrison coming out to meet them with the band playing, "Oh, but ye've been lang o' comin'." Sale's 1,800 men of all arms had driven off the 6,000 Afghans who besieged them. Now Pollock from Jellalabad and Nott from Kandahar, in spite of contradictory orders from Lord Ellenborough, made a race for Kabul, rescued the captive officers, ladies, and children, and returned in triumph.

The mutinous conduct of the Sikhs at Jellalabad had rendered it necessary for Lawrence to be sent for. There he met Havelock, who showed him round the fields of battle and took him to his chapel in the town, where some forty soldiers and twelve officers joined in the extempore prayers and listened to the read sermon of the Captain, who had so recently led to victory one of the columns that had routed Akbar Khan and his Afghans. Lawrence led his Sikhs into action at Tezeen, and, ever true to "the Blues," his own loved artillery, helped his brother officers to lay the guns, which his Sikh cavalry had dragged along. Lord Ellenborough, more just to him than to the noble captives whom he had helped to rescue, rewarded him with the appointment of Superintendent of Dehra Doon, that paradise which the low range of the Sewalik hills shuts in between Mussoorie and the plains of Hindostan. But it was found that only a covenanted civilian could hold that office, in which already the soldier-administrator had begun to plan all sorts of improvements. So Lawrence was transferred to Umballa, with the title of Assistant to the Envoy at Lahore. Thereafter he gained new experience in the settlement of the lapsed territory of Khytul. Finally, promotion came to him in his appointment as Resident at the protected Court of Nepal. In almost as many months he had, to his own disappointment, been moved about four times on the

official chess-board. These changes, so evil in ordinary cases, inasmuch as they prevent the individual influence of the English officer flowing forth to a people whom he knows, and who become loyal for his sake, were beneficial in this instance. And now it was rest that he really wanted, though his active spirit chafed at such promotion. The years 1844 and 1845 were fruitful, however, in other forms of action. His essays in the *Calcutta Review* revealed him as a thoughtful reformer, skilful alike in the highest quality of statesmanship—foresight, and in that which is its basis—the ability to gather the fruits of experience in the study of men and of events. And to these years India owes the Lawrence Asylums.

Only twelve per cent. of the fifty-five thousand men who form the English garrison of India are allowed to be married. This, though a higher proportion than is the rule in Great Britain, is a frightful fact, as all know who are acquainted with barrack life in the tropics. The two military arguments against a married army, that is, an army in which only half the men would probably avail themselves of the permission to marry, are these—the mortality of the women and children in time of peace, and the difficulty created by such impediments in war. The expense need not be noticed, for that is really greater under the present system, if all the effects of that system be considered. Now, in the Indian Army, even under improved sanitary conditions, at least one woman dies annually out of every twenty, and one child out of every ten, to say nothing of ever-prevalent sickness. Such mortality, however, is less to be lamented than the effect of barrack life, on the girls especially. The deduction is not that our Indian army should live in the vilest concubinage by being unmarried, but that the children should be reared on the hills from an early age, away alike from moral contamination and the effects of a hostile climate. No English parents, who can afford to send their children home, keep them in the tropics after they are five or six years of age. If a policy of military colonies on the hills, so modified as to fit into a sound strategical system in the plains, cannot be carried out on a fair scale, at least the children of soldiers may be educated in the sanatoria of the Himalayas and the Neilgherries. Henry Lawrence saw this at an early period. During the single month that he had charge of Dehra Doon, and Mussoori its hill station, he resolved that his first task would be the establishment of what he then called a Euro-

pean charity-school. Again, at Umballa, having Simla in his jurisdiction, he proposed the endowment of such a school at Kus-sowlee, and Sir George Clerk approved. No sooner was he at rest in Nepal than he elaborated his plan, and on 22nd July, 1845, formally submitted it to the Government of India. He said, "My proposal is no sudden freak of wild enthusiasm, but the sober result of long acquaintance with the condition of barrack children, and of the especial degradation of girls." He offered £500 at once and £100 a year, sums which he afterwards far exceeded. He had already failed in inducing the managers of the military orphan schools in Calcutta to remove them to the hills, although he offered £500 for the purpose. After some unwillingness on the part of even Mr. Thomason, Lieutenant-Governor, and of Lord Hardinge, the Governor-General who superseded Lord Ellenborough, his brother-in-law, the scheme was sanctioned amid the smoke of the first Sikh war.

The traveller, who, panting from the hot winds of the plains, climbs slowly the great wall of the Himalayas where it towers up four thousand feet into the table-land of Kussowlee, rests a little on his way to Simla to gaze at the Hill of Sunâwur, which he passes on the road to the next stage of Subathoo, or Dug-shai. There stands the first Henry Lawrence Asylum, a happy colony of soldiers' children, girls and boys, saved from moral and physical death on the plains to feed the educated labour-market of India. Begun in March, 1847, by Mrs. George Lawrence, the Sunâwur Asylum now reckons as its offspring similar institutions at Murree, in the Punjab; at Mount Aboo, in Rajpootana; and on the Neilgherries, in Madras. The Bible without sectarian comment is the corner-stone of the whole system of education, which is industrial as well as ordinary, a principle practically objected to only by Roman Catholic priests, but not by Roman Catholic parents. The children of each sect may receive religious instruction from their own pastors. How near the soldiers' children were to the heart of this great philanthropist, not only the large sums which he spent on them every year, but his last words testify. When dying amid the shot and shell of the siege of Lucknow, he faintly murmured, "Remember the Asylum; do not let them forget the Asylum." And in addition to his expenditure on the Asylum, this Indian officer, without a private fortune and with a family to provide for, spent £400 a year on other charities through

one of his almoners, and more through others.

From the solitude of Nepal Lawrence sent his wife to England, while he himself was summoned to that very position on the Punjab frontier in which he had before been assistant. Lord Hardinge had early discovered his ability, alike as a soldier and an administrator, and leaned upon the soldier-statesman all through his term of office. The murder of Runjeet Singh's successor, Shere Singh, was followed by a succession of similar crimes, and finally by the march of the Sikh army across the Sutlej. The battles of Moodkee, Ferozshuhur, Aliwal, and Sohraon were the result. In all it was seen that our Sepoy army and our military system were only just a match for the levies trained by the European officers of Runjeet Singh. Henry Lawrence was by the side of the Governor-General, who had so chivalrously placed himself under the far inferior commander-in-chief at the final victory of Sohraon, and he confirmed Lord Hardinge in his desire not to annex the Punjab. The hopeless task of reconstructing the Sikh Government was tried, and if it could have succeeded, Henry Lawrence was the one man in India to secure success. As it was, the almost fascination which radiated from him kept the kingdom quiet, so as to allow some civilising progress to be made for a time. But it was at the expense of such expedients as the sale of Kashmir and its people to a man like Goolab Singh, a transaction so fruitful in bitter consequences. And even he came to be rather less unfavourable to annexation. But sickness forced him home with Lord Hardinge to receive at last his K.C.B. The inevitable catastrophe came, in the second Sikh War. That converted Lord Hardinge, but not Sir Henry Lawrence, to the necessity of annexation. Lawrence hurried out with his wife at the end of 1848. He saw Mooltan fall, he was in time to convert the drawn battle of Chillianwala into a seeming victory, by prevailing with Lord Gough to remain on the field. He learned from Sir Colin Campbell our success in the last battle at Goojerat when he was again taking charge of his office as Resident at Lahore. Lord Dalhousie was Governor-General.

We now come to what Lawrence himself considered the turning-point in his career. The former Governor-General had consulted him on all great occasions, and had followed his advice. That advice had seemed to be justified by success so long as he ruled the Punjab. The second war he looked on as partly due to his absence. He had car-

ried his point, too, in the sale of Kashmir to Goolab Singh, a chief whom even Edwardes had described as base beyond conception. What he did not see was that it was only his personal influence which had prevented failure at an earlier period, and that the time was past even for that influence. John agreed in the inevitable; and on the 29th of March, 1849, the Punjab was proclaimed British territory. Yet such was Lord Dalhousie's regard for Henry Lawrence, that he had delayed this proclamation, and he refused to accept Lawrence's resignation of the Residentsip. The government of the Punjab was entrusted to a Board, of which Henry, with special charge of political matters, was President. The other members were John, with revenue and finance as his department, and Mr. Mansel in charge of the judicial administration. For a time this worked well. Accepting annexation, Henry could not but feel a little bitterness, even though he had been kept in office to make the change as easy as possible for the demoralised Khalsa or Sikh brotherhood. The moment that our comparatively rigid, because equal and just, system of administration came to be applied to a chaos in which might had been right, and riot had wasted a noble peasantry, John could not help seeing that the period of a sentimental regard for the spawn of Runjeet Singh's court must not be indefinitely extended. On this point the brothers divided, and Lord Dalhousie sided with John, as he could not help doing. There was, in truth, no alternative between a return to Henry's favourite plan of a protected Sikh government on the purely Asiatic system, and a financially sound administration in that elastic form of the Anglo-Indian system known as "non-regulation." The result has justified Lord Dalhousie alike in the loyal support given by the Punjabees to the Empire in '57, and in the annually growing prosperity of the people and their chiefs. Much as I admire the *sentiment* of Henry Lawrence's policy, which only he could have worked, I marvel still more at the delicacy with which Lord Dalhousie conducted his part of the relations which ended in the breaking up of the Board and the honourable transfer of Sir Henry to Rajpootana. Lord Dalhousie's reputation can afford to wait for justice; Henry Lawrence's can suffer no abatement even in the eyes of those who differ from him on this point.

When, in such circumstances, Henry Lawrence closed his four years' administration of the Punjab, he wrote a letter to John showing

undiminished affection. The secret of his chivalrous self-abnegation, combined with impetuous zeal for what he believed to be right, will be found in the following passage from a journal, written amid the bustle of administrative work as he sailed down the Ravee, and at a time, the 2nd of October, 1852, when his official differences with his brother and the Governor-General had reached their height.

"O Lord, give me grace and strength to do thy will, to begin the day and end it with prayer and searching of my own heart, with reading of thy word. Make me to understand it, to understand thee: to bring home to my heart the reality of thy perfect Godhead and perfect humanity, and above all of my entire need of a Saviour, of my utter inability to do aught that is right in my own strength: make me humble, reasonable, contented, thankful, just, and considerate. Restrain my tongue and my thoughts; may I act as ever in thy sight, as if I may die this day. May I not fear man or man's opinions, but remember that thou knowest my motives and my thoughts, and that thou wilt be my judge. It is not in me to be regular: let me be so as much as I can. Let me do to-day's work to-day, not postponing, clear up and finish daily; so living in humility, thankfulness, contentment."

The removal to Rajpootana, like the promotion to Nepal years before, had at least the attraction for Lady Lawrence of possible rest. But Mount Aboo, the hill sanitarium, was rarely visited by Sir Henry. He spent even the hottest months in camp, for the Anglo-Indian disease, the crave for work as a refuge from the climate, and disappointment, was on him. Soon the necessity for sending their second boy to England wrung the strong woman's heart. Her last letter was to her boys at home. To her loving exhortations the father added this postscript:—"Remember how much your mother's happiness—indeed her very life—is in your hands." In a few weeks she departed, looking out for those letters from her boys which arrived two hours after she breathed her last, and repeating her daily prayer for them, that they might live to be good men, honest and straightforward in word and deed, kind and affectionate, and considerate to all around, thoughtful and pitiful for the poor and the weak, and those who have no friends.* Such is the tragedy of many an Anglo-Indian household. May each be irradiated as Henry Lawrence's was with the presence of the spirit of Christ. The memory of Honoria Lawrence is fitly enshrined in the little chapel of the Asylum,

at Sunāwur, by a stained-glass window, and an inscription on a monumental slab.

The stricken husband plunged still more deeply into work. In one of his letters he states that Lord Dalhousie offered him the newly-created Chief Commissionership of Oudh, which was annexed by orders from England in 1855. Sorrow and sickness probably led him to decline a position which he eagerly accepted from Lord Canning eighteen months after, although the doctors had ordered him home. It was unfortunate for the new province, and for himself, that he was not its ruler from the first. Had he organized the administration as sole governor, there would have been no rebellion in Oudh, probably, and its great barons might have been used, like the Punjab chiefs, to help us actively in crushing a purely military rising. But the north-west civilians, entrusted with the administration, grossly mismanaged the land settlement, and quarrelled among themselves. Even General Outram's military and political arrangements were condemned by Sir Henry Lawrence as worse, for that noble soldier would enlist no Sepoys or policemen who had not been in the ex-king's service, while the troops, the unprotected magazine, and treasury were scattered over a wide area. When, at the end of March, 1857, Sir Henry reached Lucknow, he found discontent in the city and throughout the country. His European force was hardly 700 strong, and the military arrangements were thus defective. This was the result of the neglect of Lord Dalhousie's orders, due to the interval between the departure of a strong Governor-General and the time when his successor could govern for himself. But such was the magic of Henry Lawrence's name, such the effect of his firm but loving rule, that "in ten days" the mass of the difficulties disappeared.

But side by side with the local discontent there was, throughout all Northern and Central India, the mutinous spirit of the native soldiery. At Berhampoor and Barrackpoor, in Lower Bengal, and then at Meerut and Delhi in Upper India, the storm had burst. From the beginning of the cartridge excitement, Lawrence saw the extent of the danger, and the best way of meeting it. "He told me," says the ablest of his staff, "that nearly the whole army would go, that he did not think the Sikhs would go." His policy was to segregate the Sikhs and selected men from the mutinous mass. He placed the artillery with the European infantry, he distributed the discontented irregulars, he garrisoned the fort called Muchee Bhawn, he prepared

* The elder, Alexander, who succeeded to his father's baronetcy, was a Bengal civil servant, and was dashed to pieces, with his horse, when riding along one of the roads fastened into the side of a precipitous hill some miles from Nuala. His son, born in 1864, is now Sir Henry Hayes Lawrence, Bart.

the Residency. In directions and personal intercourse with the native officials and troops he attached to himself many who afterwards helped us, and neutralised the hostility of others. By the 17th of May, one week after the fatal 10th at Meerut, his military re-organization was complete, and he awaited the storm in calm confidence. Ever thoughtful of others, he encouraged General Wheeler at Cawnpoor, and so comforted Lord Canning, that he looked on him as "a tower of strength." The English Government quietly nominated him provisional Governor-General. When, on the night of 30th May, the outbreak came, it was fitful; it had been discounted. But in the out-stations of the province, the Sepoys were triumphant; the great landholders, while occasionally giving refuge to the English fugitives, were acquiescent. At Cawnpoor the Nana Sahib had shut in Wheeler, and had already butchered several. On 31st May the mutineers had been driven northwards from the city of Lucknow. On 29th June, worn out by constant toil and vigilance, and overruled, it is believed, by rash advisers, Sir Henry Lawrence marched out of Lucknow to reconnoitre the insurgents at Chinhut, some little distance from the city. He had only 336 white troops and 11 guns; his 220 natives went over to their brethren. The reconnaissance became an attack, the attack a rout, and Sir Henry Lawrence and the garrison were shut up in the enclosure of the Residency which he had prepared for the worst contingency.

On 1st July an eight-inch shell burst in Sir Henry's small room without injury. When urged to leave it for a safer he laughingly replied that the enemy had not an artilleryman good enough to send another after it. Round shot followed later in the day. The 2nd of July he spent in withdrawing the garrison of Muehee Bhawn to the Residency amid the dreadful heat of that season, and at eight P.M. he lay down in his clothes exhausted. He was again urged to go to a lower room. His nephew lay on a bed parallel with his. As he was directing alterations to be made in a memorandum which was being read to him by Colonel Wilson of his staff, the fatal shot came: "a sheet of flame, a terrific report, and shock, and dense darkness." Colonel Wilson fell stunned, and on recovering consciousness could see neither Sir Henry nor his nephew amidst the smoke and dust. In great alarm, he twice cried out, "Sir Henry, are you hurt?" The third time there came the low response, "I am killed." Some

soldiers of the 32nd rushed in and bore him to a safe room. Then, Dr. Fayer, telling him he had only forty-eight hours to live, had him removed to his own house beside the Baillie Guard Gate. These hours the dying hero spent first in duty—in giving instructions to those who were to take his place. That done, he did not even then think of himself, but called to his bedside those officers whom he knew in private life, that he might tell them the one lesson of his life. "Earnestly he entreated them to consider the vanity of earthly things, and the importance of living unto Christ while life and time were granted to them. He exhorted them not to set their hearts on the transitory pleasures, or honours, or riches of the world. . . . He spoke most humbly of himself as having failed to do what he ought, though he had tried; spoke of himself as unworthy, and died, I hope and trust, a humble, good Christian, none the worse for being a soldier of the centurion's stamp, who did not deem himself worthy that our Lord should come under his roof." These words were written by Sir Henry Durand as he took them down from the lips of Dr. Fayer, the Christian physician, soon after the relief of the garrison. They have new interest now, since Sir Henry Durand was himself, when Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, struck down by a still more terrible death when passing under the low gateway of the frontier tower of Tank. Of all the great men it has been my privilege to meet, these two Christian soldier-statesmen are the greatest. Of both we may ask, with Durand himself, when commenting on that death-bed, "Will God prosper the soldier's sermon?"

The Residency of Lucknow, like the area around the massacre-house and well of Cawnpoor, is now a sweet garden-cemetery, amid the foliage of which the long beleaguered ruins look like some old cathedral. There lies all that is mortal of Henry Lawrence under a simply massive tomb, which speaks of him only as one "who tried to do his duty." When last I visited the hallowed spot his brother John, standing as Viceroy of India on the terrace of the Residency, which overlooks the plain of the Goomtee, was receiving homage from all the chivalry of Oudh! The national memorial of Henry Lawrence, a marble statue, has its fitting place in St. Paul's. With Durand we may best apply to him his own favourite lines from George Herbert:

"If soldier,
Chase base employments with a naked sword
Throughout the world. Fool not; for all may have,
If they dare try, a glorious life or grave."

GEORGE SMITH.

THE EDITORS' ROOM.

I.—NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE NEW CRUSADE.

THE greatest difficulty in saying anything special in favour of the new crusade for the suppression of the slave trade in the East of Africa, is the impossibility of conceiving anything that can be said against it. Peter the Hermit, if he were here, or rather the noble crusaders of Clapham who originated the truly heroic enterprise against the slave trade of their time, would find that not even a dog would now bark against them. Obviously, this is due in a considerable degree to the fact that not a single subject of Queen Victoria, so far as is known, far less any influential section of her people, has the shadow of a secular interest in maintaining the accursed trade. Don't let us flatter ourselves too much. Don't let us dream that Christian philanthropy has made such rapid progress that what was denounced in influential quarters in the days of William Wilberforce is cheered to the echo in the days of his son Samuel. Suppose that there were in these islands a hundred thousand persons deriving profits from the slave trade of East Africa to the tune of hundreds or thousands a year, should we not have a tolerably keen opposition? If it were proved that the traffic in drink is doing as much harm as the slave trade, would there be the same unanimity for its restraint or suppression?

But passing from this, it is most gratifying that the English people have shown a determination to bring to an end the system which Livingstone has never ceased to expose and denounce. A few weeks ago, we gave our opinion in these columns, that the best way in which the nation could show its appreciation of Livingstone, was to take steps for the suppression of that abomination. And now these steps have been taken. Sir Bartle Frere, whose emphatic testimony in favour of missions in India we have before this submitted to our readers, has been appointed the head of a mission to Africa, and by universal admission, he is the right man in the right place. His first errand is to endeavour to revise our existing treaty with the Imaums of Muscat and Zanzibar, under which all the efforts of our cruisers in opposition to the atrocities now practised are laughed to scorn by the Arabs. Not allowing us to interfere with slavery in their dominions, the treaty permits us only to stop ships that are exporting slaves abroad, say to Persia or Arabia; but as such ships always manage to have papers pretending that they are only trading from one port of their own country to another, the right of search, and the fear of prevention are reduced to mere nullities. The report was, some time ago, that the Imaum of Zanzibar, who would be a great loser by the suppression of the trade, was to receive a money solatium to compensate for his loss. This, however, is no necessary part of the programme, although, from the circumstance that Sir Bartle Frere has advocated the proposal, it may be presumed

that is among the contingencies which are not unlikely to occur. It must be well seen to, however, that the nation gets value for its money; it would be tantalizing in the last degree if we were saddled with a payment of eight thousand a year only to find that though put a stop to in one way, the traffic was as active as ever in another.

Nothing, certainly, can be more appalling than the atrocities we read of. Few readers of Livingstone's books have forgot the print representing the string of negroes fastened to one another by logs and chains and what not, driven on by their captors with far more barbarity than a herd of cattle. The memory refuses to let go the thought of wretches overtaken by sickness or fatigue loosened from the gang and left to die; of infants torn from the arms of their mothers, and of obstreperous members of the company knocked on the head or murdered in cold blood. Not less harrowing are the accounts of the voyage performed in ships constructed so as to conceal, as far as possible, the nefarious traffic to which they are put. What nameless atrocities are involved in the fact that of the captives taken in Africa not more than one in seven or one in ten reaches the scene of his future bondage alive! Unhappily, too, the East of Africa is not the only part of the globe cursed with this infamy. The murder of Bishop Patteson has drawn attention vividly to the horrible development of a like system in the South Sea Islands. Is there really no limit to the covetousness of man, or to the atrocities which he coolly commits on his fellow-creatures through lust of gain? What a lurid light these proceedings throw on the corruption of human nature! We should like to ask how the theory that sin is a mere weakness, an imperfection, a result of the limitation of man's nature, will hold water side by side with the facts said to have been confessed recently in a fit of remorse by the captain of a slaver, whom a dangerous illness brought near to death. His ship, cruising about, contrived to fill its hold by first sinking canoes, and then picking up the men. Proving refractory in the hold, these men were fired on promiscuously from the deck, fifty were killed and twenty wounded; all thrown in cold blood into the sea next morning. In another case—occurring on the East of Africa—a captured vessel had in its hold a horde of negroes, many of them children, lying in filth and bilge-water of the most horrible description, and many in misery with small-pox! At first, when the disease broke out, the persons infected were flung into the sea each morning; but when it was found that the disease was not to be stamped out, they were left to their fate, to die or live as might be. Well did David say, "Let me not fall into the hands of man." O wolves, tigers, hyænas, rush from your dens on these poor negroes before they are captured, and rather let your fangs make an end of them at once than that they should fall into the merciless clutch of their own brethren! O Britain, Christian Britain,

arise to the rescue, and vow before God to give no sleep to thine eyes, or slumber to thine eyelids, till these nameless horrors are reckoned among the things that were!

THE TROUBLES OF THE LONDON SCHOOL BOARD.

We cannot say that it surprises us to find the London School Board in trouble. Our astonishment would be quite the other way; if it had no troubles we should say that it could be doing little good. A coach travelling through a jungle, and sending forward its own men to hew down the trees and make the road, may expect from time to time to become motionless. School boards cannot expect to be able to dispense with the lessons of experience,—a teacher who has in her classes as many wise men as fools, and the wiser they are the more need do they feel for her lessons. We are truly sorry, however, that the hitch should seem in connection with ragged schools and gutter children. There is no doubt much to be said on both sides of the question. Which is the better method of dealing with these? Ought gutter children to be absorbed into the common schools of the Board, and made to sit alongside of other children? or ought special schools to be got up for them? or ought the care and custody of them to be left to voluntary effort? All the sides have their advocates, and for each there is considerable strength of argument. That ultimately the ragged schools will be absorbed into the general system, we do not doubt. As Lord Shaftesbury has remarked, the mere payment of the fee is a small matter; the great consideration is, that many children, now earning their own bread, will be withdrawn from the occupations which enabled them to do so. We must say, however, that we have very much sympathy with Lord Shaftesbury in his regret that the ragged school system should have been virtually abolished before any right substitute has been found for it. The Board ought surely to have paused before virtually bringing to an end a class of schools that have constituted a memorable chapter in English history. Around the ragged schools there has been gathered a remarkable amount and quality of Christian beneficence. These schools represent an incalculable amount of that yearning philanthropy which no act of parliament can call into existence, but which is liable to be scattered when compulsory rates begin to be established. Even if some better substitute can be found for the schools, that substitute will not be able to keep alive the spirit of Christian love which for more than a quarter of a century has kept these schools in operation. Lord Shaftesbury's eulogy on the movement is worthy of all consideration:—

"Whether those who received the blessing or those who imparted it were the happier, I cannot say; but of this I am sure, that the rise and fall of the Ragged-School effort will be an epoch in the history of England, and almost, indeed, of the human race.

"It will be remembered—at least, I hope so—that the Governments were careless, and politicians ignorant, and the busy world absorbed in the pursuit of every form of enjoyment, some thousands of the less

wealthy sort, from the easy tradesman to the wretched needlewoman, came forward, in a long succession of some thirty years, to give their hearts and their efforts, their nights and their days, to rescue these forgotten children for time and for eternity. And all this, too, without fee or reward beyond that which rose out of their holy and Christian career.

"It will be remembered, perhaps, that they gave, during the period, to more than half a million children an education imperfect, it is true, but one vastly better than nothing at all; that they took off the streets and sent into various departments of service at the very least 200,000 of these cast-off creatures, who would otherwise have been the curse and dishonour of society. And most certainly it will be remembered,—if ever such a time arrive in this realm of England,

When nations slowly wise, and meanly just,
To buried Merit raise the tardy bust,"—

that when the dissolution of the system drew nigh, these self-denying labours and Christian achievements, which have staved off so many evils, reared such good citizens, and, indeed, made the present movement possible, were dismissed, coldly and contemptuously, by those in authority, without a sentiment of gratitude or a word of honour."

ECHOES OF CONGRESSES AND CONFERENCES.

Monthly magazines can so ill keep up with the rapid rush of events, that when they wish to take note of what is a few weeks old, it is almost necessary to catch up the echoes of the proceedings, the original sounds having died away. There is, however, one advantage in this; it is the most enduring notes that awaken echoes—those that have made the deepest impression on the public mind. Surveying the proceedings of public deliberative bodies a little while after they are past has this advantage—it enables one to gather up the leading currents of thought; to see what are the subjects about which the deliberative bodies have been most deeply interested, and to preserve any valuable suggestions that have been contributed towards important problems of the day. Congresses and conferences are now as thick in the autumn months as leaves in Vallambrosa. We have had the Leeds Congress, the Congregational Union, the Baptist Union, and diocesan conferences almost without number. It is natural for all these deliberative bodies to occupy a considerable share of time and attention with interests peculiar to themselves. It is at the same time their custom, more or less, to look around, and discuss questions of universal interest, applicable to the whole Christian community and interesting to every part of it. Let us note two or three of the leading topics of this kind, and see what contributions have been made towards them.

CHRISTIANITY AND SCIENCE.

The relations of Christianity to science and civilisation were fully considered at the Leeds Congress. Without specifying names, we note some points of value that have been brought out in relation to this, premising, however, that the papers and speeches were all on the Christian side. 1. Recent discussions on science have had the effect of dissipating credulity, or readiness to believe the marvellous: 2. men now do

believe any thing marvellous, the presumption is that they have found more solid evidence for it than might have been considered necessary in a previous age.

2. Some scientific men have been showing a tendency to abandon the patient method of inductive science, and to take to speculative hypotheses instead of well-ascertained theories. They have been giving up Bacon for Des Cartes. This has been the cause of much of the disturbance to religion; the more they can be kept to the inductive method, the less danger both to science and religion. One speaker referred to the fact that Mr. Darwin had been refused admission to the French Academy, because he was considered to be of too speculative a turn.

3. The remarkable zeal in the investigation of God's works of which this age affords the spectacle is in itself a good and interesting thing.

4. So also is the separation of what is certain from what is uncertain in our knowledge which the rigid inquiries of the age promote.

5. The Christian doctrine of the resurrection of the body is interesting in relation to the physiological doctrine of the connection of mind and brain. It is not said anywhere in Scripture that the separate state is more than provisional and temporary. It is the resurrection state that is the permanently glorious state. The vile body is to be changed into a glorious body when the Lord comes again. There is no trace of the Manichean doctrine that the highest state is to get quit of the body altogether. The doctrine of the resurrection is eminently a doctrine of Christian revelation. "When he spake of the resurrection some mocked." Yet this very doctrine may, perhaps, stand in intimate relation to the doctrine of the brain and nervous system which is perverted by some to the denial of the very existence of God.

6. In reference to the proposal of prayer for the ward of some hospital, one speaker threw out the interesting thought that some of these very hospitals may have owed their existence to prayer—may themselves have been originated in answer to prayer. Another remarked that even if prayer for a certain ward were to be followed by an unusual number of recoveries, the unbeliever might still refuse to believe that this was done in answer to prayer, because it would come about through natural second causes, and there would be no visible evidence of anything supernatural.

VITAL RELIGION AND SOCIAL MORALITY.

There is a deep feeling very widely spread that the springs of the spiritual life need to be replenished, and that the results of real vitality would appear speedily in a higher tone of social morality. In other words, attention needs to be turned both to the roots and the fruits of the spiritual life. One important matter that concerns both roots and fruits is the observance of the Sabbath. At a meeting of working men in connection with the Congregational Union, the remarks of Mr. George Potter, who has long been before the public as a zealous working men's advocate, were full of interest. Outsiders are apt to suspect the religious character of all who are prominent in such movements, but we have cause to

know that in many instances the state of the case is otherwise. That most unfortunate joke of the Bishop of Gloucester, when he advised the peasantry to commit to their horse-pond any one who should come to speak to them of their social condition, betrays the common notion as to the principles and character of such. It is only an act of justice to mark the very different tenor of Mr. Potter's view of the Christian Sabbath. No institution, he said, had been more blessed to the labouring man's welfare than the Sabbath. To it England owed her happiness, her prosperity, and her liberty. Where there was no recognition of the Sabbath, crime, immorality, and ignorance abounded. But where it was rightly observed order prevailed, morals were promoted, people were elevated, and the nation exalted. The Sabbath gave working men the opportunity of meeting their fellow-men, whether they were rich or poor, in the presence of their common Father, where they might confess their sins and infirmities, and their faith in a common Saviour. But for the Sabbath, where would there be any recognition of our common brotherhood, and of our equality before God? It would not be for the good of the country to devote the Sabbath to labour or amusements. About the lawfulness of using it for recreation, he had not a clear opinion, but he observed that it was not from working men who attend places of worship that the desire came that museums and picture galleries should be open on the Sabbath. It was not necessary to go to these places *on that day*, and he would have Christian people to encourage the short-time movement, in order that workers might have time on other days. Let every preacher and teacher meet that movement by telling the working men that they wanted them to have their time in the week to get recreation, and leave the seventh day for worship, as it would conduce to their rest and their welfare here, and to their prosperity in the life to come.

We can think of few things more desirable or important than that the working classes should lay to heart such counsels as these, at this very important crisis of their history.

[We had intended to notice some other points in connection with recent meetings, but our space for the present forbids.]

II.—OUR LETTER DRAWER.

EMPLOYMENT FOR SUNDAY EVENINGS.

"To the Editors of the SUNDAY MAGAZINE."

"Bromley, Kent, Nov. 8th, 1872.

"I think 'An Evening of Sacred Song' has not been among the suggestions you have received for a Sabbath evening's occupation. I was present last evening at Bromley at a kind of service, to which this name was given, entirely conducted by Mr. Phillips, the American Pilgrim. The good work that he is engaged in has probably already come under your notice. The service was opened by a short prayer. Then Mr. Phillips read the passages of Scripture as

given in the programme, after which all were invited to join in the following hymn. Then six solos were sung by Mr. Phillips. Between these he spoke a few affectionate words, and told one or two stories, all bearing on the words he had been singing. At the conclusion all were invited to join, and told how to do so, in the first set of choruses on the programme. The way in which these invitations 'to join in' were responded to by the audience was very striking. Might not some such service as this be not only very attractive, but a means of great blessing on a Sabbath evening in our large towns? It probably would be difficult to meet with many who were able physically, as well as willing, to do what Mr. P. does. Of course, he has a remarkable voice, and remarkable strength; but surely some there are possessing the former who would be willing to devote their talent thus to the Lord's work; and arrangements might be made for dividing the labour, or even introducing reading between the songs.

"Good readers are very rare amongst well-educated people. I have noticed how willingly plain, intelligent reading is listened to by the lower classes. I believe, in village reading-rooms, such a reader is most eagerly listened to by those who are supposed to come to read for themselves. The class of listeners in large towns would be of a different stamp, no doubt, to these; but would not good reading of the 'Pilgrim's Progress,' for instance, or 'The Holy War' prove attractive; or even of simple stories—'Wee Davie,' or 'Drops of Oil,' and 'The Prince in Disguise,' in the Golden Ladder series? I once tried the effect of 'Drops of Oil' (which is only intended for a child's book) on some labouring men. They were entranced, and would have stayed any length of time to hear the end. They were fair readers themselves, and very intelligent. This is, again, only country experience, still it may not be altogether worthless.

"M. C."

[We are familiar with Mr. Phillips's labours, having heard him at work both in this country and in America. We regard his "Evenings of Sacred Song" as eminently delightful and useful, with only one qualification—that we think that the plain statement of divine truth ought to be more prominent, and not to be introduced merely to fill up a little space between the hymns. We should be delighted if others to whom the like gift of song has been given, would follow the example of Mr. Phillips.

We may remark, at the same time, that "Evenings of Sacred Song" do not need to depend on a single voice. A Christian choir might be formed for the purpose of conducting such evenings. We think it is our esteemed friend and contributor, Dr. Ker, of Glasgow, who has set agoing some meetings of this kind. He calls them "Praise Meetings." They are spent mainly in singing; but expositions are given by the presiding minister of what is sung; and thus the whole is conducive to the advancement of the interests of divine truth.

There can be no doubt that the singing of hymns is

often a means of awakening and conversion. In one of the early numbers of this magazine, reference was made to the conversion of a young lady in a ball-room, through the singing of that song in Tennyson, "Too late, too late, ye cannot enter in." Singing, we believe, has been far too little used as a handmaid to home missions. The danger is, lest it supersede preaching. This, as we have said, must not be allowed; but singing as a handmaid to the proclamation of God's message, may be greatly blessed.—ED. S. M.]

III.—GLANCES AT WHAT IS DOING ABROAD.

FRANCE.—M. WALLON'S BOOK ON THE COUNCIL.

France seems as if she were unable at present to take an interest in anything but matters of political excitement. Even the Lourdes pilgrimages attracted popular attention chiefly, it is said, because of the alleged monarchical complexion of the feeling promoted by them. Meanwhile, as testified at Nottingham by M. Pressensé and from Rome by the Abbé Michaud, the Catholicism of France is becoming more and more identified with Ultramontanism and Jesuitism. In the home of the Gallican liberties, of Dupanloup and others, the old Catholic Congress at Cologne has hardly been heard of or discussed. But that the old spirit of the National Church is not entirely extinct, has been proved recently by a vigorous work by M. Henri Jean Wallon, known as a liberal Catholic politician. His work is entitled "La Vérité sur le Concile," and contains criticisms on the arguments by which the doctrine of Infallibility has been supported in France, and compilations of the remonstrances and protests signed by French, German, Italian, and American bishops against the doctrine of Infallibility. The result is little in favour of France. The brave words led to no brave deeds, and only the feeblest bulwark has been reared against Infallibility in France.

OPINIONS ON THE ALT-CATHOLIC CONFERENCE.

There are some things about which it is not less important to know what the actors did than to know what other persons think of their doings. Those especially who have spent their lives in examining religious movements, and who have acquired no little insight into them, and no little skill in forecasting their issues, will always be listened to most attentively in reference to such things. We have got four witnesses of this kind (more or less) at the door; we propose to call them in and hear their testimony. The first is:—

PROFESSOR RAINY,

who holds the chair of Church History in the Theological College of the Free Church in Edinburgh. He has contributed an article to the *Presbyterian*, in which he expresses his belief, that, although the movement professes to be based solely on objection to the Infallibility, "a leaven is working in the body which will inevitably determine very considerable changes,

and these will probably be all the more resolutely gone through with, because they are cautiously undertaken." On the other hand, he sees "no evidence that the Old Catholics have been led to make any material approach as yet to the main elements of the Evangelical Reformation Faith. They appear still to bear the mint stamp of the Church from which they have separated. They still, apparently, ascribe to the Church the position of authoritative interpreter of Scripture, although they refuse to recognise her voice in any recent councils. They do not appear to have altered their view of the Sacramental system, and of the dependence of salvation upon it. They show no approach to a Protestant doctrine of Justification. But one may see among them the evidences of a strong desire after healthy operation of religious influence on common life, and a strong impatience of mere ignorant superstition. This, if it lives and grows, may modify their views; the demands of a healthy practice leading to a sounder theory. One may see among them also a disposition to stand on the utterances, and to propagate the influence, of Scripture; and this, if it lasts, will tell still more powerfully. Finally, they constantly appeal to the imperative necessity of following Christ, whatever men may think or say, and whether, in the view of this world, they succeed or fail. This is the most hopeful symptom of all. May the gracious Lord whom they desire to follow, lead them into his own Truth, and so employ them for his service and glory."

Our next witness is the late

DR. MERLE D'AUBIGNE.

One of his latest acts was to express at Geneva his deep interest in the Alt-Catholic movement, and to prepare the address of faithful Christian counsel to which he made reference in his remarks:—

"The religious movement we have been considering," he said, "claims our sympathy; the Old Catholics are doing well. It is not a small matter for them to separate themselves from the Papacy, so dear to all Roman Catholics. The work appears to be of God; consequently, I think it our duty to approach them with the expression of our sympathy and affection. But we cannot do this better than by respectfully pointing out that in which, according to our judgment, the work is wanting." He then proceeded to show that, to accomplish the object desired by the Old Catholics, the glory of Christ Jesus should be made prominent; that which glorified Him magnified Him. And it seemed to the speaker that the Old Catholics needed to be told two things: first, that they should establish themselves on the divine and supreme authority alone of the Holy Scriptures; and secondly, that there cannot be any real religious life in the Church, or true reform, but by the work of God's Holy Spirit. After enlarging upon these points in a lucid and powerful manner, he expressed the wish that, as one of the practical results of this Conference, a letter, embodying the views just explained, might be drafted and adopted, and then sent to the President of the Old Catholics, and that special

prayer should be offered for the divine blessing to accompany the reception of the document.

Our next witness is—

REV. R. FREDERICK LITLEDALE, D.C.L.,

who naturally looks at the movement with High Church eyes, and rejoices very much that it is not of a Protestant kind. A Protestant movement would, in his view, have been equivalent to the entire abandonment of the Western Church to the lies and abuses under which it groans. Dr. Littledale rejoices that the Alt-Catholics propose no such course. They wish to exert an influence within the Church, and therein he thinks they are right. The whole cast of their movement, in his view, is of this kind, and he rejoices in it. Having been at Cologne, he speaks (in the *Contemporary*) of the singular enthusiasm of the Cologne people for the movement. Cologne is a very Catholic city, but there could be no mistaking the feeling of the congregation of four thousand, mostly men, who appeared at the public meetings. "Men got up one after another, and with all the power of eloquence, learning, sarcasm, wit, and indignation, denounced abuses in the Catholic Church, and found every telling point received with rounds of ringing applause."

One other witness remains—

REV. JOHN HUNT,

author of "Religious Thought in England"—a member of the Broad Church school. Mr. Hunt was likewise at Cologne, and greatly interested in what he saw and heard. To him the movement wears the aspect of a revolt of reason against authority. He thinks that in another form it manifests the germ of the movement in the Broad Church and elsewhere for giving to human thought its due place in connection with religious questions. But he seems to feel that it is only the faintest tinge of this spirit that can be discerned in the movement, and that its promoters are a long way, indeed, from seeing the real issues that must ultimately arise from the position which they have assumed. It is to be noted that, as far as the intention of the promoters is concerned, they are as far as possible from wishing to give the movement this direction.

THE FULDA CONGRESS.

The interest of Protestant Christendom has been so much concentrated on late on the Old Catholic organization, that it requires some effort to give our attention to the Catholic Church on the majority. For, while the other German governments have done little directly to countenance the claims of the Old Catholics to be the historic Catholic Church, the Prussian Government has recently very emphatically and practically protested against the attempts of the Infallibilist authorities to regard the Old Catholics as aliens.

The measures of the Prussian Government have been the occasion of a Congress of Infallibilist bishops at Fulda. The memorial published by them, written

professedly in the interests of peace, has been generally looked on as a declaration of universal war, and has created a storm of indignation and opposition. The public is especially incredulous as to their allegation that the present difficulties have come on the Church "suddenly and unexpectedly."

But for us, probably the most remarkable result of this memorial lies in the disclosures that have been made—in the tergiversation of these bishops, who, after long opposition to the dogma of Infallibility, have at last succumbed. Of these there are several amongst the subscribers to the memorial: and of that number Hefele, Bishop of Rottenburg, is one of the most notable. It has always been known that long after the promulgation of the dogma, he maintained his strenuous opposition to it; but he issued no such statement of his position after the promulgation till the publication, a week or two ago, of a letter written by him on the 11th November, 1870. In this letter he declares, in the strongest terms, his repudiation of the dogma, and his regret at the want of resoluteness on the part of some of those who were at heart opposed to the doctrine of Infallibility. Nothing can be more amazing and saddening than the attempted explanation he has since given of the progress of the mental conflict which ended in his "sincerely subordinating his subjectivity to the highest Church authority."

IV.—JOTTINGS FROM THE MISSION FIELD.

Everything about Madagascar is interesting, and we are glad to find from the report of the agent of the Bible Society that a large number of copies of the Bible, or parts of it, has been disposed of. "We have many indications," he says, "of good being done—crowded congregations—hundreds learning to read—and new congregations forming in all directions. Our danger is lest our churches should be flooded with men who join us only because Christianity has become the popular religion. We have now 300,000 adherents: most of them have only attended Christian services since 1869, and know very little of the real character of the religion they have adopted. And what are all our instructions among such a mass?"

It is gratifying to learn, from a recent speech by the Rev. George Sargeant, Wesleyan missionary, that of late years Jamaica has made remarkable progress in social well-being. The disestablishment of the Church had been the means of good; it had drawn out the laity and produced a state of healthy activity. He passed a high eulogy on a native minister, once a slave, called Edward Fraser, a man whose rare intellectual ability, truly noble Christian character, and hard and successful labours, must have placed him in the front rank of the men whom Wesleyan Missions had raised up in any part of the world. He never saw a man who exemplified more the excellencies of the Christian character than Edward Fraser, the converted slave. He resolved to build a chapel and mission-house; and, after obtaining the stone and wood with great difficulty, sold his library, which

he had been accumulating for forty years, in order to finish the building. He had received the mournful intelligence of his death since he (the speaker) came to England. He died just as he had lived, in the full triumph of faith as it is in Jesus.

Among the indirect results of missions in China may be named a great desire for books. Such works as "Herschel's Astronomy" are greatly prized. The Report of the Peking Hospital for 1871 states that—

"The books most in demand have been Hobson's 'Complete Medical Works,' in five vols.; the 'Pou-wuh-sin-pien,' a treatise on Natural Philosophy, one of the set having a large separate circulation; Dr. Martin's 'Natural Philosophy,' Mr. Edkins's 'Mechanics,' Prof. Li's various Mathematical Works, 'Herschel's Astronomy,' and Mr. Wylie's 'Mathematical and Algebraical Works; Muirhead's, Way's, Condit's, and Lu's Geographies (the latter is a well-known work by a Chinese official); Kerr's 'Chemistry and Materia Medica,' Pin's 'Travels in Europe,' Edkins's Map of the World, &c. The latter has had a very large circulation, and is well adapted to give the Chinese correct ideas of the relative size and position of the various countries of the globe, and to dispel their long-cherished but false notion that China is the 'Middle Kingdom.' Its circular character must be a standing denial of their belief that the earth is square. History, ancient and modern, will be an invaluable aid to this proud people in helping them to understand clearly what they are. Officials and people—the former may not care to acknowledge it—are yearly becoming more anxious to know still more about foreign countries and relations."

A translation of the Bible into Sanscrit has been completed. It was first projected and executed by Dr. Carey. A new translation was afterwards projected, and it has now been completed by an old German missionary, Rev. J. Wenyer. Mr. Wenyer says:—"I have felt as if the Sanscrit Bible was a luxury, and the Bengalee one the bread of life. But I trust that He who has led me to undertake the task will not allow it to remain unblest, and that the labour will not be in vain in the Lord."

V.—OUR LIBRARY TABLE.

The *Ordnance Survey of the Peninsula of Sinai* is one of those complete and handsome works which show that there are still men among us who can both work and pay for an idea. Among the endless financial schemes that have been poured upon the public of late years, no one has ever suggested Sinai as the scene of so much as one; nor is it readily conceivable how anything there could be made to pay. It is all the more interesting to find men who combine the love of the Bible with the love of science, and add to these the enterprise of travellers, setting out to explore the famous Peninsula, and coming home to make us acquainted with all that they have found. The Report is in five handsome folio volumes—the first containing an account of the survey; the second, maps, plans, and sections; the third, fourth, and fifth, photographic views. The public are greatly indebted to the late Rev. Pierce Butler, the originator of the expedition; the Rev. George Williams, Captains

Palmer and Wilson, and Mr. E. H. Palmer, by whom the investigations have chiefly been carried on.

So far as biblical matters are concerned, this survey has done little more than confirmed the conclusions arrived at more than twenty years ago by Dr. Edward Robinson and other biblical writers. The interesting question, Which is the real Sinai?—the peak on which the Lord descended, and from which He uttered the law of the Ten Commandments—is decided in favour of the traditional Jebel Musa, but the peak selected is not the traditional one, but the north-west summit fixed on by Dr. Robinson, called Rás Sufsáfah. At the bottom lies the plain Er Rahah, with an area of 1,200 acres, commanding a view of the top, and large enough to have accommodated more than two millions, while in the immediate neighbourhood there is ample space for encampments. The claims of Jebel Serbál, the only other mountain that has competed with Jebel Musa, are set aside. Hardly any new light is thrown on the line of march of the Israelites, nor can it be said that any additional places have been identified of those enumerated in the list of their encampments. From the Red Sea to Mount Sinai, opinions have been divided between two routes—one inland and direct, the other more circuitous, proceeding southwards along the sea-coast, then striking eastwards through Wady Feiran. The surveyors, again following Dr. Robinson, pronounce in favour of the latter route. Though longer, it is easier, and they think that Moses, who knew the desert well, would have known that for leading such a host it was the more favourable road.

The photographs, however, are the great feature of this work, and so complete are they that tarry-at-home travellers are put by them on nearly the same level with those who have looked on the actual scenes.

It is not without some significance that just as Sir Bartle Frere was about to start on that mission, of which we have already spoken, to initiate measures for repressing the East African slave trade, Mr. Stanley's work—*How I Found Livingstone*—should have made its appearance. Most people will read it for its adventure, of which it is full, and, in spite of the little salt of egotism, will not fail to admire the author's indomitable pluck; and a goodly number, doubtless, will search in it for fresh facts as to sources and watersheds. But the main attraction for us, we confess, has lain in the fair prospects Mr. Stanley opens for extended missionary effort. Ever and anon, across the exciting course of his narrative, there comes a quiet breath of reflection and hopeful anticipation. Amid the records of fevers, losses, desertions, and manifold defalcations on the part of his helpers—of perils and difficulties in swamp, and jungle, and waterless desert—he is constantly emerging on tempting tracts and peaceful villages, which, he says, only wait the advent of the missionary. The Wami River, he tells us, is navigable to light draught steamers for two hundred miles, from Whinde to Mbumi, and could be traversed in four days, conveying the Christian teacher to one of the gentlest of African races:—

"Here is the greenest verdure, purest water; here are valleys teeming with grain stalks, forests of tamarind, mimosa, gum-copal tree; here is the gigantic mvule, the stately mparamusi, the beautiful palm—a scene such as only a tropic sky covers! Except civilised society, nothing that the soul of man can desire is lacking here! From the village of Kadetamare a score of admirable mission sites are available, with fine health-giving breezes blowing over them. Water in abundance at their feet, fertility unsurpassed around them, with docile, good-tempered people dwelling everywhere at peace with each other."

And these are the very races that are being decimated by the rapacity of the lower and more servile. What he tells about the poor Wadoe, who inhabit a tract of country between the sea and Unyamembe, is deeply touching. The slave-traders of Whinde have bribed and armed their more savage neighbours to carry off the wives and children of these Wadoe, and to despoil them. The process has been often repeated. These things should quicken the zeal of the Christian public of Britain; and gratitude is surely due to Mr. Stanley for putting them before us so plainly once again, no less than for his greater achievement of so timeously carrying aid to Dr. Livingstone, and sustaining him in his grand object.

The momentous conflicts that have been going on between capital and labour impart a peculiar interest to a biography which is remarkable in itself, interesting in its authorship, and reasonable in the light it throws on great social questions. We mean Sir Arthur Helps's *Life and Labours of Mr. Brassey*. Mr. Brassey was well known as one of the great railway contractors of our day, and one of the most extensive employers of labour. He was an eminently successful man, successful in his undertakings, and successful in dealing with men—in so handling those whom he employed as to get them to yield to him a willing and hearty service. Acting towards them with generosity, and making them feel that he trusted them, he touched that hidden spring whereby men are induced to do their best in the work committed to their hands. Whether Mr. Brassey would have been equally successful in dealing with the spirit that has been dominant of late years, we cannot say. Mr. Brassey appears to have acted in life under a sense of responsibility to Him from whom all his opportunities came; and this will probably be found to account for much of the calmness and fairness of spirit by which he was so honourably distinguished.

Mr. Ward Beecher's *Lectures on Preaching* are lectures in the Beecher style. We say this quite respectfully. A lectureship of pastoral theology has recently been founded in connection with the theological department of Yale College in the United States, and Mr. Beecher has been called to fill it for three years. It is his intention to give a three years' course, and the volume on our table is the first of the three, and bears chiefly on the personal elements which have to do with preaching. It rather talks than lectures about preaching. The lectures were unwritten, and with his marvellous conversational power.

Mr. Beecher had just to pour out the observations which crowded upon him in connection with an art of which he is so great a master. Full of egotism the book is, but Mr. Beecher could not speak of his own art without egotism. To make the pulpit lively and full of force is evidently his aim. Whatever he deems good in the old theology he would throw into modern moulds. Mr. Beecher is a man of splendid instincts, but not of patient thought and careful study. If his book be read with a due regard to his idiosyncrasies, it may contribute much towards making the pulpit efficient, lively, and impressive.

The Man with the Book, by John Matthias Weyland, is an interesting sample of the work done in the poorest districts of London by Christian agents who go into them full of the love of God. The picture of the localities and their inhabitants is evidently from the life. Though the writer has not all the graphic power, and certainly not the finished style which can present such scenes and such people in the most interesting form, he brings their condition before us with great truth, and gives most wonderful instances of the power of the Bible accompanied by God's Spirit to transform and elevate them. Those to whom our own "River-side Visitor" conveys such living pictures of London poverty and ignorance, who may desire to have their impressions corroborated, will meet in "The Man with the Book," with the same kind of people, and the same kind of work. Surely some great good will come ultimately out of all the earnest labours, of which, thank God, we are constantly reading, in connection with these fallen populations.

Thoughts on Recent Scientific Conclusions, and their Relation to Religion, is a series of plain Essays on the Antiquity of Man, Darwinism, the Deluge, and other topics recently stirred in the scientific world. The aim of the writer is to show that there is no real warrant for the conclusions that have been come to so hastily by some in reference to these matters. They can only be regarded as speculations, certainly not ascertained conclusions. The work is written sensibly and clearly, and cannot fail to interest those who read it—only a larger measure of force in the style and grip in the reasoning would have added greatly to its efficiency, and enabled the writer to do more justice to himself.

Lectures on the Re-union of the Churches, by J. J. I. von Döllinger, D.D., D.C.L., appears with a preface by Henry Nutcombe Oxenham, M.A., which we cannot praise. It is written in the highest tone of ritualism, and along with the use which in his dedication he makes of the name of his personal friend Canon Liddon, it will be pronounced, we believe, by all impartial judges to be in singularly bad taste. We have already, in these columns, given some account of the Lectures—their remarkable frankness in many points, their approach to Protestant ground; but their want of that doctrine of salvation which gave to the Lutheran Reformation its great power and glory. Relatively, the Lectures are most interesting; absolutely, they leave the question of reunion pretty much where they found it.

VI.—IN MEMORIAM.

J. H. MERLE D'AUBIGNÉ, D.D.

By the death of Dr. Merle d'Aubigné, French-speaking Protestants have lost their foremost representative, and the Evangelical Church catholic one whose name is familiar in all mouths as a household word. He had reached a green old age; and, passing away during the night between the Sabbath and Monday, his death was probably without a struggle, and like that of Chalmers, whom in massiveness and force of character he somewhat resembled, it was more like a translation than a death. The "History of the Reformation," in connection with which he obtained his first fame, like Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," owed its origin to a circumstance that might be said to indicate a providential plan. Gibbon, it is said, conceived his work while looking on a procession of monks in Rome; Merle d'Aubigné conceived his when present at the tercentenary of the celebration of the Reformation, at the Wartburg, in 1817. The son of a Geneva merchant, he was on his way from his native city to Leipsic to attend the university there, when he was drawn into the stream of travellers to the Wartburg, to which place he turned aside to witness the commemoration of the memorable day, when Luther nailed his theses to the church door of Wittenberg. Dissatisfied at the spirit of the celebration, he resolved then and there to write the "Life of Luther." Previously to this time, he had come under the influence of Mr. Robert Haldane, at Geneva, and a pointed question put to him by that gentleman was the means of a new life springing up in his soul. His first charge was in 1823 as minister of the French Church at Hamburg. Thereafter he was appointed preacher to the King of Holland, and in 1830 he returned to his native city, where he became one of the founders of the Church of the Oratoire, and Professor in the New School of Theology. Of the services which he rendered to the cause of Evangelical Christianity, it is impossible to speak too highly. He was not only an interesting and successful writer, he was a great man. His very appearance carried weight. He may be said to have been equally honoured for the soundness of his judgment, the consistency and godliness of his character, his research and learning as an author, his fervour and eloquence as a speaker. The place left vacant at Geneva is one for which it is not likely that the French Protestant community will be able to find another such occupant.

LORD KINLOCH,

A devout judge on the bench of Scotland, with a catholic heart, and considerable facilities in sacred literature, has also passed from among us. As a writer, he was enabled to make some very useful contributions to our devotional reading. "Time's Treasure," the first of his works, is in verse, and is written in a vein of evangelical fervour and simplicity that meets the taste of the many. His other works were of similar quality, and have been much appreciated by the Christian Community.

AGAINST THE STREAM:

The Story of an Heroic Age in England.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE SCHONBERG-COTTA FAMILY."

CHAPTER III.



IN these days to be Insular is a reproach which most people repel with indignation. Or if any one admits it with a contemptuous pity as but too applicable, in many

respects, to our country, it is always with the tacit understanding that he himself is contemplating that narrow and common-place little community from some wide continent of experience and thought whence the island and its interests assume their duly diminutive proportions.

In my early days people gloried in being Insular. The "right little, tight little island" was delighted in with something of the same kind of attachment an old sailor used to feel for his ship—knowing well her weak points, but knowing also what storms she had weathered, what broadsides she had gallantly stood, and fearless as to the tempests and battles to come; a patriotism not at all tending to anything international or cosmopolitan, but combative, exclusive, Insular to the core.

The Americans were still our "colonies" across the seas; we were fresh from a hot fight with them, in which our national temper had not been sweetened by our having been in the wrong and having been beaten. On most of us the idea had scarcely dawned that they were a Nation at all. They were "our plantations," a branch of the old trunk, vigorous certainly, but very knotty, and gnarled;

II. N.S.

the vigour of course belonging to the stock they came of, and, (perhaps it must be admitted,) the knots and gnarls also. The echoes of a hundred years before, moreover, had scarcely died away, and in some Englishmen resentment against "rebels" who had disowned the king was blended with a dim disapproval of Dissenters who had tried to upset the Church, and were believed for the most part to be Puritans (whatever that meant), and therefore, naturally, to speak through their noses.

Again, the French were "a nation of dancing-masters," who, with all their misplaced agility, could not climb the shrouds of a ship. Had not their own Voltaire lately called them a compound of monkey and tiger?

The "German States"—(Germany did not exist, even in popular ballads)—were too remote, and too unknown and varying a quantity to have any definite portrait.

Spain loomed mistily on us, gigantic and yet shadowy, with the old glooms and glories of her past playing fitfully around her, her palaces and prisons still echoing as we believed with groans, under an Inquisition not yet dead; her fleets still recalling the Armada; yet through all, a ghastliness and ghostliness, as if the whole structure were held together by old spells grown feeble, and at a bold touch or word might crumble helplessly away.

Insular! we thanked God in our hymns for it; islanded safe, in our green security, with our glorious constitution in Church and State, our King, our Church, our "wooden walls;" a second "chosen people," better preserved than the first from the various idolatrous nations around. If Israel of old had been guarded by the Straits of Dover and the German Ocean, who could say that things might not have ended differently? But no doubt it was to be. Israel was a stiff-necked people, and we, on the contrary, were always improving ourselves and our constitution.

Of course even then there were a few croakers, who might have repeated Oliver Cromwell's old exhortation, "You glory in that ditch which guards your shores; I tell you your ditch will be no defence to you unless you reform yourselves;" and a few profane wits infected with the levity of France, who did not regard even the Thirty-nine Articles, or our

most religious and gracious king as unassailable; and a few democrats who did not consider even our glorious constitution final. But for the most part, even if, when comparing class with class amongst us, we now and then recognised reluctantly that there was some unequal pressure, that there might be some corners which were not quite paradise; when, on the other hand, we compared ourselves with the rest of the world, our self-appreciation was restored, and we became once more sensible of our privileges.

Moreover, not only were we one island, we were in another sense an archipelago of islands.

Not only was England thus islanded from the world. Every country town was islanded from the rest—was a living community in itself, with its own local history and government, local glories and wrongs, its local circle of families established there for generations; not certainly without their mutual jealousies and rivalries, but belonging to each other, by a real and recognised relationship.

And still farther within this inner island was an innermost, like the ball within ball of the Indian puzzle.

In those days every Englishman's "house was his castle," in a more peculiar sense, or at least in a greater variety of senses, than now. A house belonged to a family, was part of its complex existence, more in the same sense that a man's body is part of his complex self. It grew with the family growth, flourished with the family prosperity, decayed with the family decay; and as we die out of our bodies and leave them, so, with a mortality in one sense more pathetic because apparently not inevitable, a family might, by misfortune, folly, failure of succession, die out of the old family house. A house, therefore, had quite a different significance; it had family histories stamped into it, growing out of it; it had features, characteristics, a life of its own.

There are stately mansions of our great families, to which something of this character attaches still. The greatness and glory of the great family is built into them, and they stand.

But, then, this family character attached to countless unpretending English houses, and this not only in country places, to fine old manorial halls, or homely farmsteads, but in the streets of every town. We all of us can recognise those old houses still. They look out on us with pathetic, or quaint and humorous human faces; the humanity that has grown with them and around them, and from

them for generations, cannot die out of them. And when we see them left stranded forlorn in some featureless row of windows and doors such as human creatures now swarm and are fed in, until the next hive is ready, we welcome them or compassionate them, not as buildings but as friends.

In such houses were the families of my childhood islanded in the island of our little country town, in the island of our England.

I smile sometimes a little when I see people endeavouring now aesthetically to restore this lost sacredness of houses by means of Elizabethan windows and fireplaces and mediæval texts, and family arms on doors and walls. I think the rush of nineteenth-century life will be too strong for them. Will their children live where they lived, or love what they loved, or think as they thought?

If it is hard to make a lost religion or a lost architecture live again, I think it is harder still to revive a dead habit of social life. But our grandchildren will see.

It is this inmost island of home that I must first picture, before the scene widens to the town and the country in which it was enclosed. All true geography, all geography which would lead to the knowledge, not of names, but of things, must begin, not with the elliptic and the equator, but with the pond in the farm-yard.

The living germ of our town was a Benedictine abbey, one of the finest and earliest in the kingdom. This abbey had been built by the side of a clear rocky river, where the hills through which it cut its way from the moorland opened out so as to leave a little level of rich meadow-land.

Around the church and the conventual buildings, the two solid stone bridges, and the Weir with its deep pool and salmon-trap, whence the town Abbot's Weir had its name, the houses of the town clustered, gradually stretching back over the strip of level to the hills.

Our house had thus been driven to the foot of the steep slope, and had been constrained to make the best of it by all kinds of eccentric devices, climbing here and delving there, until it possessed scarcely two rooms on the same level; to children perhaps the most delightful plan on which a house could be constructed. Its very existence was a continual victory over adverse circumstances, and tended to communicate to its inhabitants, according to the material on which the stamp was impressed, a character either militant and adventurous, or easy and imperturbable, conquering circumstance by resolutely sur-

mounting it, or by accepting its ups and downs as inevitable... and making them part of its own constitution.

The entrance was by a Tudor arch into a broad passage. On the right was a large wainscoted room with a stone floor and one long, low mullioned window with a long, deep window-seat. In this room, as a rule, the family breakfasted, dined, and had all its family meals—all that were not connected with ceremonial and extended to strangers. This also was the nearest approach Piers and I had to a day nursery or playroom, our great resource on any wet days which drove us from our natural territory in the garden; a room into which, even after the régime of my stepmother, Pluto was admitted, and my father's favourite pointer and setter, and that long succession of my kittens which came to such a variety of tragical ends. Mrs. Danescombe's cat, which never came to misfortune of any kind, sleek, impenetrable, demure, resided in the Oak Parlour, approached by a small flight of steps on the opposite side of the passage. Into this we only went by invitation; but that cat had the *entrée*. A most evil and hypocritical creature we considered her; an embodiment of all the dark side of cat-nature—malignantly breaking all the china and gluttonously imbibing all the dainties, on account of which my luckless kittens suffered, and then sitting upright on the parlour window-seat winking superciliously at all the world.

There were few middle tints in the portraits of our childhood, and among the most Rembrandt-like that comes back to me is the image of my stepmother's cat. All that Puritan meant to the most prejudiced of Cavaliers, or Tartuffe to the most anti-ecclesiastical of Frenchmen, that sleek, stealthy, whiskered black-and-white cat meant to me. It scarcely ever purred. We believed it could not purr; its conscience was too laden with crime. Nor do I remember its ever playing, except once or twice in a murderous way with a fly on the window-pane when it thought no one was looking. Its name was Mignonette, and to this day I can scarcely do justice to the sweetness of the little flower whose appellation it polluted.

The Oak Parlour had a very different social rank from the Stone Parlour. It was my stepmother's especial domain. It was seldom entered by any one until the afternoon, being the scene of leisurely employment and sober amusement, and of all social entertainments not of the stateliest kind. There Mrs. Danescombe embroidered muslin and made lace, or took snuff and played cards with chosen

associates, always for small stakes; and there were solemnly handed around trays with small glasses of liqueurs or cordials, or in aftertimes with dainty small cups of tea. No uproarious merriment was ever heard within those precincts; nothing stronger than tea or cordials was ever sipped therein. Seldom did masculine foot invade them. If my father wished to entertain his friends with solid British viands and vigorous British beverages, recourse was had to the Stone Parlour, where also we gathered in the winter evenings on oaken settles or footstools around the great old chimney with its dogs and log-fires. Echoes of Christmas merriment and of children's laughter hung around those old walls; but the wainscoting of the Oak Parlour could never have reported anything more sonorous than the murmured gossip of the card-table, unless some of the players by any series of other people's mistakes or their own mischances lost their game and their tempers, and broke out of the decorum of the place into the hard realities of unfairly lost shillings and sixpences.

There were two sacred things to me, however, in the room.

In the recesses on each side of the high oaken chimneypiece with its carved looking-glass, hung portraits of my father and of my own mother in the dresses they wore just after they were married: he with a bag-wig, hand ruffles, and a sword, and elaborate shoe-buckles, which certainly did not recall his every-day appearance; she with powdered hair brushed over a high cushion, a little hat stuck coquettishly on the top of it, a blue satin bodice and train, and brocaded petticoat, with a large bouquet in the hand laid on her lap, and a shepherd's crook in the other. At her feet was a lamb wreathed with flowers, looking wistfully up in her face. The native Vandyke or Sir Joshua had evidently a confused Ideal compounded of the pastoral and the courtly, and was very familiar with neither. There must have been something very invincible in the character of my mother's face to penetrate as it did at once through the false idealism and the imperfect execution of the painter. For it was evidently a likeness. Underneath a fair, finely-arched brow were distinct though delicate eyebrows, visible far back at the side of the forehead, and overshadowing very large, soft dark-grey eyes. There was much depth in the eyes, but no dreaminess. They evidently *saw*—saw the lamb looking up into them, and much besides. The mouth was firm and grave; the pose of the whole figure was at once easy and commanding; the small hand, wooden

as the painting was, held the crook with a real grasp. You felt instinctively that the visible lamb and the imaginary flock were well cared for under such guardianship. Oh! with what longing I used to look at that lamb lying so safe at her feet!

She sate before me a type not so much of fond, passionate motherliness, as of tender, wise, protective motherhood; not so much of the mother's bliss, as of the mother's care; not like one of Murillo's girl Madonnas dreaming over a new delight, but like one of the earlier Italian school, grave with the very weight of the mother's joy, and with the destinies of the life with which her own was bound up.

For had I not the memory of her touch and her kiss to interpret the portrait? Had not those hands pressed me to her heart, and did I not know how those grave lips could part and smile?

Underneath this portrait stood a little table with a well in it, containing, I knew, my mother's work, and especially one dainty little frill of a baby's cap, unfinished, with her needle in it. Upon it was placed her ebony spinning-wheel. Nurse used to dust it reverently every morning; and often I stole in with her, and then, when nurse was not looking, I used to reach up to the picture and softly kiss its hands.

Every afternoon, when there was no company, I spent an hour in that room with Mrs. Danescombe and the hypocritical cat, learning to sew. But at those times I did not dare to look much at my beloved picture; because, being frequently in trouble with my work, I was afraid if I caught sight of that lamb and of that dear face, a terrible rush of the feeling of motherlessness would come over me, and I should cry. For, once, when I had been very unsuccessful with my sewing, and had had to unpick it several times, this had happened, and Mrs. Danescombe had asked what I was crying for; and I, stretching out my arms to the picture, and sobbing out something about "mother," my stepmother had replied in an even, undisturbed voice—one of her maxims being that "a gentlewoman never degrades reproof into scolding by raising her voice"—

"Bridget, that is something I cannot permit. When little girls lose their tempers over their tasks, I cannot suffer them to deceive themselves by calling their naughty passions sensibility. You have many faults! but I did hope you were a truthful child. Never let me hear you speak in that way again."

And that was a reproach I never did incur

again. How it burnt into my heart! Not only by the injustice, but the justice in it. For I was a very truthful child; and it was not only the dull pain of being misunderstood that hurt me; it was the terrible fear that my stepmother, after all, had understood me better than I understood myself. Was she not older, wiser, my father's chosen ruler for us—set over us by all the mysterious powers whence authority springs—authority against which I had not a thought of rebelling? And had I not been in something very like a naughty temper, writing down very hard things against my stepmother, and the bitter fate of little girls in general who had to learn sewing, indeed, even against the Nature of Things which involved clothes that had to be sewn? And was it possible that I had desecrated that love to my own mother, and the memory of her love, by making it an excuse even to myself for being cross and angry?

I certainly had sometimes underneath these perplexities and self-accusations a dim sense, now and then flashing into a passionate persuasion that it was *not* all my fault. But then, again, I reproached myself again for this.

If the things in Mrs. Danescombe's character which jarred against mine had been angles, the conflict would have been less harassing. But in her there were no angles; there was nothing to lay hold of; it was simply coldness, smoothness of surface, hard polish, and impenetrability; and what "case" could be made out of these? She never scolded, or threatened, or punished. She simply reprovved. Her severest discipline was a distant politeness and a peculiar way of calling me "Bridget." What was there cruel in that? Yet it froze into my bones. And there were times when her mere presence was to me a prison worse than the darkest of the dark holes nurse threatened us with. It was not until long afterwards I learned why.

Her government was based on suspicion. She was not theological in any sense; she had no extreme theories of the depravity of human nature. But she had a deep-seated conviction that every man and woman, and more especially every servant and little child, was more likely to do wrong than right, and more likely to do wrong from the worst motives than the best.

Combined with this, or perhaps flowing from it, was a remarkable keenness of perception as to any defect or mistake, in anything or person, from a speck of dust or rust on

the furniture, to the smallest solecism in dress or manners, or the least excess or defect in demeanour.

Therefore she never praised; partly because she thought commendation nourished vanity, and partly because in the best work she always detected some petty blemish, not imaginary, but real; yet, however small, sufficient to distract her attention from all that was good on it.

It would have been a difficult atmosphere to *grow* in, but that we had a large space of life free from her inspection, and an element of positive freedom, warmth, and breadth in my father, which, I suppose, would scarcely have done alone.

Only I have often thought that my mother's character would have been the supplementary opposite as my stepmother's was the neutralising contrary of my father. My mother's character would have drawn out and filled up all that was highest and best in his. Mrs. Danescombe merely repressed and neutralised. With her he was, perhaps, restrained from doing or saying some things better not done or said; with my mother he would have become all he might have been. Both made some kind of harmony, but with my mother all the life would have been larger, richer, fuller.

CHAPTER IV.

At the end of the passage was a wide staircase with black oak banisters, which led to the Best Parlour, an apartment provided with furniture altogether

"too bright and good
For common nature's daily food:"

where from week to week the amber damask curtains and tapestried chairs were pinned into thick coverings, and the carpet was rolled up on one side, and the gilded sconces on the frame of the small round looking-glass were veiled, and the Venetian-blinds were closely shut.

This was the inmost sanctuary of Mrs. Danescombe's domain. In my mother's time it had not been furnished, and I had faint memories of its having been abandoned to us as a play-room; of wild games there with my father in winter twilight, and of delicious terrors, half-real, half-feigned, as he sprang on us from dim corners with awful growls and roars, in the characters of lion or bear. Moreover, outside there was a balcony which was a delightfully romantic place, whence the world assumed quite a new aspect, a borderland which was neither indoors nor out-of-doors, where all the life of the street moved

before us in a continual procession, better than any picture-book.

But now all this was changed, and we only entered the room at all on the very highest days in our very best, and therefore most harassing, clothes; and would as soon have thought of venturing into the pulpit of the church as into the balcony.

Behind this were the principal bedrooms, looking on an inner court, and then a flight of rather ladder-like stairs leading to the first platform of the garden, on which opened the Summer Parlour. This was my father's special retreat, the corner of the house which he succeeded in defending against all the assaults of Order, and keeping freely open to us.

In this room we had the rights of citizenship to the fullest extent; everything was open to us; and, in consequence, everything was sacred to us. We were trusted and believed in; and to have hurt anything my father cared about would have been to Piers or me, naturally, the direst of misfortunes.

My father's principles of government and views of life were the very contrary of Mrs. Danescombe's. His expectation was that every one belonging to him would do right, and everything would go right; and if, contrary to expectation, any one did wrong, or anything went wrong, he was wont to attribute it to the best possible motives, and resume his sanguine anticipations, unbroken. Not, perhaps, an altogether adequate principle for government on any large scale. Although I remember being smitten with a far keener repentance by being misunderstood by him on the too favourable side than all my stepmother's keen detection and exposure of the dark ever brought to me.

The real defect in his rule was not, I think, hoping or trusting too much, but suffering his sanguine temperament to dim his sight. To see everything wrong, and yet hope everything good, is higher, I suppose, because truer.

And it was there, I fancy, my mother would have helped him. The optimism which revolted to an extreme against Mrs. Danescombe's suspicions would have been braced and corrected by my mother's loving truthfulness.

That room was a world of interest to us. There were marvellous models of machines in it (those were the days of Watt and Arkwright), balls of twine, fishing tackle, carpenters' tools, a turning lathe, pieces of various woods—Spanish mahogany and cedar, curious knots and blocks of oak, box, walnut, and

various native woods; for my father delighted in experimenting, and had a theory that half the use that might be was not made of our own English produce. The marred work, and the pieces with unconquerable flaws were our Jetsam and Flotsam; but the greatest pleasure of all was to be allowed to stand by and watch while he was at work.

To watch the real work of grown people was an endless interest to us children. It was their amusements, and still more their attempts to amuse us, which seemed to us so dull. And by mistaken benevolence of that kind we in our childhood were not much oppressed.

My father having much "of the child's heart in his breast," took us quite naturally into his confidence, and enjoyed our sympathy in his projects as much as we did his in ours. Mrs. Danescombe, probably never having known childhood herself, capable of having existed from infancy like the children in old-fashioned family pictures, erect from morning till night in a cushion and hoop, never thought of us as helpless creatures that had to be made happy, but as fallen and refractory creatures that had to be kept down, and brought up, and if possible kept tidy. Thus no one took any trouble to amuse us. And accordingly we were endlessly amused.

Never, moreover, were children happier in the scenery of their childhood, than we in that dear old up and down house and garden.

The garden consisted of a succession of platforms and terraces, connected by flights of steps, or by steep slopes. The first of these was opposite the Summer Parlour. Round it was a border of flowers—roses, pansies, marigolds, love-lies-bleeding, hen and chicken daisies, sunflowers, hollyhocks, all Lord Bacon's catalogue. In one corner, hollowed out of the rocky hillside, was a Dropping Well, where the slow falling of the drops, one by one, we saw not whence, into the dark cool water below, mysteriously echoing from the sides, made delicious music for us. The entrance was draped by tufts and fringes of ferns of the richest green and the most delicate forms; beneath it, under the rock, was a bed of the sweetest lilies of the valley. It was only entered in the early morning by a few stray sunbeams, and of these scarcely one reached the opposite rock, and none ever penetrated into the clefts and corners. My father told us it was natural, and carved out by the little drops themselves dropping through hundreds, perhaps thousands of years. They had begun their chimes,

he said, long before any had sounded from the old church-tower.

Thus to us that little melodious well was like the threshold of a thousand delightful mysteries. Where did those melodious drops start from? From what dark hidden pools under the hills? From what bright floating clouds in the sky? Whose pitchers had they filled,—what little children had they sung to before? What were they saying to us, or wanting to say? Wistful Undines and Nixen longing to speak to us; wise busy gnomes at work for ages, knowing thousands of secrets they would not tell but we would give anything to hear; all the wild mythology of mountain and water sprites; all that "nurse" nature would say to us and cannot; all that we would learn from her and cannot; dim reflections of our personality on material things; dim shinings through and prismatic refractions of the Personality beyond and within; all this, and unutterably more, murmured to us through that Dropping Well. Children of the mystic and humorous North, did we need legends Scandinavian or Teutonic to tell us what a strange compound the world was?

Was there not, moreover, from time to time, in that very well, an apparition of a gigantic wide-mouthed frog, who, in the midst of all that melancholy and mystic music, and those delicate ferns, and those sweet lilies of the valley, would croak and hop, and be as self-satisfied, and as entirely an embodied joke as any of the quaintest dwarfs Grimm ever disinterred or Cruikshank ever drew? The whole mysterious animal-world lay open to us between our sympathetic dog Pluto and that supercilious impenetrable frog.

When, years afterwards, we saw those German stories, we felt we had known them all our lives.

For I confess I am tempted to count it among the blessings of our childhood that we had no children's books at all.

No doubt there were children's books in our days; but the allowance was scanty, and what there was did not reach us. If we had been provided with any they would, no doubt, have been heavily weighted with morals, and would have been duller to us than our lessons. But happily we were not. Our lesson-books were good, honest lesson-books—my first was a horn-book. Our alphabets had no pictures; there was no sugar on the margin of our draughts of learning. We took them, certainly not without tears. But if to us "books" meant the antithesis of "play," and we cried over them and their conse-

quences very heartily and very frequently, at least we did not fall into the far more desperate fate of yawning over our play, and listlessly requesting to be instructed how to amuse ourselves.

In our days the age of wise children's literature had not commenced. For us Rosamond and Frank, Harry and Lucy did not exist. They may, indeed, have dawned on some of the higher social summits, but certainly did not penetrate to Abbot's Weir. Still less, of course, was there anything for us of the nature of the reactionary literature of nonsense, clever or inane, which succeeded that era of supernatural good sense.

What nursery nonsense we had was quite genuine, with no perplexing parodies of sense, or half glimmerings of sense treacherously lurking beneath the surface. For us Little Jack Horner sate in his corner, and took out his plum, and congratulated himself (not as one might have expected, on his good fortune, but on his virtue), in the most literal way, without any allegorical construction. No suspicions of satire, or of the signs of the zodiac, marred our enjoyment of the confusion which ensued when "the cat had the fiddle, the cow jumped over the moon, the little dog laughed to see the sport, and the dish ran away with the spoon."

For us Mother Hubbard's agreeable disappointment at the *futility* of her dog's coffin was always fresh; the funeral rites of Jenny Wren could be repeated to any extent; the Babes in the Wood and Little Red Riding Hood were alternately dreaded and desired as we felt equal or not to the luxuries of tragedy. But between those ancient histories and the literature of our elders there was no intervening world of little boys and girls, exemplarily good, supernaturally naughty, sentimental, religious, or scientific.

The world of grown people's work—of animals and flowers, the garden, and the Timber-yard, and the Iron Foundry were our books. And for us there was no idle reading.

But perhaps we were exceptionally happy in these respects. My father himself was our Miss Edgeworth, almost always ready to explain to us his own work, or to enter with such serious interest as we felt its due into ours.

And, of course, it is not every child who can be free of a Timber-yard and a Foundry as we were.

For I have not yet told half the delights of our garden.

By the side of the Dropping Well was a door, better to us than any underground

steps of Aladdin, leading through a short tunnel, ending in a flight of stairs cut in the rock, to the second garden, which was a steep slope crowned at the top with a terrace and an arbour.

This was of peculiar interest to us, because it was one of the pages of our own original illustrated copy of the Pilgrim's Progress, being obviously the Hill Difficulty, the arbour where Christian lost his roll, and also in another aspect the Palace Beautiful, and the Delectable Mountains whence the pilgrims could survey the land.

Could not we survey the whole land from that summit?

Below us lay the slate roofs of the town, tier below tier, the two bridges and the river; and opposite was the fine old grey tower of the church, with its pinnacles standing out against the wooded hillsides, whilst above stretched the sweeping curves and sharp angles of the granite Tors, the moorland hills, whence the river flowed, purple and golden, with crisp lights and shadows, or blue and soft and far away, "the everlasting hills."

This, therefore, was one of our usual haunts on Sunday afternoons.

In the side wall of this garden was another door, and beyond it an orchard, and beyond that a great free range of fields called the Leas, and at the top of this a channel of water called the Leat, which was detached higher up from the river, and fell at one end of the Leas in a cascade which turned the large water-wheel of the Iron Foundry. At the other end of this field was the Timber-yard, and the Foundry and the Timber-yard were among the chief scenes of my father's work and of our play.

In those days it was the general custom for men of business to live near their work. Now, scarcely even the smaller shopkeepers live over their shops; and not only great cities but country towns are fringed with their suburbs of villas. Then, even large merchants lived near their warehouses, and if, as we did, they possessed a farm, it was a genuine farm, in the real country, where men and women did their real work; and if things were fair to see, it was because it was their nature, not because they were put there to be seen. I suppose there is gain in the change. People breathe better air, at least physically; of the moral atmosphere I am not so sure. It may be good to escape from the cares of business to vineries and conservatories and geranium beds; it is certainly better than to be buried, body and soul, in business; but to ennoble

business is even better than to escape from it. All work must be degraded and must degrade, the chief object of which is to earn the means to do no work. The highest art may certainly in that way be degraded into a trade; and I think there are few manufactures or trades which may not, on the other hand, be raised into art.

At least it was so with my father. That

Timber-yard and that Foundry were to him, and through him to us, outlets into the world of knowledge and of work.

Into the interior of the Foundry we were not permitted to enter except under his protection.

My chief associations with that were a sense of the wonder-working powers of Water and of Fire.



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It was, indeed, a perpetual fairy tale to see those creatures which we knew as fantastic dwarfs, or melodious melancholy nymphs, or dancing sprites, when they worked at their own wild will in the Dropping Well, or around the great logs on the hearth of the Stone-Parlour, transformed into steadfast and irresistible giants by the pressure of the steady will of man.

For thousands of years the slow dropping water had been at work, and had carved out to the sound of its own singing that strange hollow in the rocky hills, with its grotesque angles and dim clefts; and now at last the great water-wheel was set to direct it, and patiently and willingly the mighty creature, rising to its full strength, turned the great machine round and round, making by its own uncon-

querable beauty the loveliest sparkling cascades and showers at every turn. And out of this combined power, of water and man, came harrows, and spades, and scythes; and pots, and pans, and kettles, and all kinds of fairy household gifts to make our work easier and our homes pleasanter. Were not the swift, flashing waters careering with their rush of rapid music over the wheel as pleasant to see and hear as when dropping into the well? And were not scythes and even kettles as poetical things to make as caves?—the fireside and the reaping field being surely as sacred as the rocky hillside and the heathery moors?

I have always, however, been rather glad, as far as the lessons and associations of childhood went, that our machinery was worked by the separate powers of Fire and Water, and not by these powers combined, in the more prosaic form of Steam.

There was a large foundry not fifty miles from us, worked by steam, before we were born. And at the great engine factory of Bolton and Watt, many years before, my father used to tell how, Mr. Bolton showed Dr. Johnson round, and said to him, "Sir, we sell here the thing all men are in search of—Power."

We lived in the days of the birth and infancy of many things which have since grown to gigantic powers and overspread the world.

Our childhood was passed in one of the great dawns of history. The world was awake and stirring around us in every direction—machinery, politics, religion; and my father was a man awake to every throb of the busy life around him.

The great Steam Power was already in the world, and through the busy brains of Watt, Cartwright, and Arkwright was feeling after its work in railroads, steamboats, and power-looms. But happily for us, our moorland river did the work for us, and instead of pistons and cranks and close oily rooms, we had our gigantic water-wheel and the cascade which rushed over it from the hill.

Then, the pictures and parables enacted for us on the great casting-days, when we were taken to see the molten metal flow out of the furnace into the moulds of sand, the Rembrandt-like groups of men with blackened, illumined faces shovelling out the liquid fire as if they had been agents in some fiery horrors of Dante's Inferno; the power of heat in that red cave of fire raging at its roof into fierce white flames, which always made me think of Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace, and clasp tight my father's hand and

Piers' lest they should be burned up like the wicked accusers!

I used to wonder how the three children and that "Fourth" looked in the midst of the flames; not black, I was sure, like old Reuben Pengelly, the furnace-man, but beautiful and calm, and fresh and white, like a very bright soft moon in the midst of the angry glare.

Yet old Reuben himself was very dear to us children. He had lost a little boy about the age of Piers, and he had always a very tender feeling to Piers, partly because the child, looking, no doubt, from his blackened face, and muscular bare neck, to his kind eyes, had always had such trust in him, and would have gone in his arms to the mouth of the furnace. Reuben's delight on Sunday, when he had his clean washed face, and his best coat on, was to carry Piers in his arms about the silent foundry-yard, amongst the stationary wheels and hammers, and to sing us Methodist hymns. For he was a man of a strong, fervent piety, such as fitted his rough work and his muscular frame; and it was from him I first remember hearing the story of the three children in the furnace. To Reuben the Bible was the written part of a continuous living history, unwritten; and he told us how that Fourth, "who made the flames as soft as morning dews to them, was with him, old Reuben Pengelly, as really as with them, and with us little ones, too." And I used often to gaze into the depths of that burning haze, in a vague hope of finding something marvellous there.

All the men knew us, not as angelic benefactors descending on them now and then on festival occasions, but as little creatures they had some kind of tender right in; "master's" and also therefore "theirs." And we knew the inside of many of their homes, not merely by religious or benevolent visits, but naturally, as our *neighbours*, as people who had known and loved and served us and ours before we had known them.

There is incalculably much in that tie of neighbourhood between rich and poor, employer and employed. The mere daily natural crossing of our paths is something, the familiarity with each other's faces and dwellings, and the countless kindnesses that may spring out of it, are infinitely more. Our Lord knew us well when He said, not "Ye shall love mankind as yourselves," but "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." We often read it the other way. But the meaning is quite different.

And it often seems to me that half the social problems which beset us arise from the

rich and poor having ceased in so many instances to be neighbours. What is half at least of our charitable machinery but an ineffective and clumsy effort to replace the countless little interchanges of mutual good-will and service, the countless healthful, mutually sustaining intertings of life and love, which are involved in the simple fact of living within sight of each other?

The timber-yard, however, was Piers' and my most constant resource and delight; our gymnasium, our race-course, the dockyard of our navies.

Thence also the histories my father told us made a broad channel on which our imaginations sailed away to the various northern and southern lands, where the great bare timbers over which we sprang had grown.

When we were tired we used to sit on these trunks, and Piers would listen to any extent whilst I reproduced to him narratives of bears and wolves which had crept stealthily like cats over the snows after their prey, or howled and growled among the stems of these Norway pines.

We must have been rather sensational and gloomy in our tastes, for these bear and wolf stories were always more popular with us than those of the garlanded trees, and the gay parrots, or even of the monkeys of the south. Through the Timber-yard, the atlas became a living world to us; and I have no doubt the sense of all these far-off things and creatures mingled like music with our plays, as we jumped from trunk to trunk, as free and happy as the squirrels and birds which had hopped from branch to branch in former days.

Here also were the chips out of which we constructed the fleets which sailed in the Leat at the top of the Leas, the fleets for which we made harbours and piers, and carried on our great contest with the elements that were always ruthlessly endeavouring to draw them over the cascade, to be crushed by the inexorable water-wheel.

CHAPTER V.

THE Sundays of our childhood, how much depends on them! To me the associations they bring are chiefly of sunshine and rest; undisturbed, unless by an uneasy sense of responsibility in relation to Sunday clothes.

I cannot recall much definite religious teaching. We used, certainly, to say the Church Catechism to Mrs. Danescombe; and I must confess it seemed to me a very obscure collocation of words, in which it was nearly impossible not to put the wrong sentence

first. I do not remember any part of it being explained to us, except the Duty to our Neighbour, which was enforced on us with strong personal application, and left me so oppressed with the impossibility of either saying or doing it, and so perplexed about the quantity of wrong things one might have done without knowing, that I should have been quite ready, with a certain little French girl at her first confession, to have pronounced myself guilty of all the sins prohibited in the Decalogue, including Simony.

My father never gave us direct lessons of any kind, religious or secular. He was undoubtedly not didactic, and I suppose he was not dogmatic; probably not finding any great necessity of formulas for his own use, and certainly not disposed to impose them on others. Neither was he given to cavil or to question. His mind was as little of the stuff heretics as of that inquisitors are made of; a subtle material, perhaps sometimes more similar than either think. In Scotland I think it probable he would have accepted the Westminster Confession, in Saxony the Confession of Augsburg, in France the great Creeds of the Gallican Church, his faith in all cases remaining substantially the same, and in all cases omitting the anathemas.

He was not theological at all in the sense of being keenly alive to the defects in other people's theology. He was theological to the core in the sense that St. John was the Theologian; in that his faith began with God rather than with man; less with man, erring, falling, sinning, than with God, loving, giving, forgiving.

Analysis and criticism were not his element. So far from his theology being negative, if anything was wanting in it, it was negations. If in after life we wandered into doubts and perplexities, to come back to him was to come back neither to elaborate solutions nor to anxious denunciations, but to the child's heart and the Apostles' Creed. His influence on us was through what he was, and what he loved.

Cowper, then a new poet, was his delight; not for his satire on social frailties, or his bitter lamentations over human depravity; but for his sympathy with human wrong, his gentle pathos, his sunny humour, his large and loving hope in man and God.

Not that my father was destitute of the force of indignation; but, like Cowper's, his indignation was reserved for injustice rather than for error; for the Bastille, for the slave-trade, for the desecration of the sacrament into a political test, for the corruption and

meanesses of "corporations," for "charging God with such outrageous wrong" as leaving the sages of old

"in endless woe
For ignorance of what they could not know."

It is strange to see how many abuses then hotly contended for, are now abandoned by the extremest reactionists; and on the other hand, how much of the larger hopes which still have to be contended for, had even then dawned on generous Christian hearts.

To my father we owe the blessing of liberation, space, and joyousness connected with Sunday; and to him also the inestimable benefit that to us Christianity was associated, not with limitation, prohibition, and retrogression, but with freedom, expansion, and progress, with all that is generous and glad and hopeful, and belonging to the light.

At eight o'clock the "warning" church bell announced that it was Sunday; and father used to knock at our nursery door, and carry us off to the weekly festival of breakfast in the Stone Parlour, Piers usually perched on his shoulders, and I holding his hand.

Then followed that long trial of patience, —the apparelling for church; and then the walk by father's side down the quiet yet festive street, between the closed shop windows, among the friendly greetings of the neighbours, across the churchyard, past that one corner of it which was the most sacred place on earth to him and to us, up the long aisle to our high, square pew, between the Squire's and the Vicar's.

When we sat down my view was necessarily quite domestic, limited by the wooden walls. But when the singing began, it was my privilege to stand on the seat and survey the congregation; and most marvellous and interesting to me were the Sunday transformations of everybody by means of clothes.

There was far more difference between best and every-day clothes in those days than now, and far more variety in costume, not only between different classes—between what might be termed generically rich and poor—but between the different orders and species of well-to-do people. Between the rich and poor the contrast was not only in form but in material. Silk was utterly unknown below a certain level; calico prints with imitations of French or Damascene patterns had not been made common by Manchester looms. Stout woolseys, woven in cottage looms, clean white kerchiefs, and sober blues and hodden greys characterized the free-seats.

Yet none of the transformations of Sunday

seemed to me so complete and remarkable as that which set Reuben Pengelly in the choir gallery embracing a huge musical instrument—not the "wee sinfu' fiddle," but a gigantic bass-viol; in a bright blue coat and scarlet waistcoat, which sat on his muscular unaccustomed limbs like plate armour, and a conspicuously white shirt, his face shining at once with friction and devotion. There was a sober radiance, and yet a sense of responsibility about his countenance which continually attracted me to it, and I always found myself ending my survey of my neighbours with that dear reverent old face, as if unconsciously I recognised it to be a shrine and altar from which more than could be heard or seen was going up to heaven.

And it must be confessed there was much to distract my attention. If the wages-paying and wages-receiving classes were thus sharply defined by the material of their clothes, the minor distinctions among their richer neighbours were equally marked to a discriminating eye by their chronology. It was but at a slow pace that our town toilettes could approach the standard of the Squire's, and still further of the Countess' pew, in those brief intervals when the Countess shone on us.

Many decades of the fashion-book were thus represented around me, and it was impossible that my eye should not be arrested by varieties reaching from the aristocratic French classics of tight skirts and short waists, to the hoop and high whale-bone hood of Miss Felicity Benbow, the schoolmistress, to whom a Sunday dress was a possession for life, and who would as soon have thought of changing her grandfather the general's Tory principles for Jacobinism, as her mother's fashions for raiment which she severely, but blushing, characterized as "little better than none at all."

I was not conscious of doing anything profane or un-sabbatical in thus contemplating my neighbours.

At that time no gorgeous varieties of symbolical vesture had been thought of for the clergy; but I had no doubt that these varieties of costume among the laity formed as integral a part of the Sunday festivities as Tate and Brady, Reuben Pengelly's great bass-viol, and my uncle Parson Fyford's preaching a sermon in the pulpit robed in black.

I cannot remember anything special in those sermons; but I do remember well waking up from time to time, not as far as I know by external suggestions, to a sense

of meaning and a sense of appropriation in various parts of the Liturgy.

First there was the Lord's Prayer. What- ever else in the service might be the peculiar possession of grown-up people, that plainly belonged to us children. We said it every morning and evening. Then there was the Apostles' Creed, which seemed to belong to the Lord's Prayer, beginning with the Almighty Father and going on with its simple history of the Saviour who came from heaven, who also like us had once a mother, and was nailed on the dreadful cross, and had died and had been "buried" like our mother; but, unlike her, had risen again. He had, I knew, made other people rise again, but not mother yet. But one day He would make us all rise again; for that, father had told me, was what the end of the Creed meant. And then I should see Mother.

But there were two versicles in the Prayer-Book which, being entirely incomprehensible to me, I always privately revised.

Whatever the rest of the congregation might be able to say, being grown up, and no doubt having better consciences than I had, I, ignorant of archaic English, and keenly conscious of my own misdoings, could certainly never pray that God would "not deal with me after my sins," and "would not reward me after my iniquities." I who had become entangled in such a bewildering labyrinth of sins and iniquities, could I ask God not to deal any more after them with me? Therefore I always left out the "not." "Not dealing with me," as I understood it, so exactly represented my stepmother's mode of punishment. My food was given me, lessons were taught me, all the mechanism of life went on, even to the morning and evening kiss; but I, as a little trembling, clinging, living, loving personality, was left out, ignored, the averted eye never meeting mine, my words indeed answered; my wants supplied, but I myself unresponded to altogether; close in body, in heart and soul banished into outer darkness. I myself was simply "not dealt with."

If God were at all like that, watching coldly and gravely in the expectation I should go wrong; what a destiny, if for ever and ever I were to live in his sight and within his hearing, under the icy weight of his cold displeasure, not clear why I had offended Him, and feeling it quite hopeless to ask, without the resource even of an occasional flash of indignant revolt, because of course He must be right!

Those versicles are, however, especially

memorable to me as connected with one especial Sunday afternoon.

I had gone through a week of those small misdemeanours and misfortunes, connected, as usual, chiefly with behaviour and clothes, in which mischance and misdoing were so inextricably confused to me, yet in which I so often felt that if the original offence which had drawn down the displeasure of my stepmother had been trifling, the burning anger and revolt aroused in me were *not* trifles. Moreover, I had fallen into two undeniable passions about wrongs done, as I conceived, to Piers, and to the reigning kitten.

That Sunday therefore, with unusual fervour, and with bitter secret tears, I had prayed my little private revision of the Liturgy.

"Deal with me! oh do not give up dealing with me after my sins."

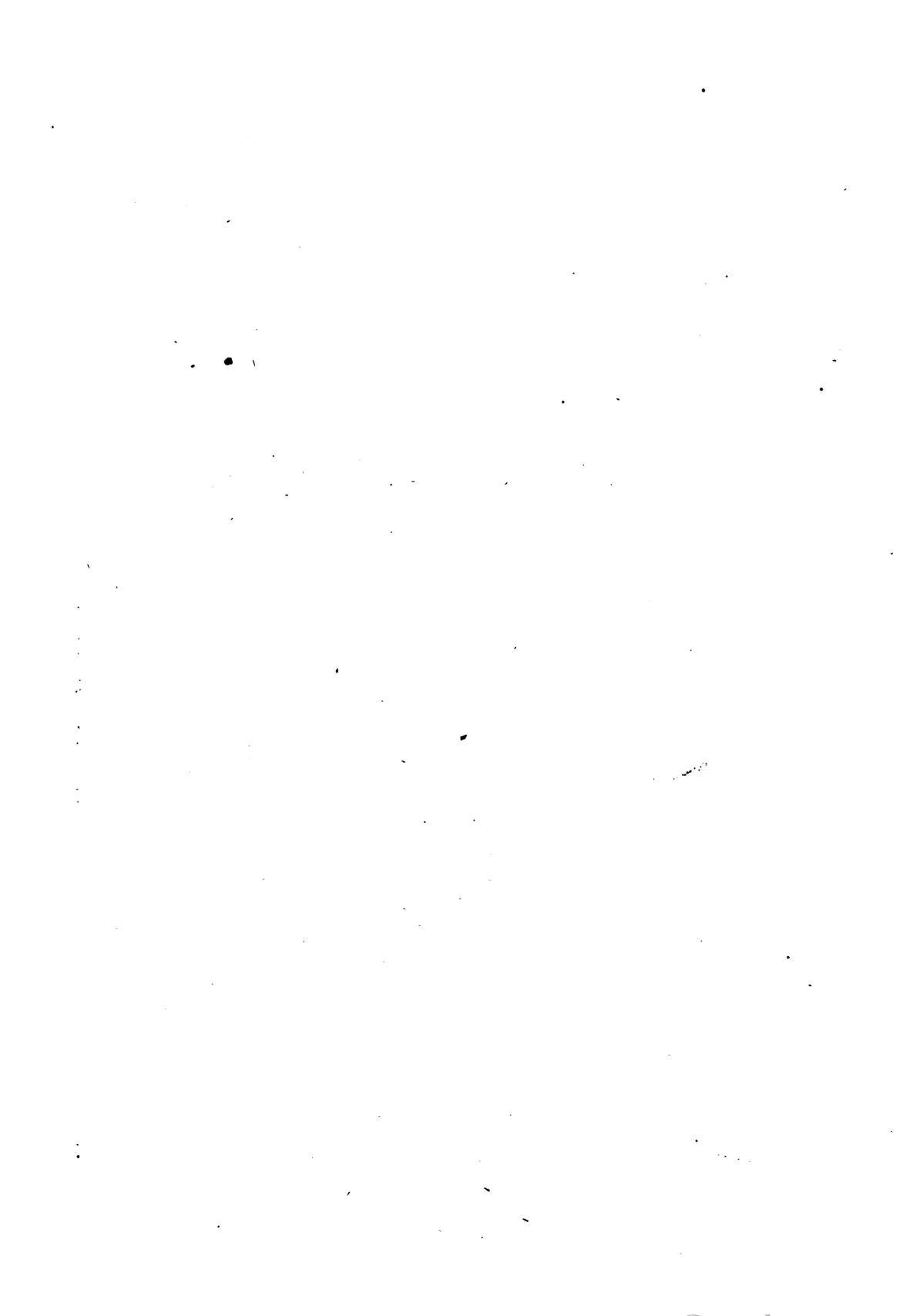
Poor blundering childish prayer, I believe it was heard.

I had certainly no irreverent intention of correcting the compilers of the Prayer-Book, I only thought I must be so much worse than other people who could calmly say the words as they were printed! Otherwise, of course the words would never have been there. My stepmother had so often told me I was quite exceptionally naughty, and this Sunday at least, after such a week, I felt it must be true; more especially because my father himself, having come in at the climax of one of my passions, and not knowing the cause, had looked gravely distressed at me.

That Sunday afternoon it happened that my father was occupied with visitors, and Piers and I crept away to our usual resource, through the field to the foundry-yard, to pay a visit to Reuben Pengelly and Priscy his wife. They lived at the gate-house, and we were welcomed as usual. But I was very unhappy, feeling like a little exile even there. While Piers was sitting complacently on old Priscy Pengelly's knee, enjoying her adoration and his bit of apple pasty, I, quite beyond the consolation of caresses and pasties, sate and nursed my sorrows on the little wooden stool in the porch at Reuben's feet.

The very quiet of the place seemed to irritate me. I had so many hammers beating, and complicated wheels revolving in my little heart and brain, that the usual din and rattle of the works would have been more congenial to me.

Everything but me was so good and quiet and fit for Sunday! The water playing over the idle wheel, the lazy occasional creaking





"AGAINST THE STREAM."

of some of the machinery (like a yawn of Pluto awakened out of sleep), the quiet noiseless investigations being pursued by Priscy's cat among heaps of iron, and stationary machines she would not have dared to come near on work-days; the absence of all the clamorous busy life that filled the place at other times, and the peace and shining cleanness of Reuben's house and face, always made that porch seem to me the most Sunday-like place in the world. And I liked to hear old Reuben and Priscy talk, in a way I only half understood, but always, I felt, in good kind voices about good and happy things.

But that day the disquiet within was too deep to be soothed by the quiet without.

All Reuben's benevolent attempts to draw me into happy childish talk had failed, and at length, Piers having fallen asleep on Priscy's knee, and Priscy having fallen fast asleep too, Reuben looked tenderly down at me, and seeing, I suppose, the dull stony look so unnatural on a childish face, he said—

"My lamb, what makes thee so wisht?"

It happened that just then I was watching a little drama being enacted on the opposite side of the yard, between Priscy's cat and a large brown hen. Anxiously the poor mother, ignorant of the restraints imposed on pussy by our presence, had been calling her chickens to her, and at length had succeeded in attracting the last of them from the seductions of crumbs and grains under the shelter of her wings. And there she sate tenderly clucking over her little ones, nestled close to her; and heroically confronting the enemy.

I had watched the little parable with a strange choking bitterness; and, at first, when Reuben spoke I could say nothing.

But, when he stooped down and stood me beside his knee, and then took me on it and held my hands so tenderly in his great snowy hand, the first ice-crust of my reserve began to melt, and I said quietly—I felt too despairing for tears—

"Reuben, I cannot be good. I *cannot*. I have done so many sins and iniquities. I think God is going to give up dealing with me."

I suppose he thought my case not very hopeless, for he smiled most complacently, and said—

"Give thee up, poor lamb! *At last!* Why He did not give up dealing with *me!*"

I did not feel the force of the consolation. What could Reuben have done as naughty as I had? I only shook my head.

"Why, what be ye thinking about, Miss Bride, my dear?" came out in his hearty voice. "The Lord is good, *good*;

with poor hardened old sinners, and to thee! an innocent babe like thee!"

I felt much more like a hardened sinner, whatever that meant, than like an innocent babe; and suddenly something that had lain hidden at the bottom of my heart rose up at his words—something I could never have said to father, and had scarcely *said* even to myself.

"Reuben," I said, looking straight up into his eyes; "is God good? To you, Reuben. But not to me; not to me. He took away Mother! Even those little chickens have somewhere warm and soft to hide; and I have nowhere. God took away Mother from me. He must have known I should never be good afterwards. He is *not* good to me."

Happily for me, the old man did not crush the helpless cry of anguish with a reproof, as if it had been a mere wilful cry of revolt. But a look of pain came over his face, such as I should have felt if Piers had struck father! And he said, looking reverently upwards—

"Poor lamb! Poor motherless babe! She knows not what she says. She wants to be good; and she doesn't know how Thou wants it!—Thou who hast died for it!"

"I do want to be good, Reuben," I said, afraid I had not been quite honest; "but I want—oh I want *Mother!*"

"My lamb, my lamb," he said, "you want God! Mother is happy, for she loves God. She did when she was here, dear soul, and now she is with Him and loves Him better; for she knows how God loves."

"Is Mother happy, Reuben?" I said, roused to an unwonted daring. "How can she be happy? If she is living and awake, how can she be happy, and I so unhappy, and not good, and never going to be good? Why, even I could not be happy on Father's knee, and Father pleased with me, if Piers were hurt or naughty. And how could Mother? She loved us more than that. I know, I know, if God would let her, Mother would come back from anywhere—from *anywhere*, to help us and make us good. It is God who took her away, and will not ever let her come back. And how can I pretend to love God, or say He is good to me?"

Reuben said nothing, but kept stroking my hands. I was afraid he was vexed. But when I glanced up at him I thought he had never looked so kind, although great tears were on his cheeks.

And then gently, as if I had been an infant, he carried me into his little house, and shut the door, and knelt down, with me beside him, and prayed till the drops stood

on his forehead and the tears rained down his face.

He said something like this :—

“O, blessed Father! Pity this poor, wisht, forlorn babe. She has lost her mother, and she has lost sight of Thee. She doesn't understand. She thinks Thou art turning away Thy face from her, and not caring for her. And all the time it is Thou who art stooping down and likening Thyself to *anything*, to that poor helpless fool of a hen gathering her chickens, just to make us understand how Thou lovest us—calling, calling, spreading out Thy wings—for her, for her! Lord, make the little one understand; make the babe hear and see.

“Blessed Lord Jesus, Thou knowest how we want to hear, and touch, and see; above all, the little ones. Thou camest that we might touch and see. Thou tookest them in Thine arms, and laid Thine hands on them, that they might touch and see. Thou hast let them nail Thee to the Cross that we might feel and see. Ah, good Shepherd! And this little lamb has lost sight of Thee altogether! But Thou hearest her crying. Lord, it's only the lamb bleating for its mother—Thy little lamb bleating for Thee! Take her home on Thy shoulders, Lord. Take her home to Thy heart, and make her happy, and make her good.”

Then he rose and sat down, and took me on his knees again. I leant my head on his shoulder, and was quite quiet—quiet in my heart too.

“My lamb,” he said, “that's it; that's all. You want God. And God wants you to be good. He gave his own Son for us. He would have left mother with you if He could. It seems to me He wants you just to look up, as it were, and see mother smiling on you in heaven, *as sure enough she is*; and then turning round to Him, *just that you may follow her eyes*, and turn round to Him too, and see how He is smiling on her, and on you both. Child, child! mother *is* happy! And she would never be happy unless she knew God was good, and good to you. Follow her looks up to His face, my lamb, and you will see what she sees.”

All the time I had not cried. I had felt too naughty and wretched. But those words went to my heart.

“Mother knows God is good, *and good to me.*”

And I did try to follow her looks upwards to His face.

And He helped me; He did not give up dealing with me.

My new treasure was soon tested. For I remember the very evening after that Sunday afternoon talk with Reuben had begun to clear things a little to me, I ventured to say to my stepmother when I kissed her for the night, that I really hoped now I should be good, for I thought I had a little love to God, and He would help me.

My heart was glowing, yet it cost me much to stammer out those words. To me it was like a confession. It was in the Oak Parlour. She was looking out of the window. She turned round, a little surprised, and questioned me with her eyes till I coloured crimson; but she only said :—

“Very well, Bridget. I am sure I hope you will be good. You are liable to very violent ebullitions of feeling. I think it was two days since you called me cruel because your kitten was whipped for stealing cream, and three days since you tried to take up your brother and kiss him when he was naughty and was put in the corner, and threw yourself into a frantic rage with me because I would not let you, which your father saw; and four days since you sate sobbing half an hour, as if your heart would break, because you had torn your pinafore, and had to mend it, instead of playing in the garden. You are subject to very vehement changes of emotion. I suppose this is one of them. I hope it will last, and that you will in future wash your hands in time for dinner, and keep your hair smooth. *I judge by fruits.*”

I crept humbled away, with the feeling one has in seeing the dog in Landseer's picture, with wistful eyes and appealing paws, entreating the parrot for a crumb of cheese.

Yet I believe the hail-showers and glaciers of my childhood were good for me, as well as its sunshine and soft dews. I went away saddened, but no more chilled to the heart: for I had learned that the sunshine and the dews, and soft brooding warm wings of ever-present love were at least as real as the cold. The key was in my hand; it has never been quite lost since; and secret after secret is unlocked to me whenever I touch the doors of hidden chambers with it.

So, as it happened, my feeling after mother became at last a feeling after God, and finding Him, which, I suppose, was part at least of what He meant.

It was on the Sunday after this that I was thinking I wished mother had been among some “goodly fellowship” or “glorious company” or “noble army” mentioned in the *Zi Deum*, that I might have been sure she was among those we sang about as praising with

us. And then it occurred to me that the Holy Church throughout the world could not mean the little bit of it where we are and which we see; where the prophets and apostles are not any longer.

I remembered Reuben's words, and all at once a heavy roof seemed lifted off from the world, and I followed Mother's eyes up to his face, and saw that the church of our old town was only a little corner of the great Church throughout the world which is always praising Him; and that I down in the dark room, and Mother up in the light where she was waiting for me, without anything between, were singing our *Te Deum* together.

Thus the service gradually grew to shine out on me, bit by bit, like far-off fields on our own moors lighted up one by one by the sun.

My attention to the sermon was less endangered by external objects; for I was always caused during its delivery to subside into the depths of a great pew, above whose walls nothing was visible to me but my uncle, Parson Fyford, the top of Miss Felicity's whalebone hood, the bows in Madam Glanvil's bonnet, which used periodically to sway about and disappear, and then to recover and erect themselves inexplicably in a defiant manner; the grave face of Reuben Pengelly above the choir gallery,

and the trees waving in the churchyard outside the windows.

I remember wondering why my Uncle Fyford put on quite a different voice from that in which he spoke to us during the week, and whether I should ever be expected to understand what he said.

But my most vivid recollections of the sermon, especially after that Sunday afternoon with Reuben in the foundry-yard, were of a time of delicious rest, when the two people who were kindest to me in the world were looking serenely down on me, and Piers being, by father's express sanction, allowed to go to sleep, was leaning his sleepy little head against me, and I was feeling like a little mother to him, with one hand around him, and the other hand nestled in father's; whilst above us was the dear sacred name on a white marble tablet, and a consciousness of a sacred corner outside in the churchyard, and of something more sacred and tenderer still above us in the sky; a light deeper than the sunlight, a smile kinder than father's, embracing mother and us, all.

And eager and restless as I was, the sermon did not seem long to me; and a heaven "where congregations ne'er break up," would not have seemed to me a terrible threat at all.

THOUGHTS BY THE WAY.

II.

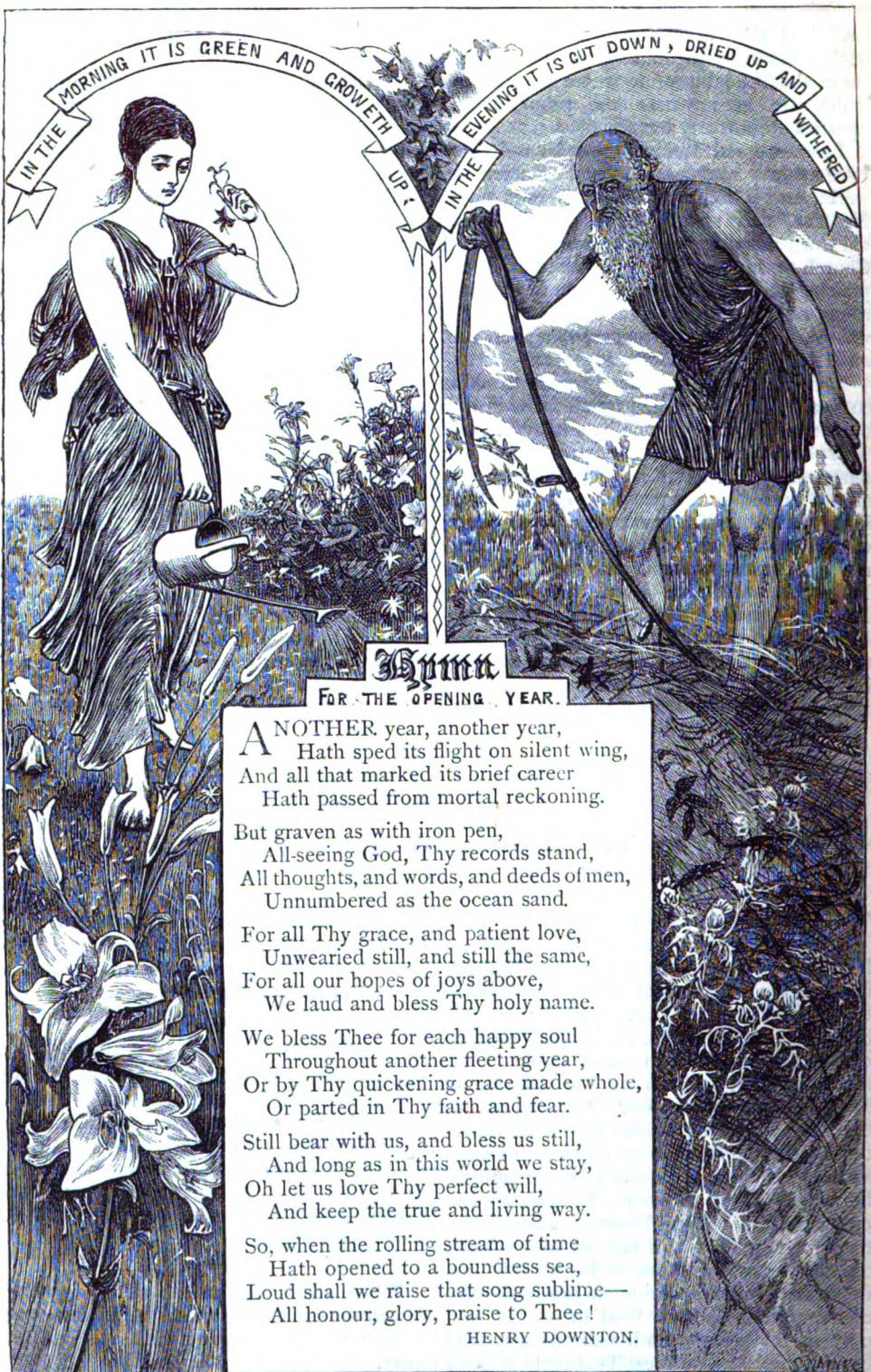
TAKE away the Old Testament, and even though the Christianity of the New were left, there would be an immense want in meeting the different moods of feeling and stages of thought in human nature. The deep sense of sin wrought by the ceremonial of purification has its value to many minds, apart from the light it casts on the doctrine of atonement; and the fiery denunciations of the prophets will be needed till we are nearer the millennium than we seem to be. There is an energetic patriotism and a strong national life which the gospel comes to broaden and enlighten, but not to destroy. There is the tender and pathetic, in view of man's frailty and of the nothingness of his earthly life, musings on the dim future in Job and some of the psalms, such as float in on the soul only in the twilight and with the sound of evening bells. The New Testament is more cheerful, and filled with bright sunshine, but

the other has its time and truth to many hearts—to all hearts at certain hours. The evening and the morning are still needed, as at first, to make the full day.

In a fiction artistically constructed, the catastrophe must be logically connected with the characters and the whole plan. The villain must be punished, not by accident, but as the result of his conduct. This is a testimony from art to moral order—to what ought to be, and shall be. The universe is the highest work of art, and shall come forth as a complete whole.

When some men speak of nailing their flag to the mast, they would be more correct if they spoke of nailing their ship to the quay.

JOHN KER.



Hymn

FOR THE OPENING YEAR.

ANOTHER year, another year,
Hath sped its flight on silent wing,
And all that marked its brief career
Hath passed from mortal reckoning.

But graven as with iron pen,
All-seeing God, Thy records stand,
All thoughts, and words, and deeds of men,
Unnumbered as the ocean sand.

For all Thy grace, and patient love,
Unwearied still, and still the same,
For all our hopes of joys above,
We laud and bless Thy holy name.

We bless Thee for each happy soul
Throughout another fleeting year,
Or by Thy quickening grace made whole,
Or parted in Thy faith and fear.

Still bear with us, and bless us still,
And long as in this world we stay,
Oh let us love Thy perfect will,
And keep the true and living way.

So, when the rolling stream of time
Hath opened to a boundless sea,
Loud shall we raise that song sublime—
All honour, glory, praise to Thee!

HENRY DOWNTON.

ON MONEY.

BY THE REV. A. W. THOROLD, M.A.

I.—GETTING AND KEEPING.

IT has been truly said by Sir Henry Taylor, that there are few things in the world of greater importance than money. To despise it is an affectation of virtue, and to ignore it is a confession of folly. See what it can do ! To the bulk of mankind it is the focus of interest, the stimulus of effort, and the instrument of power. In a real and intelligible sense it buys food, heals disease, builds houses, prints books, imparts knowledge, spreads education, moves armies, augments happiness, humanises life, promotes religion. If it is not an end, it is certainly a means to an end. In every condition of life, and in all the circumstances of it, we are perpetually handling and using it for one purpose or another. The temptations to which it exposes us, the sacrifices to which it invites us, the good or the harm for which it enables us, on the one hand help us to see why God gave Solomon riches as a special mark of favour ; on the other, to understand how St. Paul could write of it, "The love of money is the root of all evil."

To use money we must possess it ; and whether we inherit it from others, or acquire it by our own exertion, it is equally a gift from God, and a trust for us.

Any one can see that in making money the conscience is incessantly confronted with the eternal inevitable laws of justice and truth. The exact line of demarcation between right and wrong is always invisible ; but those who have most felt the difficulty of finding it for their own guidance are also most likely to be indulgent to the difficulties of their neighbours. So, when we hear surprise expressed that Christian people can be found to justify either the manufacture or the sale of such articles of consumption as human infirmity converts to purposes of sin, will not a kindly common sense bid them go a little farther back in the problem, and ask how ever it could please a good and just God to create the hop and the vine. There can, however, be no doubt at all that use and habit do blunt the edge of conscience, and that self-interest, when stimulated by a love of gain, first shuts the eye to the moral of the case, and thus blinds it to the harm.

Several other points, however, less palpable, but quite as important, soon turn up in the intricate, but interesting casuistry of this part

of the subject. Is it possible to make too much money? Is speculation lawful? To what extent, and on what grounds are we justified in praying for commercial success?

A certain degree of accumulation seems consistent with that instinct of forethought, which, like our other instincts, we may reasonably conceive to have been implanted in us for legitimate indulgence. When St. Paul appeals to the habit of mankind, of parents laying up for children rather than children for parents, as a ground for his own unwillingness to be burdensome to the Church, his recognition of the practice is tantamount to an approval of it. It is not only reasonable, but praiseworthy that the head of a family should by diligence and frugality be in a position to spare his widow, at the moment when she has care and grief enough in other ways, the additional anxiety of a sudden poverty ; to give his sons enough to start them with in their professions, and to send his daughters not quite empty-handed from their father's house to their husbands'. The hardest life, and much quiet self-denial are unspeakably sweetened to a manly and generous nature by the thought, that when the head and hands that have so steadily worked for others are becoming dust in the ground, the love that nerved to that work, and made it pleasanter than any selfish indulgence, will secure and perpetuate its reward.

But it is quite another thing for a Christian deliberately to make his life one long grind in a counting-house, and to turn not only his youth, but even his later years, into a perpetual slavery, only to swell his personal possessions, and perhaps to point in his own case the Saviour's mournful warning—"Woe unto you rich, for ye have received your consolation." Of course, political economy will treat any hint like this with undisguised contempt ; and sufficiency is a very relative word ; and few young men have sense enough to prefer to make their fortune for themselves ; and what in past and simpler days would have been called a competent, though modest, dowry for an English gentlewoman might now hardly suffice to pay for her clothes. Still wealth, with all its subtle joys, and sense of power, is a great snare and peril. To hundreds and thousands of us covetousness is idolatry, for we put our

money in the place of God to us, when we treat it as our consolation and security—the source of our dignity, the weapon of our defence. Yet it is a poor god to worship; for it takes all the leisure from the life, all the comfort from the home, all the brightness from the face, all the nobleness from the character. If you succeed, it is at the loss both of the sweetness and repose, that are the true charms of human existence; if you fail, you lose both worlds. Thus it is that to the man who fears God, and values his own consistency, and understands something of human nature, and steadily looks on into the other world, the question, sooner or later, will and must occur, “Is not the time come, that I have enough; and shall not I better please God, and help my own salvation, by retiring from the anxieties of my career?” Or, if such may not be, and it will often happen, that the entire relinquishment of active employment has a serious, if not fatal, result, a good man may easily resolve with himself, that the occupation he will continue for its own sake, but henceforward the profit of it shall be for God. Yet there is one noble justification for that plodding, and almost insatiable pursuit of wealth, that so markedly characterizes modern Englishmen. I mean the secret resolute aim of accomplishing, single-handed, some blessed Christian enterprise that shall live after us, and work by us, long after the silver and gold we have acquired have passed to our heirs. There are many among us who have done this; many more who are capable of it if it were pressed home to their consciences as a duty for God. What was the real, the beautiful secret of that passionate love of poverty, which with all the self-love that spoiled it, and the small extravagancies that disfigured it, was still such a moral force, in the Middle Ages, when the Church had all but forgotten how to overcome the world? Was it not in this, that it was endured for Christ’s sake, as a means of resembling and honouring Him. Why cannot we be content, also, to be rich for Christ’s sake, and to try to say, in the deepest sense of the word, “I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need?” There are hundreds and thousands of wealthy men and women in England at this moment, not only making a Christian profession, but eminently worthy of it—who simply from want of direction are blind to their opportunities for glorifying God through the wealth lying idle in their hands. They have ample for their heirs, and for their own needs, and for the decorous conventional

charities that society expects of them—ample, also, for some individual act of useful, practical, permanent munificence, which might be their vase of ointment for the head of their blessed Lord, fragrant and honourable till He comes back in his glory. Yes, each Christian, to whom the blessed opportunity is given, and many more possess it than care to know, should resolve to leave behind some mark of real self-denial to be his monument when he is gone. A church, a school, a bed in a hospital, a mission-house—the support of a missionary; let us choose what we please, only let us do something. The more sacrifice it involves, the more precious in Christ’s sight will the offering be. “She hath done what she could.” How few since Mary’s day have earned that praise!

In trying to think out the abstract lawfulness of speculation, the first thing to make clear is what speculation means. For there are two very different things expressed by the same word. If we simply mean by it the bold and prompt seizing of an opportunity, through the clear foresight that guesses the turn of the market, or the practised skill that calculates how the events of the day will affect exchange, then it is but the legitimate exercise of a special and valuable kind of talent. The welfare of society is often greatly promoted by the happy ventures of commercial enterprise; and to forbid such efforts would be but a feeble and silly attempt to hamstring the energy, and to impede the progress of mankind.

But where speculation is a mere gambling throw in the dark, the rash impulse of a lazy and ignorant hardihood to make in a week what honest work could hardly make in a year; imperilling precious interests on the chance of a die, and fostering in the character just those instincts and tendencies that make industry intolerable, and tempt men to exchange the serious business of life for the risks of a lottery, the individual speculator not only injures himself, but he defrauds the community; injures himself, for he can never enjoy that real sweetness of success, with which honest labour sooner or later rewards us; defrauds the community, since it does not receive from him that contribution of diligent and useful production, which is wanted to augment the general capital of the State.

To a Christian mind one key to the difficulty may be found in that practice of asking God’s blessing on any proposed enterprise, which is the habit of those who fear God. There are clearly two distinct lines of thought

in which prayer about temporal blessings may be conceived to run. There is the prayer for divine guidance as to the *lawfulness* of any particular scheme under consideration. "Will God *sanction* my doing this?" There is also the prayer for *divine blessing* on the scheme, when the decision has been made. "May God *prosper* this now that it is to be done!" It is certain that if good men were more careful to ask for counsel on the propriety of any particular enterprise before making up their minds to it, instead of first deciding, and then asking for success, many mistakes would be avoided, and much distress saved. A man, with wife and children, has five thousand pounds at his disposal, which he has put out at moderate interest on reliable security. One day he sees a prospectus for a railway across Honduras, or perhaps a Japan loan, which would pay him fifteen per cent. His imagination is fired. He appreciates with a vivid and perilous facility the comforts that could be procured, and perhaps the money put by, with so much additional income. He cannot see anything wrong in doing the best he can for himself; really, there is hardly anything to ask about. He makes up his mind, acts, then prays to be prospered, and waits the result of his venture, fortified by the delusive consciousness of having implored the blessing of God. But had he first of all asked to be guided as to the expediency, as well as the lawfulness, of the step he was proposing, He who gives "wisdom to all men," might have made him see, that the augmented income, plus the risk, the anxiety, the feverishness of mind about money engendered by such transactions in ordinary natures, and the love of it for its own sake so easily fostered by any temporary success, do not counterbalance the smaller income, and the surer investment, and the unbroken tranquillity. The "still small voice" might have said, "Leave it alone: 'they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare.' Trust me."

But, assuming that our enterprise is lawful, and that we are justifiably confident of the divine sanction on our undertakings, there still remains a question of interest for those who, just because they so fully believe in prayer, desire to pray reasonably and according to the will of God. Can it be right directly to ask God to prosper our efforts, —which in some cases may amount to a request for ten thousand pounds? or is it better to confine ourselves simply to laying the matter before Him, in the simple confidence of loyal children who wish to tell Him

everything, knowing that He will bless us in this way or in that (without our direct asking), as He may see it to be for our good. The question is complicated by many considerations; and every man must have liberty of conscience about it. The writer's own conviction, however, is clear, that while in spiritual things we should both ask and trust, for there we can have no doubt about the good of what we ask for, in temporal things (beyond actual necessities), after having poured out our heart before God, we should trust and not ask.

For temporal things, up to a certain point, we are indeed both permitted and commanded to pray. "Give us this day our daily bread" is a petition of our Saviour's own dictating; and, though one man's daily bread may mean something very different to another man's: and it is not safe to trust every one with the definition of what the necessities of life may be, there is nevertheless a distinction both reasonable and intelligible, between the prayer that asks God according to his promise to supply our necessities, and the prayer that asks of Him to pour vast wealth into our lap. Our modern society is in such a state of mutual interdependence and entanglement, that often for me to gain, my neighbour must lose; and so the event that enriches me impoverishes him. Then, though it may be good for one man suddenly to step into a position of affluence; it may be ruinous for another man; and God loving the two men equally, will, just because of that love, in one case bestow, in the other deny. Material prosperity—*so far from being the highest good—is in itself neither good nor evil*; but it will turn to good or evil, according to the character with which it is brought in contact, and the spirit in which it is met and used. Surely a thoughtful parent would pause and muse, before out of a choice of blessings at his disposal for some beloved child, he decided on the gift of great riches. May we not reverently suppose that thoughts of this kind pass through the heart of our Heavenly Father as He looks round on us; and is not there wisdom in the self-control that refuses to press Him for a gift, which may be health, and may be poison?

For nothing tries a man more than the sudden loss or gain of money. The loss of it, while it goads some men to an amazing and almost noble effort to recover it, will so sour and paralyze others, that henceforth they cease to be capable of further struggle with the world. The gain of it is good for some, is perhaps worse for more. Men who, while

enjoying a modest competency, have been simple, kind, and charitable, have found in a great accession of wealth an instant occasion for a sordid and miserable inflation. A sudden rush of selfishness will sometimes flood the heart, that think itself permanently raised over the necessities of friendship, or even the protection of Providence. Summer time parches the soil as well as ripens the harvest; and to need man's sympathy is a great help to giving it.

If the first thing about money is to get it, the second is to keep it. And it is not so easy to keep it. Most people have some sort of screw loose in their private money matters. Either they invest it foolishly, or they spend it wastefully; or, what is almost the worst possible thing to do with it, they hoard it covetously; and either way, it is their Lord's money hidden down in the earth, instead of being put out to use for Him.

The investment of money is just one of those questions which it is real wisdom to think over very carefully, till our mind is made up about it; and then, when once settled, it should be put away upon a shelf, to be left there. Money, like every other talent, is to be made the most of; and it is our duty to see that we do make the most of it, or it is worth just so much less, both for our own use, and our power of sharing it with others. But making the most of it does not necessarily mean getting the highest possible return for it; simply, the highest interest compatible with good security.

Now it is quite true that to be able to have all one's property invested in land or consols, there ought to be a great deal of it; and that the difference between three per cent. and six per cent. will often mean to the struggling father of a large family the salary of a gover-

ness, or a boy's schooling, or the summer holiday, or the annual premium on his life insurance. Still the old duke's maxim that "high interest means bad security" is a perfectly sound one. A little more income for ten years, at the cost for losing all for ever afterwards is a poor bargain; and an assured, if less income has a rest and comfort about it, that to a dabbler in foreign bonds, or speculative railways, is often an object of profound envy. It is an old proverb, "never to carry all your eggs in the same basket:" and if your fortune is invested in more securities than one, it must be a storm indeed that robs you of everything. To be living in one's own house is not only to live at less rent: but it permits you to drive a nail in the wall, or to throw two rooms into one without an uneasy dread of the landlord's displeasure. While for country people, it unquestionably gives an interest to life, to watch the trees grow up that your own hands have planted; and year by year to make fresh improvements in what you can bequeath to others, more beautiful, and more valuable than when it first became yours.

After all, as we have said already, the great aim should be to do the best we can in putting out our money, that we may be saved all anxiety about it afterwards. Very few persons out of business life can be safely trusted to make their own investments. It is money well spent to procure the best advice on the subject; and it is true economy when the advice is given, to take it. Fidgetiness often leads to covetousness; perpetually to be fancying that we are on the point of being ruined, or that we are making less interest than we might make, if we managed more cleverly, deteriorates the character, and robs the life of peace.

CUTHBERT OF LINDISFARNE.

PART I.

IN spite of the opinion of such writers as Michelet, the power which ruled the earlier Middle Ages was the power of personal holiness; a blurred and distorted image of holiness it was, but it was the only likeness of this divine attribute which our forefathers knew, "for the word of the Lord was precious in those days, and there was no open vision." We cannot afford to smile when we read of thanes and serfs alike turning out to catch a passing view of a man who was reported to

have received an answer to his prayer, to have subdued a fierce temptation, to have vanquished a demon in a lonely vigil, or to have seen a vision of his God; for it was symptomatic of the intense religious belief which had overcome the hideous paganism of our ancestors. Faulty, groping, superstitious the lives were which received this universal homage; but they were lives whose single aim was sanctification, whose single desire was for communion with God, whose

noblest zeal was evangelization, and whose most irrational austerities were for the purpose of "crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts."

The story of Cuthbert is twelve centuries old. At the time of his birth there were men living, not yet middle-aged, whose fathers remembered the days of the last Emperor of Rome. The Pandects of Justinian were still new. Mahomet was promulgating the Koran, and his followers in the flush of victory had lately desecrated the Holy City. A Christian emperor reigned at Constantinople, still the metropolis of the Eastern empire. The Church, now the mosque, of St. Sophia, lately built by Justinian, still rang with Christian litanies and the hymns of Gregory Nazianzen. Scandinavia was given up to predatory forays and the rites of her wild mythology. France was just emerging from the mythical period of her history. Germany was a vast battle-field of barbaric tribes. Ireland, as the centre of learning and piety, was known as the "Isle of Saints." A portion of Scotland was connected with the rest of Europe by the missionary enterprises of Iona. England was only known as a barbarous nation, divided into seven kingdoms, supposed to be too weak to do aught but make war on each other. Of the other broken fragments of the Roman Empire as little is known. The greater part of Europe was Pagan, and where semi-Christianized, the monastery was the only refuge from the warlike violence of the times. At Rome Gregory the Great reigned, and already in Kent his missionary Augustine was baptizing the fair-haired Saxons by thousands, and building Christian churches with the stones of the lately ruined temples of Diana and Apollo.

The great kingdom of Northumbria was the most powerful of the Saxon Heptarchy, for though Eboracum, and the remains of its magnificence under the Romans, had been swept away by Ida, it had regained its former supremacy, and extended its borders from the Humber to the Forth. Oswald, a pagan prince of the royal house, during an exile among the Scots, had embraced Christianity. Soon after his accession to the Northumbrian throne the Pagan kings, Penda and Cædwalla, ravaged his kingdom, and forced upon him an unequal encounter at Deniseburn. There, with his own hands, he set up a rude wooden cross, and kneeling before it in the midst of his half-pagan army, he offered up an earnest prayer for the help of the Lord Almighty. At dawn of the next day he utterly routed his enemies, and, in

gratitude for his great deliverance he resolved to establish Christianity in Berneira, the northern province of his kingdom. It might have been easy for a powerful and lately victorious sovereign, by force of arms and the pressure of his royal authority, to drive his subjects into the baptismal waters, and produce a temporary cessation from idolatry, after the fashion of certain ancient monarchs; but not so thought and acted this pious and enlightened prince. To bring about this great work he sought not to arms, nor to Deira, which was already Christianized, nor to Italy, from whence had come the all-conquering Augustine, nor to Ireland, still rich in missionary monks, but to the land of his own conversion, and through the mediation of the king of Scotland to the sacred *Icolm Kill*, that green island of the hoarse Atlantic, from which, for more than a century, the light of truth had sparkled here and there in Europe, making the *Rule of Columba* famous on the earth.

Nor was his quest in vain. Cormon, a monk, was at once dispatched; but, after a very brief attempt upon the heathenism of Oswald's subjects, he returned to Iona with the tidings that success was impossible among a people so brutalised and obstinate as the Lowlanders. A brother, who sat by, said in tones of solemn earnestness, "Was it their obstinacy or thy severity? Didst thou forget God's command to give the milk first and the strong meat afterwards?" All eyes were turned towards Aidan the speaker. His own words designated him as the fitting envoy, and shortly afterwards he voluntarily left the "blessed isle," with its blessed activities and blessed peace, and the fraternal intercourse of the monastery, to go forth in the footsteps of many brethren and preach the gospel among the heathen.

When Aidan arrived at Oswald's court he was allowed to choose the seat of his episcopate, but not one of the becks or rivers, not one of the fertile plains or sheltered valleys of the rich northern province, allured the Scottish monk. Memories of Iona's sea-girdled shores, of her almost treeless greenness, of her insular security, doubtless weighed with him in the selection of the island of Lindisfarne. This selection was one among many proofs of Aidan's sagacity. The island was accessible on foot twice a day, and twice a day was insulated by a strait two miles wide, and it was only ten miles from Bamborough, the residence of King Oswald. The fame of the new teacher soon brought the pagan Northumbrians in thousands to this semi-insulated

mission station, and through the long summer days Aidan proclaimed the gospel with King Oswald sitting at his feet to interpret the good news to his subjects, whenever the missionary's imperfect acquaintance with the vernacular rendered his message unintelligible. It was a goodly spectacle. The preaching of Christ soon produced an effect. Churches were built by converted thanes, and Oswald's munificence endowed several monasteries, in which Aidan and others trained English youths for the ministry. In the eighth year of Aidan's episcopate Penda, the heathen king of Mercia, invaded Northumbria, and Oswald was slain with the prayer upon his lips, "Lord God, have mercy upon the souls of our people,"—the first cry of Christian patriotism from the lips of a Saxon. The character of this prince brightens this dreary period of the story of the Heptarchy. He is the ideal of the Christian patriot hero; bold in battle, generous in victory, true in friendship, incapable of suspicion, lowly and devout, and incessantly occupied in seeking the highest good of his subjects. He has been reckoned, perhaps not unjustly, among "the noble army of martyrs." Shortly afterwards, war broke out between Oswy and Oswin, the two princes between whom his kingdom was divided, and was only terminated by the assassination of Oswin, who had won Aidan's friendship by his sincere profession of Christianity. At the time of this unholy deed, the good bishop, who was sorely grieved in spirit for the bloody wars in the land, and their disastrous influence upon its infant Christianity, was dwelling in a "lean-to" of the village church of Bamborough. He was so afflicted by the evil tidings that he sickened, and in twelve days died, in prayer, leaning against a buttress of the church.

On the night on which Bishop Aidan departed, Cuthbert, a shepherd lad, was tending the flock on the bleak slopes of the Lammermuir hills. Of his birthplace and parentage we are uncertain; but it is said that he led a peasant boy's life in the house of "the widow Kenspid, at the west end of the hamlet of Wrangholm." Twelve centuries ago the boys wrestled on the village greens of the northern villages, as they wrestle any summer evening yet. Cuthbert was an athlete, the best leaper and wrestler among them, and, like most lads of fine *physique* and well-developed muscles, he was good-natured, and a general favourite. One evening the youths were diverting themselves on the green, some wrestling, others playing hockey, some standing on their heads,

others lying on the grass, while Cuthbert, unwearied, was in every game, and always successful. A little child (he says) stood apart, constantly praying him to leave off, and at last, with bitter tears, cried out, "Leave off that naughty game," a request which he obeyed as a command, and took the infant home. The lonely boy regarded these words as a message from God, bidding him "seek those things which are above," and ever afterwards spoke of them as his "call." So, from this time, in memories of the day when Aidan signed him with Christ's cross as he came up from the baptismal waters, in dreamy musings on the unseen, in reading heavenly meanings in earthly things, in watching for visions from on high, the years of his boyhood glided by. We read of whole nights spent in prayer as he kept the sheep on the cold uplands of the Lammermuirs, till at last, on the night before referred to (according to Bede), a vision of angels bearing to heaven the soul of the Bishop of Lindisfarne, burst upon his sight, and determined him to devote his energies to a religious career. Thus, at a very early age, Cuthbert left his pastoral cares, the pleasant Lauder water, and the aged friend on whom he had bestowed the name of mother, to "seek the sheep of Christ who are scattered in this naughty world." Where the Lauder water joined the Tweed, and the heavy forest then stretched up to the triple-clefted Eildons, some pious monks from Iona had founded the abbey of Mailross (two miles from the Abbey of Melrose afterwards erected), a humble edifice consisting of a collection of low wooden buildings, at this time presided over by Eata, afterwards Bishop of Lindisfarne. He was absent, and outside the door Baisil the prior was standing with a monk, when an athletic youth rode up, who, after bestowing his horse and spear upon an attendant, went into the church to pray. "This is a servant of God," exclaimed Baisil, by a true intuition, for no man has lived who, in great or lowly work, was more emphatically a *servant*. He lived to do a servant's work with more than a servant's sense of unworthiness, but in the land to which he carried the good tidings, the name of Cuthbert of Lindisfarne is foremost on the list of those confessors whose faith and works illuminate the cold grey dawn of English Church history.

Good Baisil's intuition had prepared him to accede to the request made shortly afterwards by Cuthbert for admission into the brotherhood. The ardent devotion of the young man, and his rapid progress under instruction made him a great favourite with the

prior, and a most tender and endearing friend, ship sprang up between them.

There was no wilder region in all Northumbria than that which these missionary monks were seeking to reclaim for Christ. Sedgy stretches, dotted here and there by rude kraals of huts, harbouring a barbarous peasantry; legions of hoarse-voiced water-fowl; vast bogs, over which the few travellers picked their way cautiously, looking out at once for holes and marauders; dense forests, wolf-haunted; and bleak uplands, smitten by the east winds, were the physical features of the missionary field. Mailross was the chief mission-station of northern Northumbria; and the slopes and plains where now the rich harvests of the Lowlands wave, were then the abode of wild beasts and half-civilised men. Not that the Northumbrian peasants were altogether savage, like the "unintelligible men" of Wales and Wessex, or the tribes north and west of the Grampians. The Northumbrian court was Christian, and sturdy and independent as the thralls might be, they were influenced by the thanes, who in their turn were influenced by the king. It is almost needless to add that in the seventh century the word "influence," as applied to the dealings of thanes with thralls, meant something more than the power which position always gives to persuasion. Absolute pagan worship had consequently become almost extinct in Berneira, though we should hesitate to acknowledge as Christianity that which succeeded it. When the monks of Mailross went forth to teach the peasants of the deep love of a personal God, they had to work on a mixture of enforced compliance with Christian rites and willing adherence to pagan superstitions. The All-Father and the Thunderer were far dearer to the rustics than the victim who perished in far-off Jerusalem, and they attributed the misfortunes which befell the enemies of the new faith to the displeasure of the ancestral deities. As the log rafts destined for the construction of Tynemouth Priory drifted helplessly out to sea, with their monkish labourers upon them, the churls who looked on cried, "Let no man pray for these men, nor God pity them, who have taken from us our old worship; and how their new-fangled customs are to be observed, nobody knows."

It was to teach these benighted ones of the Lord of heaven and earth, incarnate, and dying on Calvary, that Cuthbert went forth in his youth, vigour, and apostolic zeal. The people were not stolid, and everywhere he obtained large audiences, all the more ready

to receive his message because he was no learned man from Italy or Ireland, and needed not an interpreter like these, or even like the Scottish monks from Lindisfarne; for the rude accents of Northumbria were on his tongue, and when he sought out the rough and poor, they knew that he was a peasant like themselves, fresh from keeping sheep. He was a man, too, of a vigorous frame, and at this time had nothing of the ascetic about him; and though abstemious in drink, he considered that a hearty dinner was an essential part of the day's duty. He was not a learned man, but he was a loving one. The fire of youth was tempered by a singular sweetness, which shone in his face and manner; and these natural advantages, added to strong convictions, a keen sense of humour, and vigorous common sense, gave him a peculiar command over his hearers, to whose emotions and reason he simultaneously appealed. So—sometimes on foot, sometimes on horseback, battling with every species of hardship—the young monk traversed northern Northumbria, and afterwards penetrated the wild regions of Galloway, then called in England "the land of the Picts." It was hopeful and remunerative toil. The people were sometimes indignant, sometimes impracticable, but never apathetic.

Cuthbert, along with Luther and many other moderns, had a vivid belief in the personality and active agency of the devil. He regarded his missionary work as a direct onslaught upon the kingdom of Satan, and all opposition to it as the direct work of the "strong man armed." This belief gave a peculiar colouring to his view of both his successes and disappointments, as well as to his teaching. He invariably prefaced his addresses with a caution against both the open and masked attacks of the "roaring lion." For many years Cuthbert devoted himself with marvellous zeal and intensity to the work of preaching the gospel, visiting the wildest districts, and even scaling the rocky fastnesses of robbers in search of the lost sheep of Christ. An extraordinary account is given by Bede of the difficulties which he encountered and the prejudices which he combated. One of the last, under a form adapted to altered circumstances, was not fully eradicated from the Border for a thousand years after his death, namely, the use of incantations and other demoniacal mysteries, on behalf of dying persons who had embraced the Christian faith. Among the thousands of converts brought out from Paganism, and that mixture of Paganism and Christianity to which refer-

ence has been made before, during these years of evangelization, Cuthbert was most severe in his requirements. He preached the baptism of John as well as the gospel of Jesus. In his estimation, baptism was worth nothing unless the baptismal robes were kept unspotted from the world. No missionary has ever more strongly insisted upon the complete abandonment of ancestral superstitions, or upon a life of godliness, meekness, and purity.

But, though his success in these respects has justly earned for him the title of the "Apostle of Northumbria," it was not even by an arm so vigorous as his that the old tree could be altogether felled. A current of the thought and practice of the ancient Paganism ran for several generations underneath the modern Christianity. The supposed miraculous interventions of Cuthbert are limited to North Anglia; the mythic horse and bull connected with the Teutonic rites re-appear in his legendary history; and throughout the marvellous wanderings of his cofined corpse, the feeling which erected oratories and churches where the body rested is only the same (sanctified by the Christian faith) which led the Saxon to bring to "Woden the Wanderer" gifts on all high hills and by every wayside.

In the midst of these apostolic labours, Cuthbert was removed to Ripon to serve as hospitaller in Ripon monastery, to which Eata, the pious abbot of Mailross, had been appointed. The duty of receiving and serving strangers was generally considered one fraught with peril to young monks, as it brought them into contact with many godless and vain persons, but Cuthbert passed through the ordeal with singular fidelity to his profession, and was rejoiced to return to Mailross that he might further profit by the precepts and example of Baisil. A short time afterwards an epidemic, which ravaged and decimated the north of England, lighted on Mailross, and Cuthbert was among the first stricken. The disease progressed with its usual rapidity, and his brethren despaired of his life, but knowing how deeply his loss would affect the community, they devoted one whole night to prayer for his recovery. At daybreak his delirium had ceased, and they told him of their intercessions. "Then why am I lying here?" he asked, "for it is not to be believed that God despises the prayers of so many good men. Give me my stick and shoes." So saying, he rose, aided by his staff, and though he never fully recovered the shock of this illness, yet, thanks to his strong will and vigorous constitution, he began to mend from that very hour.

But deep sorrow awaited him. He had hardly regained his strength, when Baisil, his beloved master and friend, was laid low with the epidemic. Most touching is the brief story of the death of this holy man. "Cuthbert," he said, "you have recovered, and you must live a while longer; as to myself, I must die, and that soon, therefore I would have you to learn so long as I am able to teach." Cuthbert answered, "What is there that it would be advisable for us to read together that would occupy me for a week?" "St. John the Evangelist," replied Baisil, "I have a copy of it stitched in seven divisions; one of which, by the help of God, we may read daily, I, wherever need is, explaining it to thee." So for the space of seven days the disciple whom Jesus loved spoke to the dying prior and his mourning pupil, till on the eighth day, when the task was just completed, the Master Himself broke in upon their sublime converse, and Baisil and He departed together. Long years afterwards, this Gospel of John was laid in the coffin which contained the remains of Cuthbert, Bishop of Lindisfarne.

After the good Baisil's death Cuthbert became Prior of Mailross, and not satisfied either with the penitential austerities or the practices of a purely contemplative piety, which even then were crowding into monasteries, he redoubled his evangelistic labours, and, again traversing all Northumbria, he brought thousands of its half-heathenish inhabitants into a state of Christian docility. Of this, perhaps the best part of Cuthbert's career, six signal miracles are related by his biographers, which may be passed over advantageously, in favour of two simple tales connected with his missionary journeys, which we are as safe in accepting as in rejecting. On one occasion Cuthbert left Mailross accompanied only by a boy, and when the day was far spent, and both, tired and hungry, found themselves still far from their journey's end, the elder asked the younger, "Tell me, boy, where you intend to rest to-day, or whether you know any one on this path to give us food and shelter for the night?" "That's just what I've been thinking myself," the neophyte replied, "for we brought out no supper with us, and I know nobody on this road likely to give us any. It's a long way to travel fasting." The elder was not too tired to be hopeful, and said cheerfully, "Trust and hope in God, boy; he never dies of hunger who serves God faithfully. Look at that eagle flying over head; God can feed us through him if He likes." The eagle

wheeled out of sight, but when they came to one of those wood-fringed beckes which brighten the slopes of the Border hills, they beheld him resting on the bank with his prey. "Sec," cried Cuthbert, "there is our supper settled for us as I told you. Run, boy, and bring the meat God sends us." The eagle, suddenly startled, flew away, leaving on the bank a good-sized fish, which the boy seized upon in triumph. "What have you done?" asked the humane evangelist; "why don't you give the provider his share?"

Quick, cut the fish in half and give the eagle the piece he deserves." So the bird and the travellers were both fed. On another occasion he was coasting along the shores of Galloway on a missionary tour in a small boat, with two brethren as his companions, when a storm drove them upon an uninhabited coast, and hindered for a time their further progress. The wind raged persistently from the same quarter, and having after a few days exhausted their provisions, they were in imminent danger of starvation.



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Cuthbert, however, never lost the cheerfulness and humour which contributed largely to his success, and addressed his companion somewhat jocularly, even under these dismal circumstances. "Why don't you look for some way out of your difficulties? The snow closes our way along the shore, the storm our way over the sea; the way to heaven, however, is still open to our prayers." So they wandered over the rocks, praying as they went, and presently found in a hole some pieces of seal's flesh, ready cooked, left there probably by some wandering seal hunters. They gave thanks and ate ravenously, and

the next day the sea offered no obstacle to their further progress.

We call such circumstances coincidences, or, at the most, providences, but the seventh century was as ready to believe in direct divine interposition as the nineteenth is to ignore it; and the "unilluminated" contemporaries of Cuthbert place these most simple incidents in the same category of miracles as the marvels vouchsafed to Elijah. The stories in themselves are credible enough, and there is a healthy, hearty, manly tone about them, which contrasts forcibly with the maudlin sentimentality of many of the legends

concerning "saints." It is very probable that a large number of the "miracles" reported in these early biographies rest upon a solid substratum of fact, magnified or distorted by the pious, imaginative, and superstitious faith of our ancestors.

After bringing multitudes of the Northumbrians to a saving knowledge of the true God, and imbuing his brethren with a spirit of fervent zeal and piety, Cuthbert left Mailross to become prior of the great monastery of Lindisfarne, of which his friend Eata was abbot, bearing with him the character indicated by Basil's first address to him, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" This was in 664. Shortly before, in consequence of the decision of the *Witenagemot* at Whitby, establishing the Roman ideas on the Eastern and tonsure disputes, Lindisfarne had sustained a great blow in the departure of the Scottish monks by whom it had been ruled, and who refused to accept the new order. Eata, the new abbot, was a disciple of Aidan, so also was Cuthbert, the new prior; but both accepted the decision of Whitby, and their first task on removing to Lindisfarne was to conciliate the remainder of its inmates to Roman rule. The monastery was not only weakened by the departure of the Scottish monks, but had just been decimated by a terrible pestilence which had swept over Northumbria. However, the fame of the piety of Eata and Cuthbert soon raised it to more than its former glory. It was crowded with monks at once remarkable for their personal sanctity and their evangelistic zeal, and though the Rule of Columba was exchanged for the Rule of Benedict, and the order of prayer was altered, and the monks were clothed in the Benedictine habit, the old missionary spirit imported from Iona had lost none of its aggressive tendencies, and Lindisfarne, under Cuthbert, made perpetual onslaughts upon the superstitions and low nominal Christianity of all Northumbria.

There were no drones among the monks of Lindisfarne, little learned leisure, no pomp, no luxuries. They built their own wooden churches, which were thatched with reeds and strewn with bent, and their humble wattled habitations, tilled their own soil, and wove the stuff for their coarse garments of undyed wool. The vow of poverty was sacredly kept, the rigid discipline sacredly observed. Owing to the frightful abuses which some years later crept into monastic institutions, rendering their suppression a necessity when the fierce light of the Reformation beat upon them, we are in some

danger of forgetting that "from the beginning it was not so." In the days of Cuthbert, the monasteries were not only the great religious but the great civilising influence—the only seats of learning, biblical and classical—the only schools of music, painting, and architecture. They were, in fact, the mission stations of a semi-pagan land, the colleges in which the future preachers and teachers of England were trained, the schools to which kings, nobles, and thralls resorted for instruction in the Christian faith, the abodes in which copies of the Scripture were multiplied at the cost of infinite labour, the refuges to which all the perplexed and afflicted resorted in their time of need.

Lindisfarne was not only the great centre of missionary activity, but a dwelling from which the sound of prayer and praise ascended continually to heaven. The monks, at whose feet kings and thanes were sitting for instruction, were as poor as those of Mailross, spending the money bestowed upon them in gifts to the poor, and the ransom of slaves and prisoners of war. Repose alternated with movement and activity. Missionaries were daily returning to the Holy Island, with news of the spread of the gospel throughout the land, of kings entering the baptismal waters along with the humblest of their subjects, of ill-gotten wealth given up to the work of the Church, of thousands pressing to hear the glad tidings. So speaking, they fired the younger brethren with zeal, while they refreshed themselves with the study of the Scriptures, with solitary meditation, and in committing to memory those psalms and hymns which were already the war cries of an aggressive Christianity. Then, again, going forth, two and two, after drinking of the still waters of comfort, the Lindisfarne brethren preached Christ, bearing precious seed, sowing beside all waters, to return again with rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them. It might have been supposed that the conviction which led Cuthbert, many years afterwards, to seek a hermit's cell, was the result of work untempered by worship; but it was not so, for the custom of Lindisfarne had absolutely wedded the twain. "The Hours" were rigidly observed, solitary meditation was a rule as well as a delight. As the east wind set towards the Northumbrian shore, there was never a midnight on which the solemn strains of the Ambrosian hymn, *Mediæ noctis tempus est*, were not wafted upon the ears of the peasants, and when the

long lines of breakers rolled in over ugly reefs, to spread themselves over the broad brown sands, and the dawn flushed the pale, cold waves of the eastern sea with its first ruddy light, the returning fishers were awed into prayerfulness by the sweet cadence of the "hymn for the cock-crowing," *Æterne rerum conditor*, with which Ambrose had sustained

the hearts of his flock beleaguered in the Milan Basilica two centuries before.

These were the surroundings amidst which Cuthbert found himself when he entered upon his duties as prior of Lindisfarne in 664. From henceforth his life emerges into the detailed narrative bequeathed to us by an anonymous monk of Lindisfarne.

ISABELLA L. BIRD.

BEGINNING WITH THE YEAR.

TO THE YOUNG.

AS these words to the young will be read at the beginning of the year—although suitable to any time—it will be seasonable to have as the subject of them, "*the beginning of the religious life.*"

We all know it is no easy matter, in some instances, to determine with certainty the real source, or sources, of a river. In the case of most of the great rivers, the sources are not easily reached—they are far off and high up; hundreds or thousands of miles must be trodden by the adventurous traveller before he comes even into the region where they may be found. And when he is there, standing by the very cradle of the waters, he finds, it may be, several streams from different hillsides, each having some claim to the honour of being the head: and when he, at length, assigns the honour to some one—if he does not give it equally to several—he does this on no inevitable principle of law for the case, but from taste, from personal opinion, or in a quite arbitrary manner. Or he finds that he can trace the river back to some one hillside or "mossy bed," out of which, however, a good many "new-born rills" come "trickling." So that while the whole earthly source of the river may be said, in one way, to lie quite open to the view, yet no human power can tell, exactly, where the flow begins. Or, again, he finds that the river issues at once, and in a considerable fountain, from the bosom of the earth. "Here at least can be no uncertainty." Yet even here an intelligent traveller has to think, that no water comes out of the earth that did not go into it. His imagination therefore starts on a subterranean journey, following the bendings of the strata, and comes out to the light once more perhaps in a moss, or mountain hollow, or amid the mists and showers of mountain tops. In fact, it does come to this, most literally and simply, that every river begins in the air.

Herein is a parable for behoof of those who are apt to be over-wise, or over-curious, or over-anxious, about the real beginning of the religious life in the individual. What if we are not able to find it? What if it lies deep down, or far back, within the circle of that mystery which will be found to envelop all vital beginnings? Are we the worse for not knowing what God never meant us to know?—for not seeing what only Omniscience can descry? Jeremiah was "sanctified before he came forth out of the womb,"—his religion, implicitly, began before his life. Timothy had "faith" which "dwelt first in his grandmother," and then "in his mother." Paul was converted on the way to Damascus, we may say almost in a moment. But who can tell how many preparatory things had led up to that wonderful change—his religious education and his incorruptible conscience among them? Separate streams of influence flow into each individual being from the first, and we never can be sure that we stand at the ultimate springs. Religion in the soul, like water in the river, comes originally out of the air. "Every good gift, and every perfect gift, cometh down from above."

But now, who cares for the real fountal springs of the rivers of the world, beyond a few scientific persons? Manifestly, the thing of real interest to men concerning a river is, that it really becomes and continues such—that it irrigates the country through which it flows, turns the mill-wheel, washes the city that sits clean on its banks, and, as it rolls to the sea, becomes the shelter of ships, and the highway of nations. The Nile will be just the Nile, neither more nor less, after its sources have been discovered and determined.

How a young man becomes religious—under what specific impressions and emotions—is in reality a quite secondary question. But that he should really become and continue religious and good, matters everything to him—

self, and matters very much also to many other people who are and will be connected with him. Now I want in this paper to commend to the young, and especially to young men, the practical beginning of the religious life—its first great comprehensive act—viz., a present, conscious, full-hearted, consecration to God. This practical beginning is common to all the varieties of religious experience. In this they all converge.* There are those who may be said, in a manner, to enter the kingdom of God in their birth, and who as far as can be known grow up in its grace—not without difficulties and struggles, yet, on the whole truly, “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” Surely it is not unreasonable to invite such young people to make a pause at the gate of this year and at the gate of their own manhood and womanhood, in order to realise, express, and confirm in one glad solemn act their own religious life. There are those who, if born in the kingdom, went early out of it (I am speaking of the facts as they seem, and in no way either advancing or opposing any doctrinal theory) and far away. But they have been “converted”—turned round, and, with homeward yearnings in their hearts, set on the homeward way. Surely we may invite them to corroborate in their own consciousness and by their own acts what they hope God has done for them. What is conversion that does not become consecration, but an empty name, a metaphysical subtlety as shifting as the sands? There are those too who sometimes hope that they have had grace from the first, but are not quite sure. Then let them now make sure—not by giving to the past one anxious thought, the less they think of it the better, but by accepting the grace which is present, and which is full, free, and “sufficient” for all the needs of those who trust in it, and by offering fealty and life service to God. And there are those who know and feel that they are not “of the household of faith,” and that they are not living a trustful and obedient life; who yet at times seem almost to long for it, and feel as though they could begin it at once if they might, and were it not that the profound pre-requisite of the new birth in order to any real goodness in man, stands darkly in their imagination as a thing yet unfulfilled, and which they have, of themselves, no power to fulfil. To those in this condition I would call with peculiar earnestness to come forward at once and without misgiving, to the humble and resolute discharge of this great and

blessed duty of personal consecration to God through Jesus Christ: and let them not doubt, but most steadfastly believe, that whatever needs to be done by divine power will not be left undone, and that God's regenerating grace will be the strength of every good purpose they form, and the vital air of every holy thought they cherish. No young man alive who “repents”—changes his mind, and “converts himself”—turns or changes his whole behaviour and outward life, according to the apostolic exhortation of Acts iii. 19, where both verbs are in the active form, will be left unconverted of God. What is this consecration which we are commending but conversion realised, and corroborated, and declared? I wish I knew how to proclaim with energy and emphasis enough, the simple, and when believed all-enabling truth, that we have nothing to do but begin. “Come! for all things are now ready.” “Who is willing to consecrate himself?”

1. Let it be laid deeply in the mind, and firmly held in belief, *that this is possible*. Possible to every living human creature. More easily possible, if we may say so, to the young, than to those who have lived a number of years uncommitted and at large. Possible—not merely according to some theological or philosophic theory which is constructed to cover human life, and to which the hardest facts are made to bend, but practically and really possible, just as other things are, which we seriously think of, resolve on, and do. So long as doubts on this point are entertained, or even permitted by sufferance, a fatal paralysis, more or less deep, will lie on the very nerve of moral decision, on the very spring of the living will. It were well, therefore, to compel these doubts to definiteness and express themselves, one by one, that they may, one by one, be answered. “Can I be pardoned?” This question is sure to be among the first to arise, and is sure to flit in a dim and darkening way about the heart; and in moments of silence the croaking answer of the poet's famous raven will seem to fill the air—Pardoned? “Never, never more!” That a great act of divine forgiveness must precede and accompany a real beginning of religious living in man is, of necessity, assumed. The very idea of consecration, dated from “this present,” supposes the opposite of that, or the lack of that hitherto. And the opposite of that is sin—daily forgetfulnesses and denials of God, heedlessness, passion, consecration to self. We never read in the Bible of small forgivenesses for few and little sins. Our “sins, which are many” and “great,”

are forgiven. The dark thunder-cloud is "blotted out;" the mountain is cast into the sea. "And is this really possible?" is the question; a question which agitates and darkens the young mind quite as much as it sometimes does those of riper years. And some wise men (men who are wise in other things) answer the question in the negative—say "No: we shall find no place for repentance, though we seek it carefully with tears. Nature" (nature is their God) "never relents; nor cancels; nor goes back; no forgiveness is possible: only amendment." A sad case, indeed! That declared to be impossible, without which, it is felt, amendment cannot even begin! If this were all we had to look to, and speak of to each other, the feeling would soon be universal that the less we speak of religious things to each other the better. But on the forefront of the gospel we see the word "forgiveness." Full acquittance and release are written out, as in larger letters, in the preface to the message, so that none need despair, and so that each may see that there is for him the glorious possibility of entering upon a new and consecrated life, disburdened and unimpeded. "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." "To the Lord our God belong forgivenesses." They are of his very nature. The forgiving disposition is his eternally; and, instead of being checked and frozen by the perpetual calls of our need, is only brought out the more by the sight of human miseries and anxieties. Does any one wish, in fresh youth, to begin to live unto God? The Saviour meets him with this word—"Thy sins are forgiven thee."

"But have I got anything really worthy in me to consecrate? For after all if one comes forward to a great altar with an offering, there ought to be some worth in the offering. Am I conscious of any in myself? Am I not conscious of the very reverse? Would it not be better to wait until there has been healing, and growth, and some gatherings of goodness, and then come—with some treasure in the vessel for the Master's use?" Oh, no! Seven times no. For there never will be treasure in the vessel until it is consecrated. There can be no healing of our moral nature, no growing of our spiritual affections and principles away from God. His touch is healing and strength. His breath is purity. His loving-kindness is better than life.

"But consecration is a promise for the future—for all the future. How dare we pledge ourselves to anything so vast? What security have we for the accomplishment of

this immense promise to God that we shall be his for ever?" The answer is, that we have no security in ourselves at all, and that we take security of God. Rather we, by gracious allowance, give God security in himself for the fulfilment of our life-vow. We refer Him to his own promise, to his own fidelity, and feel that in so doing we are building on the rock.

In one word, the gospel, in its whole practical intent and influence on the life and character, is a donation of "power." We, strengthless in ourselves, are able to do all things through Christ strengthening. His grace is sufficient. It is a gift to us of divine ability, perpetually renewed. It enables us to do and be all we will and all we wish as renewed creatures; and it is peculiarly present and available to all who sincerely wish to be renewed and consecrated to God.

2. *This consecration is a great act*—the greatest which can be performed by a single individual. If we can reach greatness at all, it will be evidently in such an act as this—conscious and voluntary offering up of ourselves, in wholeness, and without any reserve, unto God. To realise this fully and intensely will be some help to the doing of it. As thus:—"I am now come to myself—to my better, real self. I am henceforth to put away from my being the usurping lower self which had grown around the better, and pressed it almost to extinction. I am to 'put off the old man' which had been creeping and growing around me, although I am yet so young. I am now to wear 'the beauty of the Lord my God upon me'—to 'live, and move, and have my' intellectual and moral 'being in Him.' I am to summon my best powers and dedicate them to the best uses. My strongest affections and passions are now to be set on the noblest, purest, fairest objects. My life is now to be ruled by conscience, drawn out in practical wisdom from day to day, made strong in justice, touched by sensibility, filled with self-sacrificing love, and so offered to God! And this, not for a little while, but for ever! A great act, assuredly, if I am capable of a great act at all. I am fearfully and wonderfully made!" Yes. You are ascending the steps of that great altar, before which, when you reverently stand, you will be as in the sight of men and angels! You are beginning the performance of a continuous act, which will inseparably associate you with all the loyalty and faithfulness in the universe! You may be said now, and thus, almost to clasp hands with the excellent of the earth, and the illustrious of the sky.

3. This act, however, can be great only in proportion *as it is done in wholeness*. We know what a crack is in a costly vase: what a deep stain or cut is in a fine painting: what a little oozing of water through the bank of a reservoir may come to: what a worm can do at the heart of an acorn, or at the root of a flower. These are emblems by no means too strong of an act of professed consecration not made in wholeness. In the old times God never would accept a sacrifice with a flaw. He rejected such an offering with emphatic indignation. It might be much or little in itself—bullock, lamb, turtle-dove, or young pigeon—all that was left to the disposition, and made dependent on the circumstances, of the offerer, but it *must* be without blemish. Wholeness does not mean perfection realised; but it does mean perfection purposed. It means that no allowance is given to sin by the self-devoting soul; that there is no reservation of anything possessed; and that the future, without stipulation, is put into the hands of God. Religion, as a business and an enterprise in this world, will be found, by the individual, to be easy or difficult exactly in the proportion in which there has been wholeness, or the opposite, in the individual consecration. When all the inward powers and emotions, and all the more outward activities are united in a holy happy league, and held, day by day, in singleness of service, life is comparatively easy. While, on the other hand, if there be internal dissension among the powers, or an allowed infirmity in the general purpose, storms and struggles will of necessity arise. No doubt there are some natures which make storm as they go. They have that in them which changes the moral atmosphere and challenges opposition. But then, as compensation, such natures experience a kind of joy in conflict, which in their case adds nothing, or very little, to the difficulty of religious obedience. No doubt also there are some natures which make peace as they go. By temperament they have it, as much as by religious faithfulness. But the general truth remains that we partly make the conditions of our own life as we pass along. The spirit and aim of the pilgrim make the rough or smooth path. "I entreated thy favour with my whole heart." "Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments."

4. Surely it were well to give this act of consecration *such embodiment and expression* as will present it, and keep it before the mind in the most solemn and affecting light.

Each one must find for himself the best means of doing this. It may be that you can do it all, and do it best, in the silence of the mind. Or, it may be wise for you to speak it, in some solemn sentences, for your own hearing. What should hinder a young man from opening the Bible some night, in the quiet of his own room, and reading out David's words to God, as his own—"O Lord, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant. Thou hast loosed my bonds?" Or you might even *write* it out, as a covenant between yourself and God for ever. "Set your hand and seal to it," says the saintly Doddridge, "that on such a day of such a month and year, and at such a place, on full consideration, you came to this happy resolution—that whatever others might do, you would serve the Lord." He then gives a form of consecration at some length, of which these solemn and tender words make the close—"Receive, O heavenly Father, thy returning prodigal! Wash me in the blood of thy dear Son! Clothe me with thy perfect righteousness, and sanctify me throughout by the power of thy Spirit. And, O Lord, when thou seest the agonies of dissolving nature upon me, remember this covenant even though I should then be incapable of recollecting it, and look with pitying eye upon thy dying child. Put strength and confidence into my departing spirit, and receive it to the embraces of thine everlasting love."

5. Finally, whatever form the self-consecration may take, give good heed that it be transacted and accomplished *in very humble and sincere dependence on divine grace*. You know not what the future is to be—what suns may shine, what storms may blow, what fires may burn, what friends may be snatched from you, how hard it may be in some places and times of that unknown future to keep your vow; and it may, therefore, seem almost presumptuous to make it. Meet and cover all that unknown future with this one promise, which has all other promises in the heart of it—"My grace is sufficient for thee." Trusting to that one promise, you cannot fail. He who makes that promise will keep it to your heart's comfort, in all the changes of your life, and through the darkness of your dying hour. Rivers must freeze in their fountains, and flowers wither to their roots, and the light die out of every star, before it can fail in fulfilment. He who gives himself to God, has God as the strength of his heart and his portion for ever.

ALEXANDER RALEIGH.

A MISTAKE.

SCENE I.

THE summer sun was high and strong,
 And dust was on the traveller's feet;
 Oh weary was the stage and long,
 And burning was the early heat.
 There was a pause. For Ernest stood
 Upon the borders of a wood.
 Between him and his home it lay,
 Stretching in mystery away.
 What might be there he could not tell,
 Of briery steep or mossy dell,
 Of bog or brake, of glen or glade,
 All hidden by the dim green shade.
 He had not passed that way before;
 And wonderingly he waited now,
 While mystic voices, o'er and o'er,
 Soft whispered on from bough to bough.
 Oh was it only wind and trees,
 That made such gentle whisperings?
 Or was it some sweet spirit-breeze
 That bore a message on its wings,
 And bid the traveller, that day,
 Go forward on his woodland way?
 How should he know? He had no clue;
 And more than one fair opening lay
 Before him, where the broad boughs threw
 Cool, restful shade across the way.
 Which should he choose? He could not trace
 The onward track by vision keen;
 The drooping branches interlace,
 Not far the winding paths are seen.
 Oh for a sign! Were choice not right,
 Was no return, for well he knew
 The hours were short, and swift the night;
 Once entered, he must hasten through.
 For what hath been can never be
 As if it had not been at all;
 We gaze, but nevermore can we
 Retrace one footstep's wavering fall.
 Oh how we need from day to day,
 A guiding Hand for all the way!
 Oh how we need from hour to hour,
 That faithful, ever-present Power!
 Which should he choose? He pondered long,
 And with the sound of bird and bee,
 He blent an oft-repeated song,
 A soft and suppliant melody.
 "Oh for a light from heaven,
 Clear and divine,
 Now on the paths before me
 Brightly to shine!
 Oh for a hand to beckon!
 Oh for a voice to say,
 'Follow in firm assurance,
 This is the way!'"
 "List'ning to mingling voices,
 Seeking a guiding hand,
 Watching for light from heaven,
 Waiting I stand.
 Onward and homeward pressing,
 Nothing my feet should stay,
 Might I but plainly hear it,
 'This is the way.'"
 Was it indeed an answer given,
 That whisper in the tree-tops o'er him?
 Was it indeed a light from heaven,
 That fell upon the path before him?

Or was it only that he met
 The wayward playing of the breeze,
 Parting the heavy boughs to let
 The sunshine fall among the trees?
 Again he listened—did it say,
 "This is the onward, homeward way?"
 Perhaps it did. He would not wait,
 But, pressing towards a Mansion Gate
 That, yet unseen, all surely stood
 Beyond that untried, unknown wood,
 And trusting that his prayer was heard,
 Although he caught no answering word,
 And gazing on with calm, clear eye
 The straightest, surest path to spy,
 (Not seeking out the smooth and bright,
 If he might only choose the right),
 With hopeful heart, and manly tread,
 Into the forest depths he sped.

SCENE II.

Hours flit on, and the sunshine fails in the zenith of
 day;
 Hours flit on, and' the loud wind, crashes and
 moans o'er the ridge;
 Heavily beateth the strong rain, lashing the miry
 clay,
 Hoarsely roareth the torrent under the quivering
 bridge.
 Under the shivering pine-trees, over the slippery
 stone,
 Over the rugged boulder, over the cold wet weed,
 Ernest, the traveller, passeth, storm-beaten, weary,
 and lone,
 Only following faintly whither the path may lead.
 Leading down to the valleys, dank in the shadow of
 death,
 Leading on through the briers, poisonous, keen,
 and sore;
 Leading up to the grim rocks, mounted with panting
 breath,
 Only to gain a shuddering glimpse of sterner toil
 before.
 Faint, and wounded and bleeding, hungry, thirsty,
 and chill,
 Hardly a step before him seen through the tangled
 brake,
 Rougher and wilder the storm-blast, steeper the
 thorn-grown hill,
 Brave heart, and bright eye, and strong limb, well
 may they quiver and ache!
 Was it indeed the *right* way? was it a God-led choice,
 Followed in faith and patience, and chosen not for
 ease?
 Was it a false, false gleam, and a mocking, mocking
 voice
 That fell on the woodland pathway and murmured
 among the trees?
 Oh the dire mistake! fatal freedom to choose!
 Had he but taken a fair path, sheltered, level, and
 straight,
 Never a thorn to wound him, never a stone to bruise,
 Leading safely and softly on to the Mansion Gate!
 Was it the wail of a wind-harp, cadencing weird and
 long,
 Pulsing under the pine-trees, dying to wake again?
 Is it the voice of a brave heart striving to utter in
 song
 Agony, prayer, and reliance, courage, and wonder,
 and pain?

" Onward and homeward ever,
 Battling with dark distress ;
 Faltering, but yielding never,
 Still shall my faint feet press.
 Why was no beckoning hand
 Sent in my doubt and need ?
 Why did no true guide stand
 Guiding me right indeed ?
Why ? They will tell me all
 When I have reached the Gate
 Where, in the shining hall,
 Many my coming wait.

" Oh the terrible night
 Falling without a star !
 Darkness anear ; but light,
 Glorious light, afar.
 Oh the perilous way !
 Oh the pitiless blast !
 Long though I suffer and stray
 There will be rest at last.
 Perhaps I have far to go !
 Perhaps but a little way !
 Well that I do not know !
 Onward ! I must not stay.

" Splinter and thorn and brier
 Yet may be sore and keen :
 Rocks may be rougher and higher,
 Hollows more chill between.
 There may be torrents to cross,
 Bridgeless, and fierce with foam ;
 Rest in the wild wood were loss,
 There will be rest at home.
 Battling with dark distress,
 Faltering but yielding never,
 Still shall my faint feet press
 Onward and homeward ever !"

Pulsing under the pine-trees, dying, dying,—and gone,—

Gone that Æolian cadence, silent the firm refrain.
 Only the howl of the storm-wind rages cruelly on ;
 Has the traveller fallen, vanquished by toil and pain ?

SCENE III.

Morning, morning on the mountains, golden-vestured,
 snowy-browed !
 Morning light of clear resplendence, shining forth
 without a cloud ;
 Morning songs of jubilation, thrilling through the
 crystal air,
 Morning joy upon all faces, new and radiant, pure
 and fair !

At the portals of the mansion, Ernest stands and
 gazes back.
 There is light upon the river, light upon the forest
 track,
 Light upon the darkest valley, light upon the sternest
 height,
 Light upon the brake and bramble,—everywhere that
 glorious light !

Strong and joyous stands the traveller, in that morn-
 ing glory now,
 Not a shade upon the brightness of the cool and
 peaceful brow,—
 Not a trace of weary faintness, not a touch of linger-
 ing pain,
 Not a scar to wake the memory of the suffering hours
 again.

Onward by the winding pathway many another
 journeyed fast,
 Hastening to the princely mansion by the way that he
 had passed ;
 Spared the doubting and the erring by those foot-
 steps bravely placed
 In the clogging mire, or trampling on the wounding
 bramble-waste.

Some had followed close behind him, pressing to the
 self-same mark,
 Cheered and guided by the refrain of that singer in
 the dark ;
 Some were near him in the tempest while he thought
 himself alone,
 And regained a long-lost pathway following that
 beckoning tone.

Some who patiently, yet feebly, sought to reach that
 mansion too,
 Caught the unseen singer's courage, battled on with
 vigour new ;
 Some, exhausted in the struggle, sunk in slumber
 chill and deep,
 Started at that strange voice near them, rousing from
 their fatal sleep.

Now they meet and gather round him, and together
 enter in
 Where the rest is consummated and the joys of home
 begin,
 Where the tempest cannot reach them, where the
 wanderings are past,
 Where the sorrows of the journey not a single shadow
 cast.

Singing once in dismal forest, singing once in cruel
 storm,
 Singing now at home in gladness in the sunshine
 bright and warm,
 Once again the voice resoundeth, pouring forth a
 happy song,
 While a chorus of rejoicing swells the sweet notes
 full and long :

" Light after darkness,
 Gain after loss,
 Strength after suffering,
 Crown after cross.
 Sweet after bitter,
 Song after sigh,
 Home after wandering,
 Praise after cry.

" Sheaves after sowing,
 Sun after rain,
 Sight after mystery,
 Peace after pain.
 Joy after sorrow,
 Calm after blast,
 Rest after weariness,
 Sweet rest at last.

" Near after distant,
 Gleam after gloom,
 Love after loneliness,
 Life after tomb.
 After long agony
 Rapture of bliss !
Right was the pathway
 Leading to this !"

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL.

CROOKED PLACES:

A Story of Struggles and Hopes.

By EDWARD GARRETT, AUTHOR OF "OCCUPATIONS OF A RETIRED LIFE," ETC.

PART II.—HOW GOD GUIDED A GENIUS.

CHAPTER V.—MILLICENT'S PROMOTION.



HERE is no use in denying that Mrs. Harvey felt a keen thrill of pleasure and triumph the first time that her daughter Millicent was included with George to an

evening party. Superficial people might suppose that the courage of her justice and the brightness of her self-sacrifice would have raised her above the minor pleasures and triumphs of life. Never. The great includes all beneath it. Nay, small pleasures are bigger and more important in large hearts than in small ones, only they are kept in due proportion. The quaint gargyles of a cathedral are larger than those of a domestic chapel, yet they neither darken the painted window, nor obscure the vaulted roof.

Milly's social promotion delighted the mother twice as much as the girl. It was so strange to Milly, that it rather troubled her. To Mrs. Harvey, it seemed a delightful, easy, and natural return to old ways.

"I'm sorry I have not lace to give you, my dear," were her first words on the occasion. "Your grandmother left me some beautiful pieces, but it was all sold with the other things. But fine white net is always lady-like, and it is not expensive."

"Am I to go then?" Milly asked, with a slight flush deepening on her pale cheek.

"Of course you are, child! Why should you not go to your vicar's house, when he

honours you with such a kind invitation? The vicar's lady has written the note herself, for I know her handwriting."

"I wish they had asked you instead, mother."

"Nonsense, child. What can they know of me, or expect me to be, but a poor, working woman? They pay me the highest possible compliment by acknowledging that my children are fit for their society."

"I'd rather they'd set me down as the same as you, whatever they think that is, mother," said Milly sturdily, with a slight toss of the head, and a bewitching pout that gave a piquancy to the characteristic nose and lips.

"They'll see she's pretty at the vicarage," thought the mother fondly, "though they'll be too well-bred to tell her so, as Hatty's set did."

"We'll take a drive to the West-end," Mrs. Harvey observed presently, "and go shopping at the establishment in Pall Mall, where my mother and I always dealt. I never see anything like the things that came from there. I would sooner wear one of their calicoes than other people's poplins. Plain things may be as cheap and humble as one chooses, or one's purse compels, but anything like luxury must always be good. Cheap necessaries are respectable. Cheap finery is low."

Mrs. Harvey's heart was in a secret flutter when they started on their expedition. She had never been in that particular section of the West-end since she left it in the forlorn first days of her widowhood. Life makes little distances very long sometimes.

The going back to an old long-unvisited haunt gives one a strange, sudden realisation of the full weight and meaning of all that has happened between former times and the present. Among all the strange people thronging the familiar streets none seemed so strange to Mrs. Harvey as the vision of her old self. What a weak, perplexed, despairing self it seemed! The consciousness of gained height and strength came to her, as in another sense it comes to the wanderer who returns home to find that the inaccessible mountains of his childhood are but mole-hills to his travelled eye.

The memory of herself in her widow's mourning, with hot eyes burning beneath her black veil, and heart torn with its own desperate energy and determination, seemed so strange that Mrs. Harvey caught herself recalling it as "poor thing," and pitying it as if it were a stranger!

The pair looked very insignificant customers in the great, wealthy, magnificent West-end emporium. They were very careful not to buy an unnecessary yard of black silk, though to Milly her mother seemed recklessly extravagant over the fineness and quantity of the net, and the perfection of the Limerick lace gloves, of which a pair was bought at last, folded in a walnut-shell tied up with pink ribbons. But it was not silk, or net, or lace that Mrs. Harvey was buying, but the halo of old days, the long-abnegated graces and daintinesses of her early life, like jewels that had seemed lost, while only secretly taken away by some kind hand, that they may be given back re-set in the finest gold. Staid Mrs. Harvey, eagerly directing her daughter's purchases, felt oddly like the light-hearted girl who had once gone to that shop with that dear mother dead so long ago.

Then they came out of the shop and peeped about St. Martin's Church, and Mrs. Harvey confided to Milly some of the glories of her wedding day. Then they sauntered past a rich, staid-looking goldsmith's shop, the abode of one of Mrs. Harvey's old sweet-hearts, but she said nothing about that—only remarked that "Mr. Needham was still in his accustomed place." Then they went down Buckingham Street, and surveyed the Willow Walk. Their old house was sub-let in sets of chambers. Hundreds of old reminiscences came crowding back on the widow's mind. Things that had lain apparently quite forgotten, rose before her as freshly as if they had happened yesterday. And Milly saw a light come into her mother's eyes, that brought tears to hers.

"Dear child," whispered Mrs. Harvey, pressing her daughter's hand within her arm. "Do not cry for me. It has all been so well and so good, and I am so thankful to God that it is all safely over!"

And then they returned home, and set themselves to their pretty needle-work. Millicent herself was quite docile in the hands of her mother and Miss Brook. She was sure they wished to make her look nice, and that they would know better on such matters than she did. At least, if they and George were pleased, anyhow, that was all she cared about. She enjoyed their interest

intensely, and thought that the party would at least give her something to tell them. She would have plenty of time to notice everything, for she did not expect to know any other guests at the vicarage, and quite realised that George's society was likely to be claimed by people who would not trouble themselves about her. Milly was in much the same mental and moral state as George had been in his early working-days—far more inclined to look on the world, than to mingle in it.

But Mrs. Harvey caught sight of her daughter's mood, and straightway exhorted her. Her etiquette was of that perennial sort which grows from Christianity.

"You have not only to be happy in your own fashion, Milly," she said, "you must help other people to be happy, and you must make your hostess' task easy, by letting her see that you are happy. That is the reason why we wish your dress to be pretty and pleasing; we owe it to our fellow-creatures to make ourselves cheerful and agreeable in their sight."

"Then, I'm sure it's a debt most people are willing to ruin themselves to pay, mother," said Milly.

"No, no, child," Mrs. Harvey answered, "the dress which ruins people is not planned out of kindness, but out of malice, not to please, but to provoke. I have known people who were always slovens among those they professed to love, take the greatest pains with their toilets when they went among rivals whom they disliked."

"Well, mamma, I can understand that," said Milly, "for when we were in the mercer's, the other day, I could not help wishing that papa's cousins might happen to come in and see us!"

"My dear, my dear," replied Mrs. Harvey, "don't let that feeling creep into your heart. Why cannot we drink up our own cups of innocent delight, without leaving a dreg to turn sour and physic others?"

Young Mrs. Webber was in and out constantly during those days. Last of all she brought a gift from her husband for Milly.

"The only thing I ever longed to have!" the delighted girl cried, as she held it up. It was a delicate little miniature of Mrs. Harvey set in seed pearls. "It must have been you who thought of it, Hatty."

"That it wasn't," Hatty answered eagerly. "James is just the man to know what to give everybody. I was thinking of buying you a big gold brooch; but says he, 'Hatty, won't it be better to give something worth twenty times more than the money it costs?'"

Miss Brook had her offering also. It was a coral necklace.

"I've worn it myself, in my time," she said, frowning. "I don't know whether you'll think it's any the worse for that. Mind, I don't say you will. It's forty year old, but it's the kind of thing that when it's fashionable, it's fashionable, and when it ain't, it's everything else."

Mr. and Mrs. Webber and the little Webbers came to tea the evening before the party, and Milly indulged them by dressing herself in her gala robes and giving them all ten minutes' sight of her. They might be only the "every-day wear" of thousands of women—the neat black silk, the net kerchief and ruff, and scarlet posy, the quaint necklet and the loving pendant. Little things, mere outward, transient things may be. But the royal crown and sceptre are only outward things too, the sovereignty is not in them. They are only symbols. Every palpable thing in this world is only a symbol. Let those who despise the symbols beware lest they lose the things symbolized.

The two old women and the little children, the middle-aged man, and the happy brother and sister crowded round the laughing girl and twitched her this way and that, and commented and praised.

"I like the look of it, because it's a dress fit to live in—not only got up for an occasion," said Mr. Webber. "I've seen ladies with artificial flowers and false pearls sewn over their skirts, that all went smash when they sat down."

"Don't the red coral and ribbons come out beautiful, among the black and white?" remarked Hatty.

"You're like your grandmother, child," said Mrs. Harvey. "You know she was smaller than me. I've always wished I could have kept her life-size portrait painted in just such dress as that: but God has given me a living picture instead."

"I've never seen anything prettier," said George, adding playfully, "and I'm an authority, because I've been to many parties already."

"Ah, but I won't believe your praises," Milly retorted archly; "because you are my guardian, and you'll want to make me contented with myself to keep me from being extravagant." And with a roguish tug of his hair, she ran off to disrobe, followed by Miss Brook.

"It's all very nice, Millicent," she said, "and it's quite natural and right; but you'll

find there's nothing in life that holds, except one's prayers and one's work."

CHAPTER VI.—A CASE OF CHRONIC DISEASE OF THE TONGUE, WITH HEART-COMPLICATIONS.

GEORGE HARVEY was not destined to carry to his innocent evening party the light heart he had borne the night before.

He had recently published a small book of essays and dramatic conversations, and had thereby got into the hands of the reviewers. George was by no means a person to be killed by a word; indeed, the sooner such sensitive people are put out of their misery the better. He had stood his beatings like a man, laughing to read meanings assigned to him which he had never meant, amused to find himself condemned for ignorance because of the grammatical or other blunders he had depicted in characters where such were natural, humble and attentive under honest criticism, warmly thankful for judicious praise.

But on the morning of the party, chancing to go into a bookseller's shop, he took up a certain paper, and read a fresh review of his "Talks and Meditations."

"What a delightful title!" it began. "We suppose it is intended to be redolent of the learned leisure of the cathedral cloister, or the well-appointed vicarage. Some green 'prentice boy, who can get nobody to talk to him, has talked to himself, imagining that his own poor, thin individuality can evolve other characters from its own non-existent moral consciousness. Mr. G. Harvey, whoever he may be, thinks that if he had been permitted to take a hand in the creation of the world, he could have been of material assistance to the Creator. Having arrived on the scene too late for this, he feels his next best step is to declare himself in the secrets of the universe, and pass judgment on the mysteries of existence in much the same spirit as a pigmy ascertaining the stature of a giant by measuring his little toe! This raw youth must have been brought up among the muffins and toast of Little Bethel tea-fights, for he is actually narrow-minded and foolish enough to believe in the antedated scriptural dogma that 'godliness is profitable unto all things, both in the life which now is, and in that which is to come.' He thinks that 'he is the man,' and 'that wisdom will die with him,' a fault which one never finds except among religionists, and which really puts such below the notice of easy, tolerant, and cultured people. In fact, it is hard to say why we do notice such a nonentity as Mr. G. Harvey. Per-

haps it is because we want to revenge ourselves upon him for burdening our library-table with such crude doctrinal trash as might be in its place in the reticule of an old maid on a mission to convert servant-girls and ploughboys. We can imagine that he may be very acceptable to some people, whose narrow minds think that going to church, hearing sermons, reading 'goody' books, and acting model husbands and fathers, or rather, we ought to say, wives and mothers, are all and the best which life has to give. Such people will take a pious pleasure in Mr. Harvey's coarse story of the drunken suicide, and, of course, prospective damnation of the poor, vain, heartless beauty, for whom one would have hoped some friends might have been raised up, although she had broken her father's heart, and refused her sister's counsels. To our mind it is sad to think of her golden hair dabbled in the gutter mud, and of her felon's funeral at the cross-roads by torch-light. Mr. Harvey is full of maudlin sentiment over the old father's death-bed, and the saintly sister's loneliness and struggles. Readers of the class we have referred to will also be deeply interested in the metaphysics of the 'conversion' of the infidel French governess, Madame Gérard. In passing, we may notice that in the letter supposed to be written by this lady, Mr. Harvey spells 'agreeable,' 'agreeable.' In fact, he is altogether too pious for spelling-books, the study of which he doubtless considers a sinful waste of precious time. In the last story of all, he spells 'perhaps' 'prehaps.' In fact, he knows nothing of any sphere of life but his own, which is one which nobody else wants to know anything about. The density of his social ignorance is such that he makes a fast young college man talk about his sister's 'blonde petticoat!' We should advise Mr. Harvey to turn his attention to penny-a-lining, by which his wonderful powers of spinning out will enable him to make a comfortable living. The whole contents of this volume might have been condensed into two pages, just as they may be described in two words, 'Arrogant impertinence.'

Perhaps it was altogether wrong and foolish in George to feel the least pang at this tirade. He should have accepted it in its proper light, as a proof that he was sufficiently important to provoke enmity.

But it was its utter injustice that galled him. If his critic wished to make sweeping statements of his arrogance, self-conceit, and harshness, was it not his bounden duty to have brought forward extracts in proof thereof?

From far different reviews George had already learned that a quoted sentence may be as fair a specimen of a work as a single brick of a wall. But still, that was a move towards fairness.

How aggravating, too, was the critic's fatuous belief that his own sympathy for a sinner was a genuine and beautiful thing, while the poor author's sympathy for those whose hearts she had broken could only be described as "maudlin!"

How hard, too, that the same reviewer who professed to despise as nothing the conversion of a wild, passionate, evil Frenchwoman to godliness, gentleness, and self-restraint, should often "be enthralled" by the "plot" of books whose only human interest lay in which of two equally worthless men some vacillating girl would choose for a husband! And how intensely cruel that a person, vaunting a sweetness of charity even above "that which is written," should, in eagerness and haste to find fault anyhow, carp at a word which was quite natural in the English-French letter where it appeared, and condemn the author's ignorance for a printer's typographical blunder!

"If I could set up my books as well as write them," said George, "the fellow would not have to say that I could not spell 'perhaps.' But that is the sort of review which no man would be small and low enough to write, if he had to disgrace his own name by signing it."

The pity was that, even in his very first indignation, George did not remember that most people would be as able as himself to detect the bad logic and petty malice of his assailant.

Then there entered a temptation. George said to himself, "I could not write a word that I do not think. I could not dishonour myself by black-leg heroes or adulterous heroines. But, perhaps, it is not my bounden duty to write everything that I do think. If they would prefer the play of Hamlet, with Hamlet left out, I know I could please them. I will write of good people and their patience and brightness, and their conflicts and their heroic sacrifices, but I need not so carefully hold up that this goodness is not of the natural, but the renewed, man. People who could understand it, if I said it, will know it without my telling. What good does my plain speaking do, if it only raises a scoff? Perhaps I should only be 'wise as a serpent' if I dealt my goods so subtly, that some might receive a healing medicine in the belief that it was an intoxicating cup."

George said nothing about his review to the excited, merry little circle that gathered round him at dinner. The habits of his youth had made it an instinct with him to keep secret all unpleasantness. A wise and good reserve in many cases, yet sometimes a barrier that shuts out the open air and sunshine of common sense, for while to name some pains is to fix them, there are others that fly and vanish before plain description, like ghosts before the dawn. But once the barrier of reserve is built, it is hard to break it through, and it can be seldom perfectly done except for some new love, round which such silence has never been necessary.

Another talk with plain James Murray would have done the genius good that day.

CHAPTER VII.—A SIGN SENT FOR COMFORT.

THE vicarage stood within its own garden-walls. It was a prim red house of Queen Anne's time, with long rows of high narrow windows. As George and Milly walked up the carriage-drive, the brilliant illumination within came glowing down upon them, through rich bits of stained glass with which the vicar's wife had enriched the stiff old casements.

There was an atmosphere of welcome in the very porch, where the door flew open before the knocker was touched, and a ready, pleasant maid stood prepared to receive the ladies' wraps, and the genial warmth went on rising till it culminated in the spacious rambling drawing-rooms, where the vicar's wife, Mrs. Devon, was waiting with a cheery word and smile for everyone. Her quick eyes understood George and Milly at once. The young author she had often seen before, but the keen lady could read his whole family history in the simple little figure beside him, with its touching mixture of timid reserve and dignified composure, and its old-world etiquettes and graces hanging round it, like a soft old perfume.

"My young ladies must know you, my dear," the lady said kindly. "For they have just been reading your brother's book, and are full of questions that he must take neither the time nor the trouble to answer, but I know you'll be glad to do it,—just as I am glad to talk over Mr. Devon's sermons. We women may well be thankful when we can be proud of our men-folk. The girls are in the back drawing-room. Let us go there, and find you a seat with them. Here they are. This is my daughter Grace, Miss Harvey,—and this a dear Scotch cousin of ours, Miss Christian Dunbar."

The two young ladies made room for Milly on the sofa between them. They seemed very different from each other. Grace Devon moved with a bird-like quickness, and shook up her frills like a bathing sparrow. Christian Dunbar was soft and quiet. Grace Devon poured a volley of chatter into Milly's ear before Christian said a word. And then Grace fluttered off to be hospitable to some "dear darling old lady," who presently arrived, and Christian and Millicent remained alone together.

Some visitor went to the pianoforte and began to sing. She had a sweet voice, and Milly asked Miss Dunbar what was her name.

"I do not know," she answered. "I am quite a stranger here. I have just come from Scotland for a visit."

"Have you ever been in London before?" Milly inquired.

"Oh yes," she said. "I lived in London till ten years ago, when my uncle died."

"I fancied I had heard your name before," said Milly. "Very likely you always attended St. John's."

"No," Miss Dunbar answered. "My uncle Robert was a Scotchman and a Presbyterian, and while he lived I went with him to his chapel. I hardly went out anywhere in those days. We lived very quietly together, he, my brother, and I, in the old house over the shop in Paternoster Row."

"Mr. Dunbar—Paternoster Row!" Milly exclaimed, springing up in her eagerness, "why, that was the gentleman who did so much for George when he was nobody!"

A flood of passionate tenderness rushed instantly to Christian Dunbar's quiet blue eyes. "Oh don't say so, till you are quite sure," she said, "or I should be so disappointed. I'd sooner get a new pleasant memory of uncle, than find he had left me another legacy!"

"I know it was a Mr. Dunbar of Paternoster Row, who was so kind to George," Milly said decisively. "George has always kept on mentioning him, only I don't know many particulars. George has a way of keeping in things. But I'll fetch him—I'm sure he'll tell you."

"What a difference to what I thought!" reflected eager Milly, as she threaded her way in and out among the increasing guests. "I shall like going out after this. It isn't all stupid and superficial." It was her first personal discovery of the old truth, that we need but enter any sphere, from a prince's to a beggar's, and human interests instantly enter with us.

She brought back George in triumph, breathlessly exclaiming, "It was a Mr. Dunbar of Paternoster Row who was so good to you, was it not? This lady is his niece."

George Harvey and Christian Dunbar were both a little confused at this quick direct introduction. George slipped into the place Milly had vacated.

"I am thankful indeed to meet you," he said. "It is a pleasure to tell my gratitude to one who loved Mr. Dunbar, as I can never tell it to himself in this world. A few months after he showed me kindness, I wrote to him, and my note being never acknowledged, I called at his office, and was told he was dead. I believe I was introduced to a nephew of his. I often wished I had known his name, that I might have told him of my sorrow that Mr. Dunbar could never know how serviceable he had been to me. But I feared that even if I found him out, I might only be troublesome."

"I wish you had," said Christian, for the first time raising her eyes full to his. "My poor brother had many private trials, and often got depressed and despairing about the world and human nature. A bright gleam might have done him so much good. I have lost him too—he has been for five years with God. I wish you had found him out, Mr. Harvey."

"I wish I had," said George earnestly. "I know his kindly enthusiasm, 'We shall hear of you some day,' seemed to do me almost as much good as your uncle's practical advice."

"That is it," said Christian. "It is not what is said, but when it is said, that gives a word half its weight; and so I think the best way to be sure of saying cheering words at the right time is to say them always!"

"Indeed, they are often wanted when the want is not apparent," George observed, rather pitifully, though there was something in the pure and peaceful atmosphere about this quiet woman that seemed to set the jar of that hateful review as far from him as the coarse broils and blasphemy that must have been at that moment going forward in many not far-distant places.

"And yet I know it is so easy to be silent, for fear of being intrusive or impertinent," Christian went on, smiling. "If we read a book and are specially touched or helped by it, we feel that there must be hundreds touched and helped likewise, and think that we need not trouble the author with a letter assuring him of what he must know well enough already. If it be possible to carry on two

trains of thought at the same time, I must confess that while I have been lecturing you on your reserve, I have been wondering whether you would be at all interested in a little incident I could tell you about your own book."

"Miss Dunbar," said George, "I am human—very human. And humanity is vain and—inquisitive!"

"Well, then, you must know that I travelled up from Scotland by coach, because I am a bad sailor," she began. "I was the only passenger from Edinburgh to London. All the Scotch people stopped at York, and I thought I was to finish my journey by myself, for the guard told me nobody else was booked. But just before we started in the morning a lady came up, wanting to go to London. I saw that the guard looked suspiciously at her, and spoke gruffly. You know how quick those men are to detect anything wrong or queer. For luggage, she had only a little hand-bag. She was a tall, slight woman, and wore a long thick grey cloak, reaching down to the ground. But when she unfastened this, as she took her seat in the coach, I saw that her other garments were very unsuitable for a journey, for her dress was made of dark rose-coloured satin, with white lace trimmings about the bodice—in fact, an evening dress, as if she had started on her journey in hottest haste. I should think she was about my own age—six or seven and twenty—and a very handsome woman, but with a beauty like that of burning ships or volcanic eruptions. I felt a little eerie at being shut in with her, after the sensive good-wives with whom I had chatted and nibbled and napped during the early part of my journey."

"I should think so, indeed," said George; "it was too brave of you to travel alone."

Christian smiled. "I don't mean I was afraid," she explained. "But it was awkward to have her sitting opposite me, death-mute, and staring straight before her, as if she did not see I was there. After we had driven so for an hour or two, I began to fidget about, and repair to my biscuits and sherry-flask. I offered her this and I offered her that. She shook her head, and answered 'No, no,' without a word of thanks, but not rudely, only as if she could not be troubled. She made me think of that poor girl, Charlotte Corday, going up to Paris on her dreadful errand of assassination. At last I remembered your 'Talks and Meditations,' and I offered her that, asking if she would like to beguile the journey with it, for it was very interesting.

"She did not say a word but took it,



"CROOKED PLACES."



thinking, I fancy, that it would be a convenient refuge from further interference. She sat with it in her hand upside down for about half an hour, then detected herself, and reversed it with a start. Then she turned the leaves over and over and over, as if she were searching for something between them. Then some sentence seemed to catch her eye, and she read for a minute or two, and then again stared blankly out of the coach window, but kept her finger in the place. Presently, she turned over the leaves to the beginning of that particular story. Then she leaned far back in the coach corner, and put up her hand so that I could not see her face. But I could see big tears falling fast. By-and-by, she let the book fall, and turned completely round, and hid her face in the carriage pillows, and sobbed and moaned passionately. I tried to say something to soothe her, but she never answered nor heeded. At last she sat up again, with her face worn and wrung with agony. As we neared Lincoln, she began to draw up her cloak, and make preparations for departure. 'We are scores of miles from London yet, madam,' I said, thinking she might be such an utter stranger as to mistake it. 'I know,' she answered, and picked up 'Talks and Meditations,' and handed it to me. 'Would you like to keep it for the rest of your journey?' I asked. 'I shall have another copy for myself where I am going.' 'May I?' she said. 'Then God bless you!' and as she said so, the coach stopped and she got out, and took out her bag, and fee'd the guard. 'I thought you was going to London, mum!' said the man roughly. 'So I was,' she replied, 'but I have changed my mind.' 'Well, you can do that, so long as you don't expect us to return money,' he said. She did not answer him, nor did she go into the coaching inn, but walked quietly away, with her port-manteau in one hand, and your book in the other."

"Do you know which story it was that she read?" George asked.

"Yes, I spelled out the title backwards, as she sat sobbing over it. It was 'The Repentance of Madame Gérard.' I cannot help thinking, Mr. Harvey, that you have saved a vessel of life from a reckless shooting of some terrible rapid."

"Then God be praised for it," said George earnestly; "and God be praised for bringing me here to hear the story;" and before he noticed that he was confiding to this lady, never seen before, what he had not confided to one of his familiar household, he

had told her the whole history of the bitter review, and of the doubts and despairs it had raised within him.

"But they were only for a moment," answered Christian Dunbar; "one feels thus for a moment. But one so brave as you would never long suffer from any enmity but God's."

"How do you know that I *am* brave?" George asked sadly.

"Because you ought to be," she replied, "and as you are a Christian man, God himself will make you all you ought to be."

"I should like you to know my mother," said George. "She would love you."

"I will call upon her," Christian promised frankly; "is she anything like that dear frisky little kitten of a sister who was talking to me just now?"

"No; my mother is tall, and grave, and sedate," George answered. "She has looked spiritual giants in the face and conquered them, and as the old tradition runs, has gathered their defeated strength into her own."

"And now let us go and look for Miss Harvey," said Christian, rising. She had that sweet strange womanly instinct of something in the atmosphere that made her withdraw into herself. A fancy-free maiden will not look at once into the depths of a man's heart, lest it be open to her only unguardedly. She will turn away, that he may solemnly lead her back again. She will not usurp her queendom. The crown seems nothing to her, till consecrated in the coronation.

Milly had left Christian and George together and wandered away. She went and stood near the piano, and listened to the singing. Her delight at the pleasure she had found for George made her feel quite at home. A young gentleman brought a chair to her, and invited her to sit down. She did so, and then he asked her if she played or sang. She said no, neither. Then he said, he was sure she drew, and he smiled mischievously as he said it. Milly admitted it, and wondered how he guessed. And then they began to talk about pictures, and went round the rooms to study the engravings on the wall.

Reader, reader, do not laugh. There have been men—not poets or sentimentalists, but hard-headed famous men of science—who in their youth have loved for years without a word. Little prim Milly, whom nobody had ever yet flirted with, had won such a love as this! This youth, whom she had never wittingly seen before, whose very name she did not then know—for Milly naively forgot all about an introduction—had for months

watched her going to and fro with her pattern portfolio. He knew her name, and who she was.

She had a very pleasant time of it. The good old vicar, watching her dark eyes flashing in her excitement, said to his wife, "And so that's young Harvey's sister. We must look after all that family. There's more than genius in them. Genius may grow wild anywhere, but they are surely the stuff that makes its natural soil. I never saw young Maxwell so gallant before. Well, well, he is a good lad, and if he were my own son, I should think he might do worse than try to find out what sort of heart goes with that bright girl-face."

"Oh, George," said Milly, clinging to his arm, as they turned from the vicarage homeward through the dark lanes. "If parties are often like this, they are worth going to!"

And George thought so too.

They found Mrs. Harvey and Miss Brook awaiting them by the parlour fire. They both sat down and opened their budget of news. And actually before he went to bed, George had told them all about his review, and laughed over it! A secret drawer that has once been opened is never so stiff again, but still one does not show everything that is in it, and George did not then tell the story Miss Dunbar had told him. One maintains a sweet, curious feeling of confidence with another, by keeping something that one talks over with nobody else.

"Well, my son," observed Mrs. Harvey, "it is well to remember, especially among so much praise as you do get, that 'the friendship of the world is enmity with God.'"

"Miss Dunbar used almost those same words, 'mother,' he said.

But Miss Brook punched the fire severely.

"Why can't people keep their tongues off what they can't understand, and won't try to," said she. "If a cat criticized a dog, what would her criticism be worth? If I was George, next time I wrote a book, I'd put on the title-page, that 'no one need trouble himself to review it, that didn't believe in God, read the Bible, live with one wife, and pay his debts.' Let wicked infidels get their living by reviewing wicked infidel books—and a precious poor living they'd get."

"O let them do as they like!" said George.

CHAPTER VIII.—GEORGE'S GIFT FROM THE LORD.

CHRISTIAN DUNBAR paid her promised visit to Mrs. Harvey. She did not come

very soon, and she brought Grace Devon with her, and they arrived in the early afternoon, and found nobody at home but Mrs. Harvey and Miss Brook.

George was particularly anxious to hear every detail of that visit, and he heard all there was to hear, but Grace Devon had evidently talked a great deal more than Christian Dunbar.

And so friendly relations were established between the stately old vicarage and the Harveys' quaint green cottage. The worst of it was, Christian Dunbar was only staying with the Devons for three months.

"There does not seem to be half enough time in life," George observed one day, *apropos* of nothing in particular. "So much has to be forced on, and may be spoiled in the forcing. If one could only take a little more time!"

"When an Indian chief heard some one make that remark," said Miss Brook, "he answered, 'I suppose you have all there is.'"

Somehow, at that time, there crept into the Harveys' household conversation a great many discussions about marriage. About the necessary means for marriage—about the proper time for marriage—about the duties and rights of lovers in sundry and divers positions. Miss Brook was a great deal more certain on all these points than Mrs. Harvey, and maintained her right so to be.

"Married people arn't half such good advisers in love-affairs as single ones," she asserted. "They've muddled their minds with their own mistakes, and they go on giving you the particular good advice they wanted themselves, instead of what you want. Just as when you have the toothache, some good souls think it could do you no harm to take their pet gout-specific."

Therefore Miss Brook uttered her axioms like an authority.

"The necessary means for marriage are a sound head-piece and a strong right hand," she said.

"But it is generally fools who think themselves wise," put in Milly; "and the surest sign of one's sanity is to doubt it a little."

"Hold your tongue, child," Miss Brook retorted. "And the proper time for marriage is when one meets the proper person."

"Always provided he or she is equally agreeable, I presume," said Milly wickedly.

"But when a poor man feels that nothing is too good for the woman he loves, it seems selfish for him to ask her to share his poverty and struggles," observed George.

"If she loves him, she's longing to do it,"

answered Miss Brook; "and isn't it selfish of him to balk her wishes for the sake of his own stuck-up pride?"

The fact was, George had not taken long to discover that life could never be what it had been before he had seen Christian Dunbar. Her coming had been like a burst of sunshine over a landscape—river and rock and tree are the same, but, oh, how different!

Perhaps one of her greatest charms for him was that she drew him entirely out of himself—that he could talk to her with a freedom with which he had not hitherto communed even with his own soul.

With all George's fear of selfishness, it must be admitted that he felt it to be a happy day when he heard that Christian Dunbar had a bare five hundred pounds for her whole



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portion, and that like the sensible woman that she was, she intended to leave it untouched, and to earn her own living as a teacher. She was not an accomplished woman: she neither painted, played, nor sang, but she was a good writer and arithmetician, and had persuaded her brother to teach her Latin, as a diversion during one of the melancholy fits from which he had suffered. She

did not aim to do what she could not, but diligently sought to find what she could, and so engaged herself at a moderate salary, in "a preparatory school for young gentlemen."

It was within three days of her departure, when she and George met in an old churchyard, not far from both their abodes. Never mind how they happened to meet. Perhaps Christian had said something about passing

through that churchyard on her way somewhere. And perhaps, on the strength of those words, George had waited there two or three hours. How could Christian know he would be there? And yet if she did not, why did she walk so slowly, and why did her heart beat so fast?

She came along under the new-budded trees, and George sprang out from a cross avenue, and took her hand, and drew it through his arm. He never knew he did not shake hands formally, and Christian did not notice the omission at the moment, but remembered it distinctly afterwards.

What is the use of repeating what George said? It will sound stilted and unnatural to the reader who has not said it himself, and he who has said it knows all about it without hearing it over again! What did Christian say? Well, Christian was cooler than George; which is not uncommon, for while we poor men are in agonies of suspense, the dear ladies know their own answer, and either that it makes all right, or else that they do not care at all.

And then there came a girl-and-boy feeling into two glad hearts, and without heeding it, they went walking together hand-in-hand!

Let one fact reveal the love and unity of the Harvey household. George went straight home to his mother and sister, and told them of his engagement, and knew that the greatest pang of the telling lay with himself, and that they rejoiced wholly for his sake. He was the man of the house, and one who had been enabled to give the family a distinction that it would not have without him, but they were not women to make their gratitude a blight, and their love a fetter. It might be that their lives helped them to such right-mindedness. They were no parasite women, trailing forlornly unless propped. They had learned to respect and trust themselves, and to know that life had plenty of flowers and fruit within their own reach. Beyond such tokens of brotherly love as he would continue to give, Milly had neither taken nor expected anything from her brother. She had been trained to feel it no wrong, but one of her noblest rights, to be independent. And when more women shall have sacred interests of their own, the will and the power to create their own spheres, and to clothe their own lives with appropriate beauties and duties, then surely the antagonism of mothers and sisters-in-law will cease, and the man without female relations be no longer justly regarded as the most eligible lover! Oh, if some of those who fear that the

bloom of womanhood is so evanescent that it will perish in the first brush with the realities of God's world of work, would but reflect how it already turns to driest and bitterest dust in the stagnant atmosphere of helpless spite and repining.

George and Christian were not married till the first anniversary of their engagement. Christian went to her school, and earned enough to cover the cost of her marriage outfit, without breaking the little fortune that was her uncle's legacy. She made her outfit nearly all herself—all except what Milly and Grace Devon and Mrs. Webber begged from her. There was not a hireling seam in it. Womanly love and hope, friendliness and good wishes, were in every stitch.

But Christian came back to the vicarage to spend the last two months of her maiden life. She wanted to have her rightful share in the building of the pretty home-nest that George had found midway between her Uncle Devon's house and his mother's cottage. Mrs. Harvey and Milly were to remain just as they were. Perhaps, by-and-by, they might receive another boarder as well as Mrs. Brook, but it was no matter of stringent necessity. For Milly's little income went on regularly increasing, so that she was even inclined to pout and be a little affronted that George should be so determined still to set aside a certain allowance for his mother!

George and Christian lived in a fairy tale for those two months. They were privileged now to take long sweet lonely walks. Sweet and lonely,—though they were often through noisy crowded streets. For Christian loved to be taken among the scenes of her lover's stern boyhood, and George loved to take her there. He took her over the old printing-office, and gave half-a-crown to a little red-haired lad who was sitting in his former place. He took her to the wretched little terrace where James Murray had lodged, and where he had gone to clean the boots. He showed her the boiled-beef shop. He made an effort to trace Mr. Rollo, but that failed.

"The mystery is," said George, "that as I revive the old associations, I cannot revive the old self that did not know you! I remember how I studied the sizes of penny rolls, but I cannot remember how my heart felt when it was empty. I think you must have been always there, shut up, till that night when you opened your shrine, and let in the sunshine."

Christian begged for the little manuscript book that had been bought with so much

self-denial. In long years after, George had occasion to ask to look at it, when he discovered that his wife kept it in an antique oak dressing-case, among her jewellery and lace.

The wedding-day came at last. Of course, Christian was married from the vicarage, and Grace Devon had the arrangement of the wedding presents. Conspicuous among the dainty little bits of china and silver, stood an elaborately-carved bread-plate and butter-dish stand, which had arrived with a fancy card announcing them as "small tokens of the respect and love of James Murray, and Sarah his wife, with all good wishes."

The curate read the marriage service, because the vicar gave away his niece. Grace and Milly, and little Ellen Webber, were the bridesmaids. Christian insisted on Ellen Webber, because she wished to associate Hatty with the immediate marriage group. Christian found a great share of affection to spare for beautiful Hatty.

"It is such a pleasure to look at her," she said, "and I am sure it takes a great deal of goodness to keep beauty beautiful."

Richard Webber, our old friend "Dick," now growing a tall and very interesting lad, acted "best man." The whole made a group thoroughly typical of the best side of English life—of that free and yet conservative state of society, which binds such different men as the stately old vicar, and the homely tradesman. Mr. Webber, in bonds of

mutual respect and amity, and yet leaves them far apart, where each can be happier, better, and more useful than either could be in any false and affected "equality."

Mrs. Harvey shed two or three tears of thankful joy to see how wonderfully God had supplied the particular want of her son's position by leading him to a bride, in breeding and character every inch a lady, and yet with the simple ways and tastes, that would make her happy and useful in the household exigencies of "a poor gentleman."

"God bless you, George," she said, when the ceremony was over; "and be you thankful to Him that He has given you a wife whom He himself loves better than you can."

"I say, Aunt Milly," said Dick Webber, as they drove back to the vicarage, "did you see that Mr. Maxwell peeping round the nearest pillar behind us, and he had on a rose-coloured neck-tie, like your ribbons!"

But when George and Christian were seated together in the coach that was to carry them away for a fortnight among the Surrey hills, Christian suddenly turned to George and sighed.

"I wonder what has become of that poor thing who travelled up from York with me scarcely more than a year ago."

"What makes you think of her now?" asked George.

"I don't know," Christian answered. "Unless it is because I am so happy and she was so sad!"

IS THERE A CENTRAL HEAVEN?

SECOND PAPER.

WE will now inquire, what is the testimony which the Scriptures afford to this deeply interesting question? The proofs contained in the Bible are (as I take it) neither few nor slight, to the great fact suggested by science; so much so, indeed, that, valuable as the testimony of astronomy is as a confirmation of or contribution to inspired truth, yet, had the knowledge we have obtained of the universe done nothing in that direction, the great doctrine of heaven as a place or locality in the heavens would remain the same. Stereotyped as it is in the Book that records it, it has been equally stereotyped on the mind of every person that has read that book and believed in it. It could not indeed be discredited without discrediting the entire

volume that reveals it, in which it is the central picture, next to Christ himself; the great object towards which all our hopes and fears are directed; our final home, the reality of which is indelibly imprinted on our mind from our earliest years, as being also the home of God and the holy angels, and the "spirits of the just made perfect."

At a parent's knee we have been taught to look upward to the deep blue above as indicating the direction of the place where God lives; and unless the canker of infidelity has crept in to mar the lovely vision, it has remained on our mind to the last, as one of those bright cheering thoughts that lessen the cares, and banish (when we think of it) much of the gloom of approaching death, and the sorrows and anxieties of human life.

But where has the idea been derived but from the inspired volume alone (for science could never assure us of it)? To *it*, therefore, we may look as containing, though not *all* that we desire to know, yet something more definite and certain than astronomy can afford us, and which, with the aid that is afforded by that noble science, so far as it goes, all but demonstrates the great truth, that there *is* a central heaven, the special residence of the Most High, where his glory is manifested, which is the home of many a bright angel and archangel, and from which man, when made like unto the angels (*ισαγγελος*), if not equal to them, shall not be excluded. The evidence of Scripture on this subject is confined to a few points, but not the less clear on that account. First, there is the direct testimony to the existence of heaven, with a general and chiefly figurative description of its glory and its inhabitants. Second, the indirect testimony furnished by the actual intercourse that has subsisted between some of the inhabitants of heaven with the inhabitants of the earth, together with the deep sympathy which we are informed exists among those inhabitants of heaven for the human race on earth; crowned by the actual ascension from earth to heaven in the body by two of our race, and finally that of our Lord himself, not to speak of the subsequent experience of St. Paul of the same glorious place entitled by him "the third heaven" and "paradise" (2 Cor. xii 1-4). With respect to the first part of this scriptural evidence, it may be premised that the names which are assigned to it in Scripture are in themselves significant, so as to indicate, to a certain extent, what is to be expected. Thus, in the earliest record of it, which is to be found in 2 Chron. ii. 6, and vi. 18, it is termed "the heaven of heavens," *i.e.* the heaven above or among the heavens, meaning by the latter the starry heavens. The word heaven itself indicating "a lifting up," from the Saxon "heave." In the same inspired prayer of Solomon it is called also the dwelling-place of God: "Hear thou from heaven thy dwelling-place" (2 Chron. vi. 21). So, also, David terms it, in Psalm cxliii., "Oh thou that dwellest in the heavens."

Thus, in this and many other similar expressions, the idea that there is somewhere in the universe a place where God (as it were) resides, or where his presence and glory are specially manifested in the presence of the holy company that are admitted to dwell there, is plainly conveyed. To such a place, doubtless, Paul was caught up or conducted,

either in the body or out of the body, to the "third heaven" or "paradise," by both which names he describes it, being synonymous with the "heaven of heavens." There he says he heard "unspeakable words," which it is not lawful for man to utter, *i.e.* the language of heaven spoken by its inhabitants; a language either that could not be spoken by man, or should not be revealed by him.

That there is such a place is plainly signified also in Luke i. 19, where the angel Gabriel, announcing his message to Zacharias, says, "I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee." So the evangelist relates in the same chapter, the same angel Gabriel was "sent from God" to the Virgin Mary. It is thus plainly implied and taught that there is a place in the heavens, where God is present in a different sense from that in which He is said to be omnipresent—in other words in heaven He is personally present; and to and fro from that place angels have passed and repassed to earth and back when sent by God as his messengers to do his pleasure. To that same place it is declared by Luke our Lord himself ascended (Luke xxiv. 51): "While he blessed, He was parted from them, and carried up to heaven;" an event described or prophesied previously by Himself to Mary, in words that declare it distinctly as the residence of his Father, as in John xx. 17, "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father; but go and tell my brethren, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, to my God and your God."

Here his ascension is described in one place as to heaven, in the other to his Father; therefore to one and the same place, to his Father who He states in the Lord's Prayer is in heaven.

Its vast distance from the earth is also implied by Paul in Eph. iv. 10: "He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens," meaning probably above the first or aerial heavens, or possibly the starry heaven visible to us. Also in Heb. viii.: "We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens." And there He sits, as King of kings, and as our Advocate and Mediator; "for Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true" (then there *is* a true heaven of which the holiest of holies was to us but the figure); "but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us."* Here it will be remarked, the

* Heb. ix. 24.

presence of God is again associated with heaven—it is plainly his dwelling-place. Again, John xiv. 2, 3 : “In my Father’s house,” says Jesus, “are many mansions : if it were not so, I would have told you, and I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there shall ye be also.”

There are many points of deep interest in this short but important passage that deserve notice :—1. His Father has a house (*i.e.* a dwelling-place); 2. There are many mansions in it (*i.e.* abiding-places;—rooms, apartments, as it were, to the palace where God dwells); 3. This is a certainty, as true as Christianity, “If it were not so,” says Jesus, “I would have told you;” 4. It is a distant locality to which Christ must go, and from which He will return (a far country as he describes in it the parable),* further, it is a *place*, not a mere *state* or *condition*; 6. It is a *prepared* place, *i.e.* prepared, and suited for, and made ready *now* for the people of God; 7. It is the place where Christ himself will be and is. “I will take you to myself, that where I am there shall ye be also.” The expression, “I am,” here, does not indicate, as some have said, the place where He then was—the earth—but where He should be, wherever that was.

Thus the direct evidence of a *place in the heavens*, whither Christ went, where He ascended, where God dwells, and is manifested specially in the person of Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity, where also the redeemed people of God (once on earth) are, and the holy angels dwell and pay their homage to the King of kings, is plainly declared by the direct evidence not only of the passages of Scripture now quoted, but by many others, which are but a repetition of the same thing.†

But the testimony which Scripture affords to the existence of such a place in the heavens is further proved by the intercourse which has subsisted from time immemorial between the inhabitants of heaven and those of the earth; the former having visited the earth—come, indeed, from the very courts of heaven itself, resplendent with its brightness, reeking, as it were, with celestial glory—come as ministering spirits to man, and in like manner departing again as to their native home on high.

There are few questions perhaps of deeper

interest than this subject presents to the mind of the thoughtful inquirer.

If a native of some distant and unknown part of our globe appears in our civilised regions, it naturally excites much interest and curiosity : it assures us, first, that there is a portion of our little world that we have never seen, and yet that surely exists;—the very truth that men are most likely to question, as did the crew of Columbus, although assured of its certainty by his superior intelligence and foresight. The native of a strange country assures us of the existence of that country; his strange speech, his dress, his appearance, his voice, his manner and habits—all bring conviction to the mind beyond the possibility of doubt; and if, besides, he is enabled to describe the part of the globe he comes from, the nature of the country, and the people who are his fellow-countrymen,—who can doubt the fact? Now transfer this to the angels of God; once ascertain the fact of their having appeared on earth, having spoken and acted and declared distinctly where they came from; that they belonged, not to this small planet, but had, as it were, dropped from the sky, above us, flashed from the heavens upon us, left “the heaven of heavens,” and the throne and presence of God!—and who shall be bold enough to question or deny it? The certainty of the fact is established by the arrival or departure of the strange visitors. The intercourse between the two countries, heaven and earth, is then proved, and becomes as palpable a fact as the intercourse of nations here proves that there is another country besides our own; a bridge is at once thus thrown across the supposed impassable gulf of space; and the barrier that has seemed to separate the planet we inhabit for ever from all other residences in the universe is at once removed; and though to man in his present condition it seems as though his home has been specially contrived, so that he shall never leave his present abode or associate with other Beings, the arrival of a single intelligent Being from another country in the heavens at once dissipates the illusion, breaks the charm, and shows not only the possibility and certainty of transit between the two worlds, but also the certainty that there is a heaven where angels dwell as surely as there is an earth where man dwells. And when we come to examine the records we have of the appearance of such Creatures in our world, we find that their visits have been—not, as erroneously described by the Poet, “few and far between,” but quite the reverse,

* Matt. xxi. 33.

† 2 Chron. xviii. 18—22; Job i. 6, 7; Zech. iii. 1—4; Dan. vii. 9, 10, 13; Isa. vi. 1; Ezek. i. 1, 24—28.

and that the Scriptures assume throughout a constant intercourse maintained and deep sympathy felt for man by this noble class of beings—the true nobility of heaven—superior to ourselves in intellect and power and virtue, as doubtless they are in numbers.

That there are such beings, and that they form a most important portion of the creatures of God, the Scriptures so distinctly inform us, that if we reject belief in their existence, we must reject likewise our belief in the entire of the Old and New Testaments, as both bear their testimony generally to the fact, in language that cannot be disputed; while in the history of man's redemption they form so important a feature, and play so important a part, that if their existence is ignored or denied, the whole framework of Christianity will fall to pieces, and the most important testimony to its truth will be lost.

That the heaven of heavens is the abode or habitation of these glorious Creatures we are specially informed. That delightful world is the place towards which all our own hopes and expectations are directed, the home to which we are invited to look as our final rest from every trouble, and the seat of all the enjoyment we are capable of attaining. With the inhabitants of that blest world we are told we shall, if we are wise, be one day acquainted and intimately united, and shall live in the midst of them for ever. Of this world, therefore, and of those who dwell there, we need information, and accordingly it has not been withheld from us.*

But there is one more consideration of interest to us in this matter in the sympathy thus established and maintained between the inhabitants of the two countries. That sympathy does exist we are assured by the Lord Jesus himself, when he says (Luke xv.), "There is joy among the angels of God"—in the presence of God—"over one sinner that repenteth." What does this imply, if it does not assure us of the deep interest which the inhabitants of heaven feel in the affairs of mankind?

The Apostle Peter indeed tells us that "the angels desire to look into these things,"† meaning the matters relating to the redemption of man; while the Apostle Paul declares that it was God's intention and "eternal purpose" that they should be informed of it. "That to the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God according to the eternal purpose which He pur-

posed in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Eph. iii. 10, 11).

Thus we are apprised of the interesting fact, that the matters of earth and relating to mankind are not only known above, but are the subject of the deepest interest to the inhabitants of heaven. Nay, more; that the inhabitants of both places are considered as constituting one family in Christ, of whom, says the same apostle (Eph. iii. 15), "the whole family in heaven and earth are named." Thus there is a moral chain, as well as a physical and literal one, that binds us to the bright land above us, out of sight though it be—at least out of our sight—but not out of the memory or removed from the sympathy of millions of the noblest of God's creatures, who make our joy their joy, and doubtless our sorrow or sin the occasion of their deep sympathy.

In the string of beautiful parables in Luke xv., the Lord Jesus is represented as calling his friends and neighbours around Him, to rejoice with Him in the recovery of the lost sheep and the lost money. And who are these friends and neighbours, if they are not the heavenly host? And what is a friend, and what is a neighbour? *who* are friends and neighbours to *us*, but those whose position enables them to know our circumstances and character, and whose friendship induces them to sympathize with us?

Thus England has great commercial and friendly relations with most of the civilised nations of the globe; and to all alike she is ready to extend the hand of friendship and sympathy; and though individually there are millions who have no opportunity of visiting those countries, yet there is no difference in the general feeling of the nation towards those who require or demand their sympathy or friendship, it is well understood and taken for granted, and forms a ground of union, and confidence, which regulates the most important of our commercial relations, and makes England the greatest and most prosperous of kingdoms.

So there is a like confidence and understanding between the hosts of heaven and the inhabitants of this distant little planet; and though we cannot see nor talk with them as some of our race have done, a communication is established between the two worlds and their inhabitants; not by prayer to *them* which they are too loyal to accept (Rev. xxii. 8, 9), but through *their* and *our* divine Lord and Head, to whom alone our prayers should be addressed, and who doubtless (as in the parables already referred to) calls his angelic

* Vide Rev. xxi., xxii.

† 1 Peter i. 12.

family around Him to make them participators in his joy and the joy of our salvation.

Here, when we would converse or sympathize with a distant nation, such as our American brethren, we flash our wants, our wishes, our thanks alike along the mysterious wire that connects us in speech with each other, and address ourselves to him who is the representative of the country, or the governing power by whom they are ruled.

The telegraph has thus done more to unite the nations of the earth in brotherly union and amity than any other discovery that science has ever made, and by its means, though so distant from us, we can now truly call the Americans our neighbours as well as our friends. Distance is annihilated when men can converse. But there is a more distant country than America, and a far vaster population, to whose Divine Head and representative we too may, with as great ease, send our telegraph of prayer, and supplication, and praise, and thanksgiving. We have this promise distinct and clear, that while we are

yet speaking He will hear, and before we call He will answer (Isa. lxx. 24). Any message of importance, therefore, that reaches heaven will be thus known and appreciated by the glorious company above—our heavenly friends and neighbours. The earth is possibly viewed by them as one would look at the dark hull of some convict ship belonging to the sovereign, and containing a band of criminals and traitors, or, as it has been truly described by Chalmers, a rebellious province in God's dominions; yet from that dark vessel, from that rebellious band arrives every day, and hour, and moment some soul rejoicing in its deliverance from bondage and misery; and each sinner, as he plants his foot on the pearly shore of that blessed place, will be welcomed in such a fashion as the heavenly host alone can welcome him. They will conduct him to their Mount Zion—to their Lord—to the city of the living God—the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company like themselves—the home of the elect, the throne of the Lamb.

J. CRAMPTON.

THE WIFE'S ANSWER.

(A sequel to the "Pitman to his Wife," which appeared in a previous number of this Magazine.)

I'VE listened, Geordie, to all thou's said, and now that thou's had thy say,
 I can but tell thee it's far the best of my hearing this many a day;
 Though many a look thou's given to me, and many a word thou's said,
 I was pleased enough to get and to hear both before and since we were wed.
 Thou never wast much of a one for talk, and I reckon there's little need
 Of a vast of words between two folks that are always well agreed,
 Yet many a talk we've had to ourselves just sitting here by the fire,
 But never a one that's been so much to my heart's content and desire.
 For if thou couldst take a look in my heart, and read from it line by line,
 As one reads from out of a printed book, it would be like this talk of thine;
 For I've got a word, a word in my heart that's made it both glad and sore,
 And ye'll wonder to hear me talk like this that's never talked so before.
 For though I've gone both to chapel and church, and I've minded what I've heard said,
 Yet so many things all the sermon through would come in and out of my head;
 It might be the bairns, or it might be thee, or what we're to get to eat,
 Or what we're to get to wear, or how I'd to manage to make ends meet;
 That I've thought, when I've seen the minister stand and give out a beautiful text,
 And tell us we're not to take heed for this life, but to give all our minds to the next,
 It's easier said than it's done for me, what with waur-day work to do,
 And so many folks just with waur-day talk dropping in all the Sunday through.
 But now my mind's got another turn, and I see all as clear as glass,
 And I've given my heart to the chief concern, and how it has come to pass,
 I'll tell thee now that we've once begun, it was all through our little lass.
 "For mother," says she, as she and I were going one night up-stairs,
 "Am'nt I old enough," she says, "to give up saying my prayers,
 I've been seven and a half such a great while now, I think I'll be eight very soon,
 And it's long since I've had a knife and a fork and given over using a spoon."

"Why, what dost thou mean by such talk?" I said, and she turns on me her eyes,
And gives me a look quite innocent, and yet as wise as wise;

"Why, mother," she says, "there's a lot of things like saying I will and I won't,
That children are always bid to mind, and that bigger people don't.

"And brothers, when they were as young as me, wore their little frocks instead,
Of coats and trousers, and little ones are sent off soon to bed,
And set to learn our A B, abs, and I thought that saying one's prayers
Was just like these,* for *I never see any grown-up folks say theirs.*"

"Oh bairn!" I said, "have done with thy talk," for each word was like a knife,
"Of lessons, thou's given thy mother one that'll last her all her life;"
And I knelt down beside her little bed, and all that I could say,
Was just "Our Father who art in heaven," and, "Lord, teach me how to pray."



"And pardon," I said, "a sinner's heart, that comes to Thee on her knees,
And pardon, her ways that's been blind so long, that it's only now she sees;
And pardon," I said, "a sinner's life, and give her Thy grace to mend,
And be Thou to me, and be Thou to mine, a Saviour and a Friend."

It's been on my mind to tell thee this, but I thought thou'd think it strange,
Thou's always got thy own ideas, and thou's not one given to change;
And I thought I'd just hold my peace and wait, for it's little a woman can
Do at her best, let her do her best, without the help of her man.

It isn't for me to be leadin' thee, but now that thou's taken a start,
We'll go together, for didn't we say the words, "*Until death us part?*"
It'll never part us now, Geordie, for we're seeking the blessed land,
Thou and me and the canny bairns, and we're seeking it hand in hand.

DORA GREENWELL.

* This was really said by a little girl to her mother.

EARLY ADVENTURES ON THE DEAD SEA.

BY THE LATE JAMES FINN, M.R.A.S.

THE earliest modern attempt at exploration of the Dead Sea was that of Christopher Costigan, a young Irishman, in the autumn of 1835. Of the result, however, we know nothing, as it seems that the difficulties and dangers encountered by him precluded the possibility of describing such, beyond a rude pencil sketch of outline of the lake. We do not even know what instruments or appliances Mr. Costigan had for making any scientific researches.

The writer of this is, however, in possession of a plain English Bible found among his effects, containing pencil-notes upon the blank leaves, not wholly, if at all, relating to the Dead Sea, but exceedingly indistinct—too much so for imparting information of any discoveries. The mournful circumstances of the termination of this expedition will always command some amount of interest among those who are concerned for Palestine exploration.

The following details of the closing events were gathered from the Rev. John Nicolayson (the principal person acting in them) by his daughter. All three are now at rest in the silent earth, awaiting the first and blessed resurrection.

In a boat brought over from Acre to Tiberias Mr. Costigan descended the Jordan. That task was found both difficult and perilous, owing to the numerous rocks and falls that occur along the tortuous course of the river. It was in the month of August, when the volume of water is much diminished there; and the present writer is well able, from personal experience, to understand the inconveniences of the Jordan region arising from heat at that season of the year.

Costigan was as much in the water as in the boat or on the banks during three wearisome days, and then, finding his servant (a native of the country, and unused to matters of navigation) becoming impatient, and himself too much broken in strength for continuing the work, he resolved on leaving the river, and, with his camels and Bedaween escort, carrying the boat along the Ghor down to Jericho. The luggage was sent on by the servant through Nablus to Jerusalem.

One incident, and it seems the only one of any note, took place before reaching Jericho. Seeing some Arabs on a hill near the line of march a little in advance of him, he sent forward a few of his men to reconnoitre, but

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his own horse bolted, carrying him off with them. He tugged at his sword, but it had become so rusted with the proceedings in the river, that it refused to leave the scabbard, and the hilt broke off instead. Fortunately, the Arabs took to flight on finding themselves unexpectedly assailed in that lonely place by a shouting party in full gallop. They darted into the river, swam over, and made their escape eastwards.

It was well that he met no party of regular tribes in armed force. In those days they had never conceived the idea of Europeans carrying on such expeditions, and were not on the look-out for opportunities of levying *ghuf'r*, or toll for leave of passage.

The chief annoyance was that derived from the bushes of large and sharp thorns abounding in that desert. The perpetual struggles in passing through these reduced his clothing to rags before reaching Jericho.

Leaving the boat there, he went up to Jerusalem, probably for a supply of provisions, and returned accompanied by a European friend from the city. Again he went to Jerusalem, and came back among a party of French travellers. He had now engaged a Maltese servant to assist in navigating the Dead Sea, intending to begin by examining the eastern coast.

When at the conclusion of this ill-fated voyage the Rev. Mr. Nicolayson found Costigan at Jericho, he was too weak to be able to afford information about their adventure, and such account as we have is that obtained from the Maltese.

It appears that under sail they reached the southern extremity (near forty miles) in two or three days, but there they failed to get a favourable wind for the return. A complete calm lay on the water for several days. They had to take to the oars, and persevered till the servant, exhausted with toil, threw the cask of fresh water overboard while Costigan lay asleep, with a view of lightening the boat. A more insane act can scarcely be imagined.

Hitherto they had only suffered from heat and fatigue—the heat of a vast cauldron steaming under a tropical sun, and confined between lofty basaltic cliffs at thirteen hundred feet below the level of the Mediterranean (probably the very lowest surface on the habitable globe), and that steam impregnated with saline and other exhalations even more injurious to health, beneath the sun of

August. Their true misery, therefore, only now begun. Appetite for eating failed, yet exertion at the oars was necessary in order to escape from perishing by thirst and hunger. In such an awful condition of loneliness, and the certainty that no human being could be expected to perceive them, no human habitations occurring within the reach of the keenest sight—the rocks calcined with heat or darkened with sulphurous exhalation, scarcely even a bird to be seen in the air, and the very water void of fish; we can but imagine that the young adventurer must have repented of undertaking his task, with so little knowledge of the country or its resources. How keenly must his thoughts have reverted to the home of his childhood, and the long experienced and tender care of relations far away!

Occasionally a green spot might be seen on shore, which seemed to point out the existence of water, but the Maltese refused to go in search of it. Indeed, as we now learn from later investigations, no water fit for assuaging thirst could have been reached but at great heights among steep and rugged cliffs.

Still an effort to get off the lake must be made. The sails were entirely useless. Costigan himself laboured at the oars for a whole day while the other slept, although utterly unpractised in the use of them. The servant's strength failed first, and no breeze came to sustain the flagging spirit.

On the fourth or fifth day from the southern end (for it was difficult to keep exact count of time) they reached the northern beach, with its white powdered crust; but even then, in a state of fever and starvation, they were without human aid; not a creature was to be seen, and they knew of no water short of Jericho, a walk of at least three hours over burning marl. For this they were utterly unable. Imprudently they poured water from the corrosive lake over themselves and their clothes with the idea of obtaining coolness, but this only blistered the skin and intensified their fever.

After a night and the greater part of a day spent in lying upon the beach among the trunks or branches of trees washed down by the Jordan, and bleached by saline incrustation, the servant made an effort to reach Jericho, to procure water and a horse for Costigan: more than seven times he fell fainting, and once turned out of the way towards an old ruin for shelter from the sun. This must have been the Daiv Hajlah, but

he failed to discover the beautiful fountain in its vicinity. Arrived at the tower of Jericho, he fell down in utter exhaustion; but there he found a man in the service of the Governor of Jerusalem, who immediately dispatched two of the Bashi-bozuk riders with water for the sufferer there, his own horse for bringing him to the tower, and a camel for conveying the boat.

Notwithstanding the frequent return of the fever, Costigan had just strength enough to ride the horse, and at the village was received into one of its miserable hovels, where he was carefully tended by the owner's mother. There, in similar condition with poor Mungo Park in Central Africa, he had reason to be thankful for the tenderness of woman's nature even among a population of barbarians.

This was on Wednesday, 2nd of September, 1835; in the evening he sent his servant to Jerusalem with the sails and oars of the boat, and other things that had been left before embarking, intending himself to start about midnight, when he expected a cessation from fever. The man was to see the Governor of the city, and request a camel with mattresses and cushions for conveying Costigan thither, should he not be able to ride his horse; he, however, forgot the orders, and no camel or other aid was sent.

On Thursday afternoon a messenger from Jericho, mounted on Costigan's own horse, brought a note from Costigan to Mr. Nicolayson, begging for some medicine, as "I cannot rise from my bed, and if I pass two such nights as the last without aid or medicine, you'll have to do something else for me."

As there was then no physician in Jerusalem, Mr. Nicolayson thought it right to go down himself and endeavour to bring up the patient. In less than two hours he was on the road. Not aware that there was a necessity for mattresses, he did not think of it himself, and did not know that the Maltese had been directed to procure them. Along the road between Jerusalem and Jericho (noted of old for liability to fall among thieves) he went through the night, and arrived at two A.M. of Friday. There he found Costigan lying out in the open air, which he preferred to the stifling heat of the hovel into which by day he was glad to escape from the sun. A severe paroxysm of fever had just left him.

Soon after dawn they were fain to take shelter under roof, and the day was occupied in devising methods of conveying Costigan in some easy manner to Jerusalem. So long as

he was free from fever he believed that the assistance of one riding behind him on the same horse, on whom he might lean, and a man on each side to hold him steady, he should be able to accomplish the journey; and three men from Siloam, who were going towards Jerusalem, were accordingly hired for the purpose.

But when, about four P.M., the fever returned this scheme appeared impracticable; so the Shaikh of the village was sent for, and required to furnish eight men, and some poles on which to form some kind of litter. The Shaikh came. Mr. Nicolayson at first reasoned with him, then made liberal promises, but could get no other answer than that it was impossible to find either men or poles. Threats were then resorted to, reminding the Shaikh that he was officially liable to the vengeance of the Governor of the city. This seemed to have some effect, and the old fellow began to look about and consult with some of the lazy people who were sauntering about or lying on the ground smoking; there was talk, but absolutely no work done. To the promise of paying for their trouble three times as much as the Governor of Jerusalem should allow as their due, the Shaikh promised to find some other men than his own, after they should return from the fields at sunset; but that was all.

Appeal was then made to the pitiless idlers present to procure the poles; but their only reply was, "Ma fee'sh" (there are none). Then Mr. Nicolayson set himself to look for some. Among a heap of sticks there were none found suitable for the purpose; but from the sun-shelters (*'araish*) attached to some of the huts he pulled out several pieces, in order to select the best—among these was the beam of an old plough—and promised to pay double price for everything that might be used.

The peasants now began to show some symptoms of being ashamed, and to bestir themselves. They soon produced a considerable heap of short poles. But they were in want of ropes; these were furnished by the owner of the house, and the people began to tie them together as well as they could.

Evening came on, but no other men appeared. The Shaikh was again threatened and promised alternately; but he answered only as before. It was evident the people would not obey him; they declared they were unable to carry the burden. It would seem there was then no Aga of the irregular cavalry stationed at the town, as now, to whom appeal might be made.

At this time Costigan was suffering extremely from fever; the heat was tremendous, for a strong sirocco was blowing, and whirling sand and dust over the plain; and this, although evening had come on, rendered it impracticable to bring him into the open air, however much he craved it; the sand might have suffocated him.

Then the three men of Siloam who had been engaged went away; and still no others appeared to take their place.

The mother of the host continued anxiously attending upon the sufferer. She sat, when not engaged in preparing something for him or in her household affairs, rubbing his hands or fanning him with the long sleeves of her blue dress. Indeed, all the women showed much of that compassionate feeling of which the men seemed so provokingly destitute.

Night advanced, but no men came, and those of the place would not listen to the proposal of carrying the Englishman. And no wonder, for they are in the habit of delegating all toil of such a nature to the women. There can be no doubt that had the journey been a short one, these women would have undertaken the task, and then the men would have followed on foot, smoking and chatting, as their protectors.

At last a wise old woman suggested a plan that would require only three men. This was to fill two sacks with chopped straw, and tie them one on each side of the broad pack saddle, so as to form a hollow along the back of the horse. On this was spread a large fur cloak, and then a couple of cushions were fixed on the neck of the horse for the head to rest upon.

About nine P.M., when the fever had subsided, the party started in that manner, the patient lying along the horse, two men supporting his legs and one guiding the animal. The atmosphere having cooled in some degree, poor Costigan felt strength sufficient for riding so up the first ascent, which is very steep, but on reaching the level he was so much exhausted that they were obliged to rest for half an hour: and indeed the whole journey to Jerusalem had been tedious and painful, as they had often required to halt and re-adjust the sacks of straw.

At length the city was reached at eight A.M. of Saturday, the 5th of September, and Mr. Nicolayson had the satisfaction of seeing his sick friend comfortably in bed at the *Casa nuova* or hotel belonging to the Franciscan Convent. There were at that period no hotels or lodging houses in Jerusalem: all

travellers had to resort to convents for residence, Latin, Greek, or Armenian.

The physician of H.E. Shereef Pashà of Damascus, a European, chanced to be in Jerusalem and came to the sufferer. Mr. Whiting, the American missionary, with Mr. Nicolayson, sat up with him at night, remaining also as much as possible during the day.

Throughout Sunday, Costigan was comparatively free from fever, and appeared so much better that they all hoped the virulence of the disease was past. He himself, however, did not share in this expectation, and often said, "No, I know better."

Towards evening the fever returned with violence, and the doctor pronounced that there was no chance of his surviving the night. Before midnight the fever became doubly strong. Up to that time he had possessed the full use of his faculties. During his last two hours he ceased to speak, and breathed with much difficulty. All that could then be done was to moisten his lips occasionally with lemonade, and about eight A.M. of Monday, September 7th, 1835, Christopher Costigan peacefully breathed his last, without a struggle or a groan, and was buried the same day in the cemetery of the Latin community, attended by Mr. Nicolayson, Mr. Whiting, and the friars of the convent.

The writer of this narrative has often stood over his grave to read his Latin epitaph, with the supplement in the name of his widowed mother—"Farewell, my son! May that heavenly Sion receive thee, where there is neither death, nor grief, nor any suffering, but endless triumph reigns."

It appears that his age was twenty-five.

Since the period of this occurrence two other expeditions to the Dead Sea have had melancholy terminations: that of 1847, fatal to Lieut. Molyneux, of H.M.S. *Spartan*; and the American one of 1848, which was successful in every point but in the loss of Lieut. Dale. And these two are laid near each other in the American mission cemetery at Bayroot.

In each of these three instances it was the young and the brave carried off as martyrs to the interests of science in the Holy Land.

Two years after Costigan (1837), two Englishmen, named Moore and Beke, had also a boat conveyed to the Dead Sea, but no account is extant of their proceedings: we only know that they met with much difficulty, and at last abandoned their task, sinking their boat into the lake, expecting probably to return under more favourable circumstances, but no indication was left for others of the whereabouts of the boat; and they never returned.

HAPPY TEXTS.

A WELL-CHOSEN pulpit text, fitting in with happy exactness to the circumstances of a people, is of great advantage to a preacher. It often acts upon the hearers with the effect of a kind of sacred wit, surprising and pleasing them; while it predisposes them to attention, because they see that the arrow has been skillfully chosen and feathered, and is to be aimed at a mark. It must be owned, however, that even in texts of this kind there are differences, and that in some instances the adaptation is confined to a play upon words that is scarcely consistent with a belief in the gravity or earnestness of the preacher. The greater number of those which we intend to notice shall be of the better class; though a glance at a few of the inferior order may have its uses, as revealing the sentiments or reflecting the prejudices and animosities of the age in which they were spoken. The first is not a very favourable specimen, but it serves the purpose to which we have just referred.

When Galileo, at the age of seventy, was cast into prison for declaring his belief that the sun was immovable in the centre of our planetary system, and that our earth, instead of being an immovable centre, performed an annual revolution round the sun—a belief which the observations of his own telescope had confirmed, and of which it has been said that he could not cease to believe, without ceasing to think—every effort was made to inflame the popular prejudice against the old philosopher. Many of the monkish theologians of those times refused even to look through the telescope at the stars, and the priests were vehement in their denunciations of astronomy and its aged apostle. One of their favourite pulpit texts was taken from Acts i. 11, and from the Latin Vulgate, which made the play upon the words the more successful, "Viri Galilæi, quid statis in cœlum suspicientes?" as if they had read it in our own vernacular, "Ye men of *Galileo*, why stand ye gazing up into heaven?" There is more

of an unscrupulous cleverness in this selection than of that grave wit which may sometimes even besem the pulpit. But it gives us one of those glimpses into the past which are not without their value in the present; and it is easy to imagine what ignorance, bigotry, and vindictive suggestion may have gathered around words so misapplied.

The age of the Puritans supplies us with more than one of those happily chosen texts of which we have undertaken to present some specimens; and we question whether there ever was a more perfect adaptation than in one of the funeral sermons preached by the majestic Howe. A Mrs. Henry Sampson, the wife of an eminent Christian physician of those times, and herself a woman of strong, enduring faith, having languished for the long period of eighteen years under a distressing ailment, died on a Sabbath morning. Howe read as his text those words in Luke xiii. 16, "Ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo! these eighteen years, be loosed from her bonds on the Sabbath-day?" The sermon has been preserved with this title, "The Devil's malice in inflicting, and Christ's compassion in curing, diseases." In no part of it does the great Puritan rise into a loftier region of thought than when dilating on the congenial sentiment that death is, to every one of the spiritual seed of believing Abraham, a loosing of bonds and an entrance into glorious liberty. He mentions with a beautiful tenderness the motto on the wedding-ring that had been given to Mrs. Sampson, by agreement with her pious consort, on their first coming together, "Emmanuel, God with us."

Few men excelled more in appropriate texts, or in the quaint and felicitous handling of them, than Matthew Henry, the famous popular commentator. He delighted in alliteration and in compact proverbial sentences, and it almost seemed as if he kept a magician's wand for commanding from its hiding-place the very verse in all the Scriptures that was most suitable. Even after the Act of Uniformity had come to be a dead letter, the spirit that prompted it was long in dying out. Suspicions of disloyalty and rebellion were apt to be awakened even by the building of a new place of worship for one of the Non-conformists, and the work needed to be proceeded with in such a manner as would least awaken observation or arouse hostility. It was with this state of things before his mind that, on the opening of his new place of worship at Chester, which "remains unto this day," he took his quiet protest that separa-

tion was not rebellion, in those words from the Book of Joshua, xxii. 22, "The Lord God of gods, the Lord God of gods, He knoweth, and Israel he shall know; if it be in rebellion, or if in transgression against the Lord, that we have built us an altar."

We place alongside of this, as an instance of felicitous selection, the words in Genesis xxxv. 5, from which his patriarchal and saintly father, Philip Henry, preached on occasion of his baptizing several of his grandchildren in Matthew's chapel at Chester, "Esau asked, Who are those with thee? And he said, The children which God hath graciously given thy servant."

A wedding sermon by Manton is woven with much skill out of this well-chosen passage, "And the Lord God brought her unto the man" (Gen. ii. 22). Marriage is traced up to its divine institution in Paradise; and, after the old Puritan manner, the principal doctrine of the text is stated in these words, "that marriages are then holily entered into, when the parties take one another out of God's hands."

When we pass from the Puritans to certain of the court preachers, we find ourselves in a very different element. Yet we might plead in excuse for what now appear to us to have been great indiscretions, the difficulty which men, preaching in the presence of royalty, must often have felt in hinting a fault without losing the sunshine of kingly favour, especially at a time when the pulpit exercised more of the right of censorship over public acts. History and fiction have alike painted James I. of England and VI. of Scotland as a vacillating ruler, who varied in his purposes under every new influence; no pen, perhaps, having traced his character with such masterly vividness and truth as Sir Walter Scott's, in one memorable passage in his "Fortunes of Nigel." That preacher was therefore surely making a bold hazard when he announced as his text for the edification of a king who added to his other weaknesses a keen appetite for flattery—"James i. and 6—'Nothing wavering.'"

The spirit of political faction, more than anything higher or better, must surely have helped the preacher in the choice of his text, when a new party in the state having mounted into power, and the new minister having neither place nor pay sufficient for all the greedy claimants for office, he announced his intention of instructing his audience for the day from these words, John vi. 9: "There is a lad here that hath five barley loaves and two small fishes; but what are they among

so many?" One is apt to think that Cowper must have had preachers of this stamp in his eye when he spoke of those who were more eager "to court a grin than to woo a soul." The man who for the sake of a clever hit could so grievously cast away a golden opportunity, deserved to be "unfrocked."

We can imagine that Fuller, who was witty in season and out of season, but beneath whose wit there was usually a thick substratum of wisdom, must often have startled his audience with the happy adaptation of his texts to his purpose. We are not aware that the record of any of these has been preserved. But he gives us, in one place, his recollection of a preacher whose ingenuity struck him not so much in the choice of his text, as in his success in making what seemed a desert to sing for joy. Of course, we present the narrative in his own words; though we are not without some suspicion that, after all, the preacher whom he reports was Fuller himself.

"I heard a preacher take for his text: 'Am not I thine ass, upon which thou hast ridden ever since I was thine unto this day? was I ever wont to do so unto thee?' I wondered what he would make thereof, fearing he would starve his auditors for want of matter. But hence he observed:

"1. The silliest and simplest, being wronged, may justly speak in their own defence.

"2. Worst men have a good title to their own goods. Balaam a sorcerer; yet the ass confesseth twice he was his.

"3. They who have done many good offices, and fail in one, are often not only unrewarded for former service, but punished for that one offence.

"4. When the creatures formerly officious to serve us, start from their wonted obedience (as the earth to become barren and air pestilential), man ought to reflect on his own sin as the sole cause thereof."

"How fruitful," adds Fuller, "are the seeming barren places of Scripture! Bad ploughmen which make balks of such ground. Wheresoever the surface of God's word doth not laugh and sing with corn, there the heart thereof within is 'merry' with mines, affording, where not plain matter, hidden mysteries."

There are two sermons by South, entitled, "Against Long Extemporary Prayers," in which all the characteristic excellences and faults of that powerful preacher come out in bold relief. There are his masculine energy of thought, his clear, incisive, muscular, Saxon

style, and his knowledge and command of Scripture facts. But along with these, there are his scathing satire in which the truth is spoken without love, and his rancour and hate against ecclesiastical adversaries, in which the great preacher sinks into the political pamphleteer, and the pulpit is given over to the worst purposes of faction, justifying his designation by Wilmot's as "the theological Junius." Many of his representations would be utterly untrue and his charges unjust, if they were designed to be levelled against the leading men among the contemporary Puritans; but undoubtedly they were fairly enough aimed against many of Cromwell's more fanatical and extravagant followers. And his text itself was like a nail driven home firm and fast, "Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter anything before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few" (Eccles. v. 2).

The temptations associated with the theatre have afforded frequent occasion for the warnings of faithful preachers, and sometimes the text has been happily adapted. Orton, the biographer of Doddridge, in a sermon entitled, "A Serious Dissuasive from frequenting the Playhouse," preached from these words, in 2 Tim. ii. 16: "But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness." Though we think there was a more curious fitness in the text chosen by an eminent London minister justly celebrated as the friend of young men, when preaching with a similar design, he announced those words respecting Paul at Ephesus as the motto of his discourse, "And certain of his friends sent unto him, desiring him that he would not adventure himself into the theatre" (Acts xix. 31).

It was a more than pardonable adaptation on the part of the late Mr. Jay of Bath, when, on the re-opening of his place of worship after it had been enlarged, and his soliciting an extraordinary collection from his people, he read as his text those words in 2 Cor. vi. 13, "Now for a recompense in the same (I speak as unto my children), *be ye also enlarged.*" And there was at once an implied eulogy on the departed friend of fifty years, and a suggested lesson to the living, when, on the death of the famous Rowland Hill of Surrey Chapel, who, with all his eccentricities, had for two generations exerted such a mighty influence for good in London, Mr. Jay preached the patriarch's funeral sermon from those verses in Zechariah, xi. 2, 3, "Howl, fir tree, for the cedar is fallen; because the mighty are spoiled: howl, O ye oaks of

Bashan, for the forest of the vintage is come down. There is a voice of the howling of the shepherds, for their glory is spoiled: a voice of the roaring of young lions, for the pride of Jordan is spoiled."

We remember a beautiful little church which stood on the sides of the Ochils in Scotland, half hidden among woods and ivy-clad, and which had been the place of worship for more than one generation. One night, it was burnt to the ground from some mysterious cause that was never explained. The aged minister travelled over the neighbouring counties, preaching with a view to collections for the "repairing of his waste places;" and his well-chosen text perhaps did quite as much to open the hearts and the hands of his hearers as the sermon founded on it. It touched more than one chord,— "Our holy and our beautiful house where our fathers praised thee, is burned up with fire: and all our pleasant things are laid waste" (Isa. lxiv. 11).

We must not omit from this enumeration the singularly appropriate text of Carey's memorable sermon, the preaching of which at Nottingham, in June, 1792, may be affirmed, without extravagance, to have marked an epoch in the history of modern missions,— "Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles and make the desolate cities to be inhabited" (Isa. liv. 2, 3). After observing that the church was, in these words, compared to some poor, desolate widow who lived alone in a small tent, that she who thus lived in a manner forlorn and childless, was told to expect such an increase in her family as would require a much larger dwelling, and this because her Maker was her husband, whose name was not only the Lord of Hosts and the Holy One of Israel, but the God of the whole earth, he proceeded to bring out the spirit of the passage in two memorable exhortations—1. Expect great things from God. 2. Attempt great things for God. In private conference with his brethren immediately afterwards, Carey formally laid himself on the missionary altar, saying to Pearce and Fuller in those immortal words, "I will go down into the pit, if you will hold the ropes;" and so was formed the Baptist Missionary Society, and a mightier impulse given to missionary zeal all over the world.

It has long been the custom among the

Presbyterians in Scotland, that when a young minister has been ordained as pastor of a church, he shall be introduced to his congregation on the following Sabbath, by some older minister of name and experience preaching a sermon and commending him to the confidence and affections of his people. In a little mountain village in Mid Lothian, about a century ago, a promising young pastor was to be thus introduced to his future charge. On the Saturday a snow-storm commenced, and on the following morning it continued to rage with little diminution in its violence; but the aged father had not arrived. Still he might only be delayed, and might appear at the eleventh hour. The anxious young pastor was in great straits, for two services had been promised, and he had only prepared to preach at the second meeting; besides, there was an awkwardness in having no one to take him by the hand on such an occasion, and with devout and loving solemnity to bid him God speed. There was much eager listening for the sound of an approaching vehicle, and much peering through the drifting snow, in search of the much-longed-for presbyter appearing on horseback; but the hour for assembling had come, and there was no sign. The necessity brought out unexpected power and fertility of resource in the young minister, for, casting himself on divine strength, he, with much modesty and propriety, introduced himself, preaching with great eloquence and acceptance from those words in 2 Cor. ii. 12, "Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit because I found not Titus my brother."

Perhaps no text has been more happily chosen in our days than that from which the Dean of Westminster preached in his own abbey in behalf of Paris when it was suffering all the mingled horrors of siege and famine, and that most splendid and luxurious of European cities was shut out from all intercourse with the world,— "How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people! how is she become as a widow! she that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces, how is she become tributary!" (Lam. i. 1.) That was not the least honourable page in our nation's history which was written a few weeks afterwards, when the munificent charity of England rolled up to the opened gates of the desolated capital, and all the jealousies of centuries were forgotten in that hour of our neighbour's sorrow, humiliation, and misery. ANDREW THOMSON.

OUR DISTRICT.

By A RIVER-SIDE VISITOR.

IV.—THE SUGAR-BAGS DEFENCE FUND.



TURNING OVER some old papers that were calculated to serve as remembrancers of some of the more noteworthy incidents and experiences

of our district work, I came across a subscription-list headed "The Sugar-Bags Defence Fund," and containing a number of such signatures—most of them in one handwriting, but attested by the crosses of the individuals—as Crockery Jack, a shilling; Big Kate, sixpence; Busker Bill, a shilling; One-armed Hopkins, ninepence; Darkey Rogers, ninepence; Donkey Smith, a shilling; Dry Land Lawson, sixpence; Mother Badger, a shilling. These signatures, strange as they looked, were not playful inventions of people desiring to do good by stealth; they were the regular sobriquets of the subscribers, and were in most cases characteristic. For instance, Crockery Jack was a hawker of crockery; and Donkey Smith was the proprietor, manager, and driver of three or four donkeys, that were hired out to holiday-makers in the summer months, and to costermongers and other itinerant tradesmen in the winter. Busker Bill was a "busking," that is, wandering, musician; and Dry Land Lawson was a worthy of the type known as dry land, or "turnpike" sailors—sturdy, able-bodied impostors, whose line is to beg, or, if opportunity serves, extort, under guise of selling tracts narrating the dreadful shipwrecks from which they have escaped with bare life.

The sight of this subscription-list reminded me that I had preserved it as a sort of curiosity of literature, reminded me too that it had a history.

On the morning following the death of Fly Palmer I was passing along one of the leading streets of our district, and was brought to a standstill by a gentleman who, standing on a door-step, saluted me with a jauntily uttered "Morning, sir," as I came up to him. As a whole he was a horsey-looking gentleman. The suit of light grey tweed in which he was attired was tight fitting and sportingly cut, his scarf was loud in colour, his horse-shoe breast pin large in size, his boots glittered with patent leather and fancy buttons, and he wore a shiny, curly-brimmed hat, stuck on the side of his head.

He was a cool gentleman too, and he evidently enjoyed the puzzled air with which I regarded him.

"Can't quite make me out, eh?" he said, smiling. "Well, think I can freshen your memory there, though: Buttonhole Row. Does anything knock now, eh?"

Something did knock, that is to say, the name he had mentioned "freshened my memory," for I instantly recalled the face as that of the man who had directed me to Buttonhole Row, when I had been looking for it under its map name of Foundry Lane.*

"Ah, that fetches you!" he exclaimed, smiling; but his manner abruptly changing to seriousness, he asked—

"Did you see any one leaving me as you came up?"

"No," I answered briefly.

"Well, that doesn't matter much," he replied. "You know her; it was Fly Palmer's Poll. She tells me that you were with old Braidy at Palmer's death-bed."

"Yes, I was at his death-bed," I answered, adding, "a terrible death-bed scene it was."

"So Poll has been telling me," he said; "and if it is true—as I have no doubt it is—that the memories of their whole past life flash back upon the dying, don't wonder at it. Can guess that his recollections must have been ugly chickens to come home to roost upon him in his dying hour, and can quite understand his not dying 'game.'"

* See "Button-hole Row," SUNDAY MAGAZINE for September, 1872, page 853.

"He died penitent, which is a grander thing," I said.

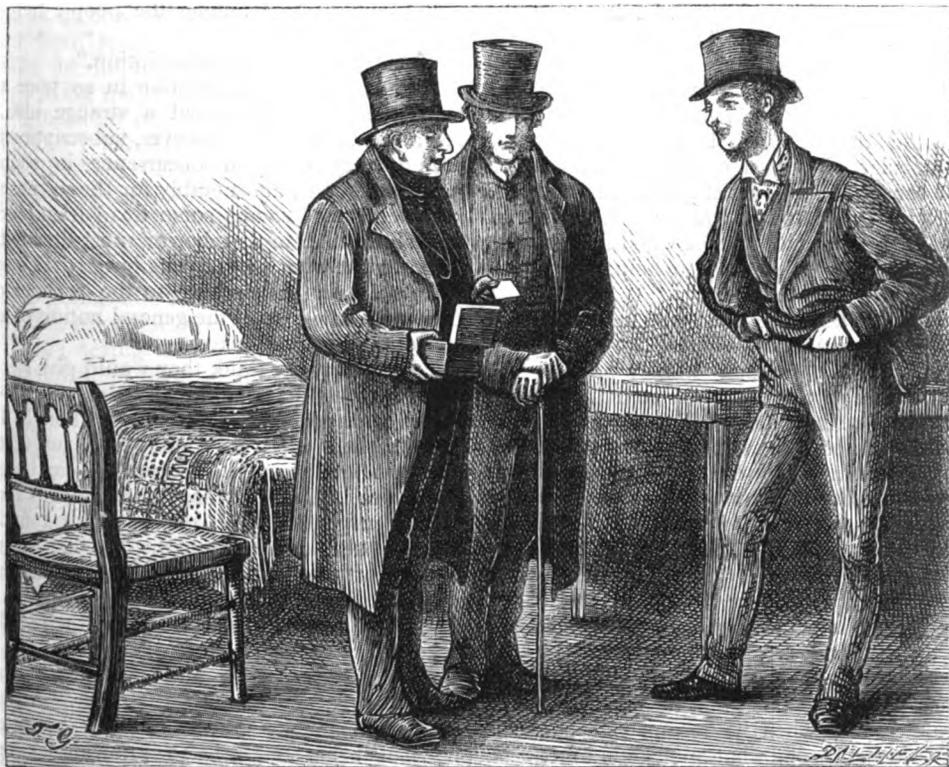
"Well, yes," answered our companion, "better so than that he should have passed

'Unhousel'd, disappointed, unanel'd,
No reckoning made, but sent to his account
With all his imperfections on his head.'"

So far he had spoken and quoted in all earnestness, and indeed with a certain degree of solemnity; but his usual mercurial manner asserted itself when, on concluding the quotation, he struck a theatrical attitude, and added, "Hamlet! verbally altered."

"Do you read Shakespeare then?" I asked.

"Well, I used to read him a goodish bit, when I was a younger and better fellow than I am now," he answered, "and, as you hear, I can still spout him a little; fact is, it's part of my business to be able to do a bit in the 'language of the poets' line. People would hardly think it to look at them; but the rank and file of such quarters as this are greatly taken with the 'flowery.' As long as it is given with a flourish, it don't much matter whether they understand it or not. If ever I'm at a loss I shove in a



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bit of doggerel of my own, and it generally goes down all right, especially as, barring old Braid, there is no one else hereabout as can tip them the flowery at all. Speaking of old Braid," he rattled on in his rapid jerky style, "I've sent round for him to come and do a confab with me, about a matter I have in hand; that's why I have stopped you—matter in question arises out of Palmer's death, and so I thought you would feel interested in it, might perhaps be able to lend a hand. Will you come into my crib here, and wait till Bible comes?"

While I stood hesitating what to answer he broke into a light laugh, in which, however, there could be detected a certain tone of bitterness.

"Ah, well, never mind," he said; "we'll wait for him here; though really, you know, I don't think I look quite the style of customer to go in for decoying and robbing passers-by."

I am afraid that if I had subjected myself to very strict self-examination, I should have found that it had been some vague general ideas anent passers-by being decoyed and robbed that had caused my hesita-

tion; but, evading such self-examination, I smilingly answered—

"Oh! it was scarcely so bad as that. But, to be candid, you did not strike me as quite the sort of customer to be associated in any business with Mr. Braidy."

"Right you are—in a general way," he answered readily enough; "but, then, you see, there *are* strange associations, and strange many other things in a neighbourhood like this. I can remember a time when the idea of my becoming what I have become would have appeared much more strange to me, than such a thing as a true old Christian like Braidy associating with a fellow who is out of the pale of honest society."

He spoke with an affectation of cool cynicism, but it was easy to see that he was really moved. With a sincere desire to soothe him I said I felt sure that the particular object in connection with which he sought Braidy's assistance was a good one.

"I believe it to be a good one," he answered, "and I believe old Bible will think so too. It is to do what we can to help poor Sugar-Bags in her trouble."

"Sugar-Bags!" I exclaimed in amazement. "The woman who——"

"Yes, the woman who murdered Fly Palmer, if you like to put it that way," he broke in, seeing I hesitated for a word. "The woman whose hands are stained with the life-blood of a fellow-creature—who, knowing only that of her, the world will be inclined to regard as a 'female fiend,' 'a human tiger,' or any other penny-a-liner-christened monster; a thing to shudder at and shrink from—perhaps strangle."

He spoke with the utmost vehemence, and with a sternness of expression such as one would scarcely have thought him capable of, but, pausing at this point for breath, he grew calmer, and when he resumed he spoke in a lower and somewhat apologetic tone.

"I beg your pardon," he said, "I know it is both rude and wrong of me to fly out in that way. Still that is how Sugar-Bags *would* appear to outsiders if she went before them undefended; and my object is to see that she does not stand friendless in her hour of need. She is not the woman that that one unhappy act would seem to stamp her. The blow was struck in mere madness and terror, and, take her for all in all, she is more to be pitied than condemned. She is nothing to me, but she is unfortunate and friendless, and so overcome by horror at the result of her own mad act as to be helpless, and therefore I would help her."

I said that I had no doubt of his good intention in the matter; and that there was no necessity for his justifying himself to me over it.

"It isn't exactly that," he answered, "I wouldn't justify myself to any one; but I saw how you looked at the mention of Sugar-Bags' name, and I thought how ready the world is to judge hardly. I was rather railing at the world than justifying myself or blaming you."

"And how do you propose to help the woman?" I asked.

"By getting up a subscription to raise the means to defend her."

"A subscription among the people hereabouts?"

"Yes, a purely local subscription."

To a stranger, a subscription in so poor a quarter might have seemed a strange idea. As a matter of fact, however, subscriptions are of very common occurrence in such neighbourhoods, and notably for the purpose of funerals; of saving some dead friend or acquaintance from that horror most dreaded of all by the poor—a pauper's burial. It was therefore only in reference to the particular object in view, not to the general notion of a subscription, that I asked—

"Do you really think they would give?"

"I believe they would if the thing is properly managed," he answered; "though I want to hear what old Braidy says on that point before I take action. I can see your idea is that a feeling of friendship for Palmer might stand in the way, but I find a great deal more sympathy for her than sorrow for him; and, knowing the reputation he bore, I'm not surprised at it."

"What reputation did he bear, then?" I asked.

"That of a traitor and informer," was the prompt and emphatic answer. "He was nicknamed 'Fly' Palmer, because he had been so 'fly'—so knowing as to have avoided ever being convicted, though it was notorious that he lived by crime. He was what some would think wise in his generation. He worked upon the cats-paw principle, and not only used his tools, but sacrificed them. If he was not convicted, those who were associated with him generally were; and, though no case was ever fully brought home to him, there is no doubt that, in some instances, he betrayed his fellow-criminals; furnished the police 'information I received,' which condemned them. I'm not saying this as against his memory, or in her extenuation; simply state it as a fact, justifying belief, that there would be no

special objection, even among the Barker's Buildings fraternity, to subscribe to a 'Sugar-Bags Defence Fund.'"

"And the upshot of all this is, that you want a subscription from me?" I said.

"No," he replied, shaking his head, "I wasn't leading up to that. Of course, if the thing is set a-going I would be glad if you did subscribe, but I had no idea of touting for subscriptions now. I merely spoke to you because your coming up just after Palmer's Poll had referred to you, had put it into my head. In fact, now I come back to it, I almost think my *first* intention in stopping you was to mention to you what Palmer's Poll had been speaking to me about, as I was under the impression that you had noticed her leaving me as you came up."

"And what might she have been speaking about?" I asked, for on his first mentioning that she had been with him, I had felt somewhat curious to know.

"Well, curiously enough, about a subscription," he answered, "though not, as you will easily guess, the Sugar-Bags one. She wanted me to get up one to bury Palmer."

"But, of course, you couldn't?"

"No; seeing that I was already turning over the other affair in my mind, I couldn't have acted for her under any circumstances," he answered; "but, apart from that, the idea was altogether a mistake. As gently as I could, I put it to her that, rightly or wrongly, he had been unpopular, and that to ask subscriptions promiscuously would be bad policy; at same time, gave her a note to a leading melter, pointedly suggesting that he and a few more of his kidney should make a 'whip round,' to the extent of raising sufficient to put Palmer decently under ground, as parish authorities pottering about his room might make discoveries that would be ugly for some people. I fancy they'll make the whip. Halloo, here comes the messenger I sent for Braidy!" and as he spoke, he indicated by a nod of the head a boy coming along on the opposite side of the street.

"Well, is he coming?" he asked, as the boy came up to where we were standing.

"No, he has gone to the court," was the answer.

"That will do," he said, in a tone of dismissal; then, turning to me, he went on, "He must be gone to hear Sugar-Bags' first examination. I'll go too. Suppose you won't care about going?"

"Well, I would not have thought of going of my own accord," I answered; but what he had been saying had interested me,

and I rather thought now that I should like to hear the examination.

"All right, then," he said, "only you know you needn't stand on ceremony with me—needn't walk through the streets with me unless you like."

He spoke seriously, and without bitterness; but, putting the point aside as lightly as I could, I started for the court with him.

Outside the court there was a strong muster of people from our district, and especially of the Barker's Buildings set; and as we made our way through their midst I could gather that the burden of their song was, "Poor Sugar-Bags!" Inside, too, the court was crowded; but, following in the wake of my companion, who pushed forward with a most business-like air, we secured standing-room at a point from which I had a good view of the prisoner's face when she was brought in. It was a younger, more comely face than from the brief glimpse I had obtained of it on the previous day I had supposed it to be; but it was deadly pale, and wore a haggard, despairing expression, that left no doubt as to the intense agony of mind she was enduring. Though many eyes sought hers, she kept her gaze steadfastly fixed on the ground, save once or twice when she turned it timidly to where Braidy sat watching with a look of kindly sorrow in his soft brown eyes.

The examination was a short one, being merely a formal preliminary to a remand, the only evidence given being that of the constable who had arrested her, and who spoke to expressions having fallen from her which amounted to a confession that she was the person who had struck the blow.

With eyes still averted, and the agonized expression of her countenance unchanged, she was taken from the bar, and her removal was greeted by a general sigh of relief among the spectators, the majority of whom immediately left court.

On reaching the street a man accosted our companion, who, turning to us, exclaimed in his jerky, self-satisfied way, "Business! Must be attended to, you know; soon knock it off, though; won't detain you long; mind just stopping old Braidy if you see him going?"

In less than a minute after, Braidy did come out, and, touching him upon the shoulder, I bade him good day.

"Oh, good day, sir," he replied, looking up; "I saw you come into court with Shiny Smith."

"Shiny Smith!" I exclaimed; "is that his name?"

"Well, he calls himself Smith," answered Braidy, "and others call him Shiny, I suppose, because in slang phrase it is his nature to be constantly 'cutting a shine.'"

"What is he at all?" I asked, for I felt curious upon the point, having already been turning it over in my mind without arriving at any conclusion. My first impression had been that he was simply a swell-mobsmen, but that idea had not borne reflection. Swell-mobsmen are birds of prey that flock together, and I knew that there was no nest of them in our district.

"What is he!" echoed Braidy, who for the moment seemed puzzled by the question; "well, I think he would be best described as regular scribe, and irregular lawyer to the doubtful and dangerous classes hereabout."

"A lawyer!" I exclaimed significantly; "that accounts for his interesting himself so warmly about the defence of this woman."

"I did not know he was interesting himself in the matter," Braidy answered; "still, if he is, it does not follow that he is doing so selfishly. He is a bad man, and yet not wholly bad. Not that he is particularly exceptional in that; few people that haven't lived among such a set as I have done would credit the amount of good—I mean goodness of heart and kindness of feeling—there is latent among bad people. I often think that with better chances many of them would have been better men. Not that that applies to Shiny. I feel convinced that he in his day has had good chances. He is one of the might-have-beens, but I have not given up hope that he is yet among the may-bes. More than once when I have been with him it has struck me that his flourishing manner is put on to stifle the still small voice; and where conscience wants 'putting down' there is always chance of amendment."

Before any reply could be made Shiny Smith joined us, and in his most rattling manner saluted Braidy—

"Ah, here you are then!" he exclaimed, seizing his hand. "Glad to see you taking an interest in poor Sal's case; been on the hunt for you to speak to you about her; thinking of getting up a whip round; wanted to see what you thought of it; like the idea myself; think it sounds well, you know: The 'Sugar-Bags Defence Fund.'"

"I am going to her room to take possession of a few little things I have promised her to hold in charge," answered Braidy, with what seemed coldness by contrast with the other's tone; "if you want to talk anything over you had better come there with me."

"All right, old friend," answered Shiny, quite unabashed; "we're with you. I've enlisted Mr. — here in the cause."

I was about to say something in modification of this assertion, but guessing my intention he anticipated me—

"Well! well!" he hurried on, "provisionally, of course; supposing you are shown that it is a deserving case."

The three of us then walked on in silence until we reached Barker's Buildings.

The landlady of the house in which Sugar-Bags had occupied a room made no objections on Braidy explaining his errand.

"Well, the rent is a couple of weeks behindhand," she said, "but that is neither here nor there now. I wouldn't be the one to keep back so much as a cutting of twine belongin' to poor Sal. The furniture, what little there is of it, is mine; whatever small traps of hers there may be you'll find quite safe."

"This was her room," she went on, when she had led the way up to it, "and many's the hard day's, and, for the matter of that, hard night's work she done in it; and many's the sore heart, and good cry, and hungry belly she's had in it, poor thing; and to think that she should a' come to this, all in a minute, as you may say, she as never did a wrong act in her life before, and no one—the police, nor no one else—can say she did, for all the sort she lived among and the husband she had, and being often without a bit to put in her mouth. You must live with people to know 'em, as the sayen is, and I ain't had her livin' in my house without knowing something about her. She wasn't the one to make a song about her troubles, 'specially as it would have told agen him; but what she had to put up with and go through, and *how* she did put up with it and go through it, would soften a heart of stone to think of."

The recollection had undoubtedly softened *her* heart. She was a coarse, hard-featured woman; and I subsequently learned that she was generally reputed a hard-hearted one in the matter of "bundling out" lodgers who were in arrears of rent with her; but, however unused to the melting mood in a general way, her emotion now was unmistakable, and it was easy to see that her volubility was intended to hide an inclination to tears. "It's her as has done it," she resumed, when she had taken her breath, "but it's him as ought to suffer for it by rights, for it was all along o' him, with his lettin' hisself be led by the nose and givin' way to the drink, though I say it as has a

husband of my own about as big a drunkard as there well can be, but you don't catch me going after mine like she did after hers. Many a time I've known her live on a crust a day; not that that was much punishment to her, for she was often too heart-sick to eat—and then spend her last copper in getting a bit o' something tasty for supper for him; and go to the public-house to beg him to come home to it. I've seen her myself coaxing him and my-dearing him, and clingin' to him and looking up in his face that loving that you would think that any man couldn't but go. But no! When he looked like going, Palmer or some of the rest of the gang would jeer him into throwin' her off; and then she'd creep home and fling herself on her knees by the bed, and cry her heart out pretty near. All the same, she would save him the supper and have it there for him when he did come home, and then she'd try to coax him again as loving as ever—I've heard her with my own ears. 'Oh Bill!' she would say, 'why will you act like this? it will break my heart altogether, if this goes on much longer. You know how wrong it is; then why won't you give up your evil companions, and strive to be a better man? But there you will, now, won't you, dear; promise me, now.'

"And then, though I was only listening outside, I could tell she was putting her arms round his neck. Then he would come out with his regular excuse: he couldn't get work, his character was gone, and he must drown care.

"No, it isn't drowning care, Bill,' she would answer him, 'it's bringing care, and making bad worse. Give up the cursed drink, and I'll work for us both till better times come for us, as I'm sure they would come, if you would only turn your back on your evil companions.' Then he'd tell her that he would—ay, and swear to it too; and I dare say he meant it right enough at the time. Sometimes he would be steady for a day or two, and sometimes even get a day's work at the docks; and then you should have seen how pleased and proud she was, and what a fuss she made about him. But it never lasted; the gang would get hold of him, and he'd go off on the drink again, and be worse than ever; and so it went on till it come to what it did."

"Why," she was beginning again, when Shiny Smith unceremoniously cut her short—

"Ah, yes! To be continued in our next," he said, motioning her to the door; "your feelings do you credit and all that sort of thing, but we want to have a little talk among

ourselves, if you don't mind—see?" She apparently did see, for muttering that what she had said was right, she retired.

"What she says is true enough," observed Shiny, shutting the door of the room after her; "but she would have talked all day if she hadn't been checked. There's one thing," he went on, glancing round the apartment, "she might well say 'what little there is of it' when she spoke of the furniture: a rickety chair, a deal slabtable, and a shaky truckle bed, isn't an unnecessary amount of furniture, to say the least of it. As we are a council of three, it just runs to a seat each, so, Braidy, I vote you to the chair. Mr. — here had better take the table, which, though rough, looks pretty firm; and if the bed goes down with me, I shan't have far to fall."

Without making any direct reply, Braidy, pointing to a cupboard beside which Shiny was standing, asked—

"Is there an old tea-caddy in there?"

"Yes, here it is," answered the other, opening the cupboard, and handing out a small caddy of various-coloured woods. Is that her casket of treasures?"

"Treasures of memory, perhaps," answered Braidy. "You may easily guess that they have no pawnable or sellable value, or they wouldn't be here. Here they are," he went on, opening the caddy, and turning over the papers in it; her marriage certificate, some faded photographs, a few old letters, and a character as housemaid. "And now, Smith," he concluded, as he put back the papers, "I'm ready to listen to you."

"Well, the sum and substance of what I have to say is—What do you think of my idea of a general 'whip round' to defend Sugar-Bags?"

"Well, broadly, and supposing I were assured it meant nothing more than a desire to obtain legal assistance for her, I would have nothing to say against it."

Braidy spoke with a coldness that appeared to surprise as well as disappoint Shiny, who observed—

"Well, that's poor encouragement, and, excuse me saying it, it's scarcely like yourself; perhaps I don't quite 'take.'"

"Perhaps not," responded Braidy, rather drily; "but I'll tell you exactly what I mean. I find that in the Buildings here there is a strong disposition to regard her as something very like a heroine. There are some of them who seem to think—and, indeed, don't hesitate to say—that even had she acted deliberately, she would be justified in what she had done; and if your proposed subscription

is in any way intended to sanction that opinion, then I am conscience-bound to disapprove of it strongly, however harsh it may seem of me to do so. I speak in all humbleness: but, however it may be with those around me, it would ill indeed beseme me to forget that it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.'

"I assure you, Braidy," answered Shiny, "that, so far as I am concerned, there is no thought of justification, though I am free to confess there is of extenuation. My grounds for moving in the matter, as I have already partially explained to our friend here, are, that I believe she was for the moment in a frenzied state, that she is friendless, and has been dragged down to her present condition by too faithful love for one who was unworthy of it."

"There, I can quite agree with you," answered Braidy in a much more hearty tone than he had hitherto spoken in. "Understand, I do not speak against befriending her, poor creature,—the Lord forbid,—I only speak against the opinion I mentioned, and I am happy to say that she has no part in it. She feels the greatness of her sin, is bowed down by it, and is as contrite as a poor sinner can be. So far as I honestly could, I spoke nothing but words of consolation to her."

"You have seen her, then," I observed, taking part in the conversation for the first time.

"Yes," he said, "she sent for me last night, and I was permitted to converse with her."

"But about the subscription, Braidy," said Shiny, who seemed to fear that the conversation might go off at a tangent; "do you think it would be a success?"

"I think that may be taken for granted," was the answer.

"Well, yes, I think it may," said the other; "but will you put your name to it? for that, after all, is my point with you."

"Will you take it round yourself?" questioned Braidy.

"Yes."

"Well, if you will promise me not to allow me to be misunderstood on the point I've spoken of, you can put me down for a shilling, which is about as much as I can afford."

"Don't mention the amount!" exclaimed Smith enthusiastically, "your name is a tower of strength; with that, and the estimation she was held in, to work upon, we shall do well."

"If, previous to this unhappy business, she was the sort of person you and her landlady would make her out to be," I said, addressing Shiny, "I can scarcely understand her having stood in good estimation in a

neighbourhood like this. If she did, it could scarcely be upon the principle of fellow-feeling."

"Well, she undoubtedly was highly esteemed by her neighbours," said Braidy, taking up the answer. "It was a case of vice paying homage to virtue; and my experience is that vice will always do that where it sees that virtue is genuine in itself, and faithful to itself, and is *not* given to pharisaically thanking the Lord that it is not as others. When this Sugar-Bags, as they call her, first came here, her neighbours were very much inclined to resent her holding aloof from them, but when they come to find that her shrinking was rather from timidity than pride, that she was humble and long-suffering in her determination to live honestly, and had been brought into such a neighbourhood as theirs, by a too faithful love for a worthless husband—when they come to see how the land lay, as they would say, that though among them she was not of them, resentment was turned to respect and pity. Unhappily, as I have already told you, there is a disposition—arising out of the character the dead man bore—to approve of what she has done, but apart from that there is a general friendliness of feeling for her, so that the subscription is very likely to do well."

"Do well—of course it will!" exclaimed Shiny, "we'll make it do well. That'll be about the style of thing, eh, Bible?" and as he spoke he handed over a pocket-book in which he had been scribbling during the latter part of the conversation.

"Well, that part of the business may be safely left to you, Smith," answered Braidy with a smile, and passing the pocket-book as he spoke.

It was a large-sized oblong book, and boldly written across its length was the following rather startling announcement:—

**"THE SUGAR-BAGS DEFENCE FUND.
NEIGHBOURS, ATTENTION!**

To Be or Not to Be? That Is The Question.
Shall Poor Sugar-Bags go Undefended?
Remember! Many Can Help One.

The Smallest Donation Thankfully Received."

"Strikes you as a rum start, doesn't it now," said Shiny, observing my look of astonishment; "dare say you think it a caper of mine; but there you're wrong. When in Rome do as Romans do; that is the regular sort of thing here, isn't it, Braidy?"

Braidy nodded assent, and the other resumed—

"I told you they were fond of the flowery; and there is nothing they like it better in than the heading of a subscription-list—give

them a bit of sentiment for their money, and they'll part with it as freely again. 'Help one another, Boys,' or, 'Be to a Friend in distress like a Brother,' is very easily written, and it draws. The Sugar-Bags heading will be mild and sensible compared with many I have done; all it wants now is two or three good names to top it—shall yours be one?"

The question came rather unexpectedly; but I answered that I had no objection, provided it was understood that it was given in the same spirit in which Mr. Braidy's had been given.

"I'll take care of that," he answered; "and things being settled so far, I'll exit and see about putting the business in train."

As there was nothing further to detain Braidy, he observed that we could all leave together, and we accordingly did so, separating at the door, Braidy and Smith going in one direction, and I in another.

I had scarcely, however, got half-a-dozen paces from the threshold, when I was followed by the landlady, who exclaimed—

"Just half a minute, sir," by way of apology, and led us back to the door-step. "Beg yer pardon, sir," she said, when we came to a standstill, "but might I ax yer what's on the cards about poor Sal?"

It was scarcely flattering perhaps to have been selected—as I could see I had been—as the person most likely to be got round; but, feeling assured that her interest in the matter was a friendly one, I answered that I believed there was an idea of getting up a subscription to defend her late lodger.

"And a werry good idea too!" she exclaimed emphatically, "and here's one that'll give to the whip, if she pawns her gown to do it. They calls me a tartar, and perhaps I am, and I'd need to be to get along with some of the customers I has to deal with. But, bless yer, sir, we's all a soft spot in our 'earts if it is only got at, and poor Sugar-Bags got at mine, and it would had to have been a heart of stone altogether if she hadn't, poor thing. I'd come to look on her like a daughter almost, which I would have had a daughter pretty near as old as her if she had lived till now, though it's perhaps as well as she didn't, for she was but weakish, and it's a rough world, and a crowded 'un, and it's the weak as goes to the wall in the crush."

"How old might Sugar-Bags be, then?" I asked.

"Well, she looks forty, but she's only eight-and-twenty," answered the voluble landlady. "It's trouble as has aged her; she's gone through oceans of it. You know,

when the heart is full of sorrer, it *will* run over at times, and as she had no one else to speak to, she used to come to me, rough as I am, with her troubles, and that is how I come to know more about her than others, and to care more for her."

"What has she been?" we asked.

"Well, nothing very grand as far as that goes. Still she had been decently brought up, and was a respectable servant, and it was a come-down for her to be brought here. It was meeting her hopeful husband that was the ruin of her. He was a clerk, and went fast, and got himself into some scrape, and Palmer and one or two others of his stamp got him under their thumb; and they weren't the men to have a hold on him for nothing. They'd got *some* information about the crib in which she happened to be in service, and meant to crack it. But it was a big job, and before starting of it they wanted to know more about how things stood, and to get at it they put him up on the lady-killing lay—to court the servant, you know, and get out of her all about the house. Well, he made up to her, and to make a long story short, she thinking him a decent young fellow, falls in love with him, and I suppose he did with her as far as his shilly-shally nature would let him. What between his liking for her, and the others putting the screw on him, he played in and out—at least it was thought so—and when they did the crack they got hardly anything, and in a little while all that had been in the job, except Fly Palmer, got took and convicted. Sugar-Bags' husband, as is now, he got off for a few months, and when he comes out what does he do but go after her again. Well, he was down on his luck, and he talked fine about not having a friend in the world, and what a lesson this job would be to him, and how well he would do in the future, and all the rest of it, and I dessay he meant it at the time. The end of it was she married him, and they went to a part of London where they weren't known, and made a fresh start; but he wasn't long before he got into bad company again, and gave way to drink. Then Palmer came across him and got him here, and led him on from bad to worse, until it has come to what it has."

Such was the Barker's Buildings landlady's history of her lodger—a history which I subsequently ascertained from other sources to be substantially correct. Having heard so much of her, and having in this incidental manner come to be concerned in the organizing of the subscription in her behalf, I could

not but come to feel an interest in the fate of the unhappy Sugar-Bags, and I must confess it was with a sincere feeling of relief that I heard that her crime, reduced to manslaughter, was punished by a short term of imprisonment.

It was immediately after the expiration of this term of imprisonment that it became my lot to meet her face to face and speak to her. I was entrusted to convey to her an offer, upon the part of some benevolent person, to enable her to emigrate; and, taking Braidy with me, I called upon her at her old landlady's on the first day of her return. She was greatly altered in appearance. She was very pale, and so thin that her clothes seemed to hang upon her. Her black hair was heavily streaked with grey, her manner was painfully nervous, and there was a timid and grief-stricken expression upon her face. We saw that our presence was calculated to put her into a state of nervous excitement, and so we delivered our message as briefly and kindly as we could. I had confidently expected to see her delighted at the news, and was therefore astonished to behold the look of dismay that came over her countenance. She could see that my surprise was not exactly of an agreeable nature, and that Braidy shared my feeling, and in a pleading tone she exclaimed—

“Oh! sir; oh! Bible, don't be angry with me, and don't think me ungrateful; I know how kind you mean to be, but I couldn't go away now, my—my husband.”

Neither of us made any reply in words, but we looked what was passing in our minds; namely, that we would have thought she had had enough of such a husband.

As we remained silent she went on.

“Don't think too hardly of him, believe me he is not altogether hardened; if it is the Lord's will, his heart may be touched yet. I know how weak I have been before; I trusted only to my own strength, but I have been taught better now.”

In her weakened condition her emotion was too much for her, and she sank into the only chair in the room, unable to speak further.

Seeing this, Braidy, who was evidently moved, stepped to her side, and, laying his hand kindly on her shoulder, said—

“There; I see it's too much for you; I think I understand you, though; it's brave of you, and I believe you are right. Do give up the trust in your own strength, lean upon the Almighty; pray to *Him* night and day, that your husband may be turned from his wickedness, and your prayer may be answered.”

“I will, Bible! I will!” she exclaimed

fervently, and the tears starting to her eyes as she spoke. “He shall have a home to come to, and if it is God's good will to change him we will go away together; if he won't be better I will know then that I am called upon to leave him, and I will; but I must give him one more trial.”

To this resolution she adhered; nor seeing the spirit it was couched in could we well offer any strong objection to it. She took her old room, but she shrank from all “neighbouring,” not morosely, but with the nervous sensitiveness of one broken in spirit and wishing to be alone. Seeing this, those around, while pitying her, refrained from thrusting their sympathy upon her with a degree of delicacy and good feeling for which few would have been prepared to give them credit. On the rare occasions on which she appeared out of doors, she hurried on her way with eyes cast down, and even in the little chapel, of which she became a regular attendant, she sat apart. She resumed her former employment of sugar-bag making, and wrought at it with an eager assiduity, the meaning of which was explained when, on the eve of her husband's release from prison, she took a couple of rooms in another part of London, and in humble fashion furnished them as a home. I was among the few who were entrusted with a knowledge of the whereabouts of the new residence, and I watched with a painful curiosity to see how the husband would turn out; whether he would go on in his downward career, or “turn from his wickedness,” and it was with unfeigned feelings of joy that I saw that the wife's efforts to reclaim him were proving of avail. At first he was very restless, and had his former companions been at hand he would probably have lapsed into evil courses. Happily, however, he was for the time out of their reach, and by an earnest watchfulness his wife managed to keep him off “the drink.” At the end of a month employment was obtained for him, and he then became steadier, and a few weeks later he began to accompany his wife to her place of worship. From this time things went smoothly with them in their degree. They both worked hard, lived hard, and saved hard—saved so that in three years' time they were enabled to emigrate at their own cost. At intervals, Braidy still receives letters from poor Sugar-Bags. They are but ill-written and composed, and there is always a melancholy tinge about them; but, upon the whole, they show her to be about as happy as the cloud which fell upon her life will admit of her being on this side the grave.

GOD'S MESSAGE.

USURPING authority, and violating every law both of God and man, tyrants have shed the blood of innocence, and so abused their power, that not the property only, or the liberty only, but the very lives of others have been in danger. Where there is no tribunal at which such a tyrant can be placed, nor superior authority by which he can be restrained, are his subjects free to preserve their liberties and their lives by putting him to a violent death? Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, I will repay. There is no question about that; but the question here is whether without form of law private individuals are in such circumstances entitled to assume the office of the magistrate, and protect themselves from certain destruction by putting the tyrant to death; dealing with him as all acknowledge they would be justified in doing with one who sought to murder them, with a midnight assassin, a maniac, or a mad dog.

It must be admitted that a good cause has seldom been promoted by private individuals taking the law into their own hands. Such violence, however it might be justified or palliated, has usually recoiled with terrible effect on the heads of those who have resorted to it. The matter presents a difficult question in moral casuistry. It is one on which it becomes men to be severe in judging themselves, but lenient in judging others. This, however, is certain, that the cases of that description recorded in the Bible, without censure but rather with approbation, supply no warrant for us assuming the prerogative of the public magistrate, or of Him who says, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." To take his case as an illustration, Ehud, who became a Judge in Israel, was invested with a divine commission. He was raised up by God to deliver his countrymen from the oppression of the King of Moab. King of a nation whom God had cursed and commanded his people to destroy, that man's life was already forfeited; he lay, so to speak, under sentence of death, and, though through the long-suffering of God he and his people were relieved from time to time, the sentence itself had never been repealed. In these circumstances we are told that when the children of Israel, groaning under the intolerable oppression of this tyrant, cried unto the Lord, "the Lord raised them up a deliverer, Ehud the son of Gera, a Benjamite, a man left-handed."

Selected by his nation to carry a present to the tyrant, he chose that occasion as an

auspicious and favourable one for striking a brave blow for liberty. The lion crouches before he springs; and Ehud's visit to Eglon, the King of Moab, with this token of submission, and even of apparent loyalty on the part of Israel, was calculated to lull the latter into false security. The children of Israel would appear through him, their representative, rather to be hugging than on the point of breaking the chains that bound them. Besides, the very aspect of their deputy was calculated to lull the king's suspicions, if he had any, and to dispense with the precautions against danger which tyrants usually take. Indeed the man, as well as the time, was admirably chosen for the end in view. According to our translation, Ehud was "left-handed;" but in point of fact he was more than that, he was lame of his right hand; and this infirmity, which would become apparent when he laid the presents at the feet of the king, would go far to confirm him in his false security. It would not be a lame man conspirators would select for such a bold and desperate enterprise as Ehud had undertaken.

He executes his public commission; and has proceeded so far on his way home when, as one that had forgotten some circumstance of importance, Ehud hastens back to crave a private audience of the king. It is granted. The grateful office which he had that day discharged, the sentiments of loyalty on the part of Israel which he had been the medium of expressing, as well as the hand that hung withered by his side, would be considered sufficient guarantees against his harbouring any sinister purpose. So, as the audience he asks is a private one, the attendants retire and leave him alone with the king.

He breaks the silence with words that make Eglon start—I have a message from God unto thee! He had gone, on his return as far as Gilgal, where certain graven images had been set up, and at whose oracle Eglon, the King of Moab, probably fancied he had received the communication for which he sought his ear. With a reverence that did him honour, the king rose to receive it—not, however, in words whispered in his private ear, but in a double-edged dagger, suddenly drawn from his flowing robe, which Ehud plunged into the tyrant's heart. The blow was well struck. No cry, nor sound was heard by the guards without, leaving Ehud to improve the opportunity of escape. He was the man for such a

bold and daring deed. With singular coolness and deliberation, as he left the apartment, he locked the door, that the attendants might suppose that the king, wishing for retirement, had locked himself in. As if nothing unusual had happened, he walked deliberately past them; and afterwards, hurrying along at the top of his speed, had the mountains of Ephraim echoing before nightfall to the blast of the trumpet that gathered the children of Israel around him, and the standard of a successful revolt. Death was the message he came with from God.

Very different the message with which the ambassadors of the cross are charged. They also are sent to men, but on a very different errand; yet no words could more appropriately express the purpose and object for which they ascend the pulpit, and crave, or rather demand, a hearing than these. It is not in his own name, or of his own authority, the preacher speaks. It is not himself he preaches, nor his own thoughts and opinion he comes to deliver. Rising from his knees, leaving the august presence of God, to stand face to face before a congregation of mortal and sinful men, with the Word of God in his hand and on his lips, he occupies a place of the highest dignity; and, more than any other orator, may begin every discourse with these solemn, startling, but in respect of the communication he brings, most blessed and gracious words, I have a message from God unto thee!

1. His message is from God. Some people have shed many tears over a novel, who never dropped one on the Bible; and many have sat melted and enchanted within the walls of a theatre, who sit within walls where Jesus Christ is set forth, and the most solemn truths are spoken, unmoved as the seats they sit on. This led to the question which it is said a bishop once put to a distinguished player. "Why is it," said he to Mr. Garrick, "that men hear our truths as if they were falsehoods, while they hear your falsehoods as if they were truths?" "Because," said the other, "you speak your truths, my lord, as if they were falsehoods, while we speak our falsehoods as if they were truths."

Notwithstanding the natural disinclination of the heart to the things of God, there was truth and justice in this reply; much in it to account for this, that people are never seen sleeping in a theatre as they are seen sleeping in a church. Did we see a blind man, who had missed the bridge, approaching the edge of the rock from which it sprung, nearing the brink over which another step

carries him to be plunged into the deep dark pool that foams and boils below, what a cry should we raise to arrest his steps! And if preachers of the gospel were sufficiently alive to the hell on which sinners are hurrying, to the heaven which all may gain but many lose, to the solemn consideration that for every soul committed to their charge they will have an account to render at the great day of judgment, how much more earnestly would they plead with God, how much more powerfully and eloquently would they plead with men? "Dull as a sermon," would cease to be a proverb; the dullest speakers becoming lively, and the coldest tempers kindling into enthusiasm. People may talk of extravagance, and want of taste and refinement. But does the mother when she hears her infant scream, and sees it borne away before her eyes on the roaring flood, bear herself calmly and coolly as she takes measures to save its life? Was it as one goes to waken another to their daily labours that Lot entered the houses of his sons-in-law, drew aside the curtains, and told them to rise and flee for their life? I can fancy the bound with which he burst into the apartment; the terror expressed on his countenance; the loudness of his cry; how he shook his grey hairs and bewailed their folly when they refused to rise, treating him "as one that mocked." We should oftener see something like that in the pulpit—in the manner, and passions, and fervour, and fire of the preacher, were the messenger of God sufficiently alive to the danger of those he is addressing—addressing, alas, as coolly as if they were in no danger at all; and oftener also, did the audience realise the brink of ruin on which many of them are standing, would they, breaking through all the rules of conventional propriety, give audible expression to their anxiety and alarm in the old cry, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

Whatever defects, however, may be laid to the door of preachers, much of the little influence of the pulpit is due to this, that the people forget what the preacher is; and that, whatever be his appearance or manner, he comes to them on God's errand and in God's name as an ambassador of heaven, with this solemn, startling announcement on his lips, I have a message from God unto thee! God has sent various, and often strange messengers on his errands. By the dumb beast which he bestrode He spake to Balaam, rebuking the madness of the prophet; a shepherd from the mountains of Midian, slow of speech and of faltering tongue, was sent to Pharaoh to demand the liberty of the

Hebrews and set the bondsmen free; his ambassador to Nineveh was a stranger clad in a shaggy robe, who trode its streets, filling and frightening them with this doleful cry, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be destroyed! while it was by the lips of a little artless child that he foretold to the aged Eli the wreck and ruin of his house. It was in peals of thunder He delivered his message on Sinai; it was in letters of fire on the walls of Belshazzar's palace that he wrote the doom of the king; it was in the songs of angels that He announced the advent of the Messiah; and it was by a voice sounding down from heaven that He revealed the presence, and proclaimed the authority of his Son, saying, This is my beloved Son, hear ye Him! And what we are to remember in the house of God, whoever be the messenger or whatever the manner of his message, is this—that the preacher is an ambassador of God; that it is not how he holds up Christ, but the Christ he holds up that we are to look to; that the messenger is to be sunk in the message, the earthen vessel to be forgot in the treasure it contains; and that if he is a faithful minister of the word, whatever be the plainness of his style, the defects or even dulness of his manner, he is entitled to a hearing, to the serious and solemn attention of his hearers, as one who may begin every address with this grand and startling announcement—in the words of Ehud to the King of Moab—I have a message from God unto thee!

2. The message itself.

That is the best window which, transmitting it in its purity, imparts no colour to the light of heaven; that the best pipe which imparts neither taint nor flavour to the water it conveys, but carries it along pure, as it springs in the fountain; and he the best preacher who delivers to men the message as God delivers it to him—like the disciples when they gave the bread to the people as they received it from the hands of Christ.

Through the fear of man that bringeth a snare, the messenger may sometimes be tempted, not to deliver the whole counsel of God. Forgetting that a faithful minister has no choice, people are apt to take offence when, with speech more plain to their sense than pleasant to their sins, he assumes the office of a censor. For example, Jeroboam set up two calves in Bethel, and because a prophet, commanded of God so to do, denounced this idolatry, and cried out against the altar, Jeroboam puts forth his authority to silence and his arm to seize him. Seduced by his heathenish and bloody wife, Ahab abandons the

worship of God for that of Baal; and because Elijah, faithful amid a faithless generation, protests against the crime, the king accuses him of being “a troubler of Israel;” and because on the mountain where heaven, by its descending fires, attested the divinity of his mission, Elijah ordered her priests to be slain, Jezebel swears that the gods shall do to her and more also if she make not his life as the life of one of them by to-morrow. How unreasonable, to say the least of it, this displeasure with the messenger!

An ambassador for God, to use Paul's words, the indignity is not offered to him, but to the sovereign he represents; and if Christ regards a wrong done to the humblest member of his body as one done to himself, how shall He resent injustice to those his servants who speak in his name and bear his authority! Let such as are displeased with the truth because it jars on their conscience, and attacks their sins, and breaks in on their peace, remember that their contention is not with man, but with God; the truth being God's, and man here no more than the instrument by which He speaks, the servant who carries his master's message. But whatever offence men take against faithful ministers of the Word, the great message they proclaim in the name of God is one it should be as pleasant for others to hear, as for them to announce. He who hastens to the felon's cell with news of his pardon, goes to an unhappy man, but on a most happy errand. It is pleasant to be the bearer of good tidings—to tell men dying of thirst on the desert sands that a spring of water has been found; to bid the Israelite drag himself to his tent-door, and look on the serpent to be healed and live; to turn the eyes of the trembling host on the sea through which the wind is cleaving a passage of safety to the other shore. But better far the message the preacher of the gospel is commissioned of God to carry to dying sinners—that in Jesus Christ there is salvation for the chief of them; that whosoever believeth on Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life; that they have nothing to do but to believe in Him who has fulfilled all righteousness for them, and opened a way of escape from hell to heaven. True, the consequences of rejecting this salvation are not concealed—there remains for those who do so, nothing but a fearful looking-for of judgment. But the message itself is one of reconciliation, peace, and pardon. We come as ambassadors for Christ not so much to warn you of your danger, as to tell you of

your safety; like Lot by the bedside of his son-in-law, we would waken you, not so much to hear that Sodom shall be burned, as that there is still time and opportunity of escape. The sinner, like Peter asleep between his guards, lies in his prison-house, condemned to die, dreaming perhaps of liberty though fettered in iron; in a jail of home; of peace in the midst of danger; and what though, like the angel who set him free, we smite to waken them, break in on their deep slumber and dissipate their pleasant but delusive dreams, when we can direct their astonished eyes to open doors, and, speaking for our Master, say, in his own words, "Behold, I have set before you an open door!"

3. The message addresses itself to unawakened sinners.

Is it peace, Jehu?—was the question with which the king sent forth his servants; on recognising, by the fury with which it was driven, the chariot of Jehu the son of Nimshi. One servant goes forth; a second also; and then a third; and to the same question Jehu had but this one brief and stern answer, "What hast thou to do with peace? And such is the answer the gospel gives to men who obstinately refuse salvation, and choosing self-indulgence rather than self-denial, live on in their sins. "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." Do they, nevertheless, enjoy a sort of peace; feel no remorse; enjoy the present; look back on the past without regret, and forward into the future without dread of approaching evil? So much the worse. Most fatal of all signs! They have peace—such as it is. And so has the patient when mortification has set in; and the unhappy traveller who, sinking amid Alpine snows, has with feelings benumbed and fears allayed, laid himself down to "sleep the sleep that knows no waking." No state so alarming as when all tenderness of conscience has gone, and, glorying in their shame, men court temptation, and sin without remorse—when, to use the expressive language of Scripture, their conscience is seared with a hot iron.

Yet would God's Spirit give effect to them, there are truths in the Bible sharper than the dagger Ehud struck to Eglon's heart. Not that these are intended to kill the sinner, but the sin that's there. Jonah carried no such terrible message to Nineveh, nor Lot to his sons-in-law in Sodom, nor did Noah, as his hammer rung on the ark, foretell any such calamity impending on an impenitent world as is proclaimed to sinners in these words of Christ, "Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish! This is God's truth—a

solemn, very awful part of the message which the preacher is bound to deliver, and to press on his hearers, if he has any regard for their safety, or for his own, as one bound to declare the whole counsel of God.

When the cry rose on his sleeping ear, The Philistines are on thee, Samson, how did he spring to his feet, and, leaving the wanton arms of pleasure, stand like a lion at bay! Had there been any to raise a warning cry, how had the weary and war-worn soldier started and fled when the nail of the Kenite's wife was at his temple and the hammer raised that, descending, drove the tent pin through blood and bone, pinning him to the earth! In the message God sends by his servants He raises such a cry. It is a Father's voice which follows the sinner through all his wicked life, on to the very brink of ruin, saying, Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die? He who died to save them, with all the tenderness of divine love, warns us, if we neglect this great salvation, of pains and horrors, imagination fails to conceive—a worm that never dieth, and a fire that is never quenched. Between that hell and those who reject the gospel there is no more time nor space than between any man and death. Another breath, and we may be there; another step, and it lands us in irretrievable perdition; another moment, and the door that had long stood open may be shut; and what avails it then that we cry, Open, open unto me—no other answer returned to our knocking and crying and earnest entreaties, but this, The door is shut!

4. The message addresses itself to awakened sinners.

To their eager, anxious question, What must I do to be saved? the preacher has an answer altogether satisfactory; glad tidings indeed of great joy. By the bedside of his patient the physician has not unfrequently to stand, beaten and baffled, confessing that he can do nothing more. Disease he may, death he cannot cure; and the case there is beyond all human remedy. Equally helpless, the crowd has stood on the stormy shore, and heard cries of distress mingled with the roar of breakers, and seen the poor seamen, one after another, swept off the wreck into the devouring waters, and, though willing to risk their lives in the noble enterprise, been unable to do aught to save them.

Were we as unable to save men, or rather to show them how they might and would certainly be saved, we would make no attempt to touch their consciences, to awaken or alarm them. In such a case I would no

more disturb the slumber of a sinner asleep in his sins, than break in on the sleep and silence of a cell where he smiles in happy dreams who dies to-morrow on the gallows. But who would let him sleep on to die, were there time and opportunity for escape? And such is the message with which God sends the preacher of his word to sinners. The door is open; the way is clear; there is none too foul to be cleansed—too wicked to be forgiven.

Whosoever cometh unto me, says Jesus, I will in nowise cast out. Whatever you may have been, whatever you are, believe and be saved. Is your guilt great?—my blood has virtue to wash it all away. Are your righteousnesses as filthy rags?—cast them off, and put on in mine a robe fairer than ever angel wore. In your repentance, and good works, and efforts of many kinds, have you sought peace and found it not?—I am your peace; I have borne your griefs and carried your sorrows; I was wounded for your transgressions, and bruised for your iniquities; the chastisement of your peace was upon me, and with my stripes are ye healed. And now, believing in me, poor, penitent, terror-stricken, awakened, trembling soul, fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed; neither be thou confounded, for thou shalt not be put to shame, for the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.

5. The message is often rejected.

I have a message from God unto thee! These words made Eglon start, as well they might. A message from God?—that must be a matter of importance; and he was all attention, nor attention only, but reverence also—putting many to shame who sit in the house of God with wandering eyes or drowsy ear.

We find the messages which God has sent to men meeting with very different receptions. Received where one might have supposed they would have been rejected, rejected where one might have supposed they would have been received, a thief is saved and a disciple lost; and those gates that are shut against scribes and pharisees are thrown open to admit publicans and sinners. How different the way in which the messages conveyed by Jonah and Noah were received! Jonah appears in the streets of Nineveh an utter stranger to its inhabitants; yet as that foreign man goes up and down its streets, raising above its sounds of pleasure and din

of business that doleful cry, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be destroyed," the people are struck with terror, and from the palace to the meanest hovel the whole city goes into mourning. On the other hand, Noah was no stranger to those whom he addressed. They knew him to be a man of God, and one—as preachers have not always been—who practised what he preached. The flood that he predicted he diligently prepared for; his axe rang in the forest and his hammer on the ark as it rose deck by deck before the eyes of a scoffing world, a palpable testimony to his faith. Yet of all the men who heard him preach—saw the ark built—more wonderful still, saw the sea-bird from the shore, the eagle from her crag, the sheep from mountain pastures, and lions from the thicket take refuge within its walls, not one turned their steps to the open door; not one repented him of his sins. Noah's message was universally rejected. With his hand on the windows of heaven, ready to let the waters go, yet waiting to be gracious, God looked down on the world, and they were all eating and drinking, marrying and given in marriage—"he hearkened and heard, but they spake not aright; no man repented him of his wickedness."

Blessed be God, the message of the gospel is neither thus obstinately nor universally rejected. There were but eight saved in the ark; yet, though in one sense many are called and few chosen, heaven already holds of ransomed, redeemed, and glorified spirits more than any man can number. In them, and millions who shall follow them, or are now treading their steps, Jesus sees of the travail of his soul and is satisfied. Yet if many are in the ark who have found salvation through faith in a crucified Saviour, how many, alas, are out of it!—are living as if no flood were coming, to sweep them away, from the door where they stand, perhaps, with their foot on its threshold, fully intending some day to enter!

Broad is the way, said our Lord himself, and wide is the gate that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat; but narrow is the way, and strait is the gate that leadeth to life, and few there be that find it! How sad to think it is so; and how much the more need we should see to it that, neither neglecting nor rejecting this great salvation, we are giving all diligence to make our own calling and election sure. Then, rising above all earthly cares, with the hour of death and day of judgment full and near in view, we may be "careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and sup-

plication with thanksgiving, let our requests be made known unto God; and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep our hearts and minds through Jesus Christ."

6. Hindrances to the reception of God's message.

Among these may be reckoned our familiarity with it. If that does not, in the terms of the common proverb, breed contempt, it in too many cases, through the influence of our sinful nature, breeds indifference. Thus many, accustomed from their very childhood to sit under the sound, and receive the offers of the gospel, become, as it has been called, *gospel-proof*. Hence those who have been reared in godly homes are, when they become wicked, apt to run into excess of wickedness. History records no rebellion more abominable than Absalom's; and, child of David, under what holy influences was he reared! Judas Iscariot is the chief of traitors; yet he passed the last years of his life in constant intercourse with the Son of God. Hence of all unconverted men, the case of an unconverted minister may be regarded as the most hopeless—familiarity with the gospel if disassociated from saving, sanctifying grace, like familiarity with death, hardening, petrifying the heart. No man thinks less of the grave than the hoary sexton whose trembling hands toss about the mouldering wrecks of mortality.

This explains how it is—as we ourselves have seen—that discourses which have been preached without any apparent effect to an audience familiar with the name of Christ, and as much accustomed to the sound of the gospel as natives of the shore to the dash of the waves that seems but to lull them to sleep, when preached to congregations to which Jesus Christ and Him crucified was as a new revelation, have been listened to with astonishment; with open eyes and ears; with such gladness on the part of eager crowds, as was ready to express itself, in the words of the old exclamation, How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation.

Another hindrance to the reception of the gospel message, is the self-denial that it requires. The message sent to Lot is not only to leave Sodom, but its possessions and pleasures—all his wealth and property to perish in its avenging fires. This may explain why he was so slow to depart. He found it no easy matter to tear himself away.

Though the day was breaking, and the angels were urging him to make haste, and every moment was increasing the danger of delay, those who came to him saying, We have a message from God unto thee, had to lay violent hands on him and his family, and drag rather than lead them out of the doomed, devoted city.

And here lies the difficulty of getting sinners to accept the gospel message. The salvation of our souls requires the sacrifice of our sins; it is by the cross, borne daily for Christ, that his people are prepared for the crown; and so strait is the gate that, though the greatest sinner may enter, he cannot enter with the least sin upon him. It is this which makes men unwilling to accept of Christ; which keeps them so halting between the two opinions, that though *almost* they are not prepared to deny themselves, and take up their cross daily, and become *altogether* Christians. You can part with many, but not with some favourite sin. Well, there is no alternative. You must part with that or part with God, and part with Christ, and part with happiness and heaven. Where will you find folly like that?—not in the hospital where a man parts with his hand or limb to save his life; not in the prison where the felon will submit to any pain or punishment to escape the gallows; not at the death-bed—unless he is a Christian longing to depart and be with Jesus—where a man would part with all his lands and pay down all his fortune for a medicine that would save him from the grave. "All that a man hath will he give for his life." Yet strange and sad to say, many give up heaven rather than give up their sins.

7. To receive God's message, it must be accompanied by his power and Spirit. He who says, Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest, says also, No man can come unto me, except the Father draw him. Some fancy that if the message were more impressively, earnestly, eloquently delivered, it would be more generally, if not universally, received. I have heard of a minister of the gospel desiring them to carry him from his dying bed to the pulpit, that, standing there on the very verge of another world, he might beseech sinners once more to accept a Saviour, and with panting breath raise his emaciated hand and sepulchral voice to address them in a last, loving, farewell warning. Such an affecting and affectionate scene, we may think, could not fail to tell; imparting a power to the broken speech of the dying never given to the bril-

liant and burning eloquence of the living pastor.

Fond, but vain imagination! There is a hardness and depravity in the human heart which could resist not only the voice of the dying, but the voice of the dead. Dives, the rich man of the parable, would have had the beggar sent from heaven to his brethren. There are no prayers either offered or answered in hell; but suppose the request had been granted, and that some night when his surviving brethren are carousing in the hall, the beggar stands before them, and after delivering his message — telling where their brother was, and what he was suffering, revealing the horrors and secrets of the prison-house — vanishes from their sight. What were the issue? No more wassail that night; pallid with terror the company disperses; and for a time the apparition of that old beggar haunts their solitude and rises before them in the darkness and dreams of the night.

But it had never changed their hearts. Our Lord lends his sanction to the answer of Abraham, "If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe though one rise from the dead." Let God's Spirit grieved and resisted be withheld, and with the ark and its open door before them, the world is drowned; but let him give his Spirit, and when an unknown stranger walks the streets of Nineveh, proclaiming her approaching doom, the city clothes herself in sackcloth, repents, and is saved. What prayers should be offered for the Spirit! He only can send home the message of the gospel like Ehud's weapon; strike it into the sinner's heart. So let us cry to the Lord, when we read his word or hear his servants, that the Master's power would go forth with his message, and that the gospel which has come to us in word, may come to us also "in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and with much assurance."

THOMAS GUTHRIE.

FÆDER URE.

By HENRY ATTWELL.

MANY readers of this magazine will, we think, be glad to possess a copy of the Lord's Prayer in the form in which our Anglo-Saxon forefathers were wont, a thousand years ago, to utter it; and those who are already familiar with our mother-tongue, will not, we are quite sure, grudge the space here bestowed upon it.

Our interesting extract is taken from Dr. Bosworth's edition of the Anglo-Saxon Gospels, based upon the best manuscripts.

It cannot be ascertained with exactness when the Gospels were first translated into Anglo-Saxon; but we are told that the Venerable Bede dictated with his dying lips to his pupil Cuthbert the last words of St. John's Gospel. This was A.D. 735; and we may fairly infer that the other three Gospels had already been translated. The two Anglo-Saxon MSS. from which Dr. Bosworth's text is mainly derived, were probably copied about half a century before the Norman Conquest.

It is interesting to note that the Anglo-Saxon translations were made from the Latin version known as the *Vetus Italica*, and not from St. Jerome's *Vulgate*. We learn that two copies of the *Vetus Italica* Gospels were sent by Gregory the Great to St. Augustine.

These valuable manuscripts are preserved, one in the library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, the other in the Bodleian Library: it is probable that it was from one of these, or at least from a copy of one of these, that the Anglo-Saxon churchmen made their translations.

We shall append a few notes to the prayer: not as a philological study, but to show how readily the Anglo-Saxon may be converted into intelligible English: and this without the aid of a single word of Latin or French origin; and by barely making any alteration beyond simplifying the old inflections.

Fæder ūre dū de eart on heofonum, sī dīn nama gehālgod; to-becume dīn rice; gewurde dīn willa on eorpan swā swā on heofonum; urne dæg-wamlican hlāf syle us to-dæg; and forgyf us ūre gyltas, swā swā we forgyfap ūrum gyltendum; and ne gelæd dū us on costnunge, ac ālys us of yfele.

Sōþlice.

We would ask the reader, before looking at the following notes, to try to recognise the words by their sounds. We sometimes fail to recognise an old friend until we hear his

voice. It will help us to the recognition of these old words if we read them aloud, giving attention to these two hints:—

(1) — makes the vowel long: thus, a is pronounced as o in cone; o, as oo in book; u, as ow in fowl; y as y in spy; æ, as EA in HEAT.

(2) d, represented in the old Anglo-Saxon ð, has the flat sound of TH in THOSE. has the thin sound of TH in THIN.

(a) The first note we make is that ðE (*the*) has, like the German DER, the force of the relative *who*.

(b) SI (*be-thou*). This is almost the only word we shall have need to change. Through intermixture of substantive verbs in our verb to *be*, this part of the A.S. verb *wesan* has been dropped. The student of German will see that SI is exactly identical in sound and sense to *sei*, the subjunctive of *sein*.

(c) GEHALGOD (*hallowed*). The prefix GE of the A.S. participle is obsolete in English. It is, however, preserved in the antiquated word *yclept*, A.S. *geclepod*, *called*.

"But hail thou, goddess, fair and free,
In heaven *yclept* Euphrosyne."

MILTON.

The change of *g*, A.S., to *y*, English, will be seen in very many words.

The ear will perceive that such a change is a very natural one by gradually softening the guttural *g*, in such a word as *dæg*, until it becomes *day*.

(d) TO-BECOME (*come*). The TO has the force of the Latin *ad*; and we see the same prefix in the German *zukommen*. It is interesting to find, in Wykliffe's translation of the passage, the old form preserved: "Thi kyngdom cumme-to."

(e) RICE (*kingdom*). Pronounce *c* as *k*. This word has lost its primary meaning of *power, kingdom* (seen in the German *Reich*); but we retain it, in the sense of wealth, in *rich*.

(f) GEWURDE (*be, become, happen*). We have the root of this word in the adjective *worth*, which means *to be of some account*; and again in some parts of the verb to *be*, *was, were, wert*. The GE, here, gives an intenseness to the verb, much as the prefix *be* does in such verbs as *be-drop, be-dim, be-labour*. This A.S. participle, GE is retained in *clash* (*GElash*), *cram* (*GERam*), *crumple* (*GERumple*), *grub* (*GERub*), &c.

(g) SWA, SWA (*so, so; so, as*).

(h) HLAFF (*loaf, bread*). It would seem that *loaf* was not quite so limited in its mean-

ing in A.S. as in English: still, the *loaf* (HLAFF) was the *lump of bread*; while the *bread* was the *aliment*, the substance that *bred** (BREDAN). We cannot resist the temptation to digress for a moment in order to look at this word HLAFF in a few kindred languages. German, *laib*; Old German, *hlaiba*; Russian, *chleb*; Bohemian, *chleb*; and on turning to Ulphilas's translation (ab. A.D. 360) of the Lord's Prayer into Gothic,—the *oldest* written language closely allied to Anglo-Saxon,—we read, "*Hlaif unsarna pana sinteinan gif uns himma daga.*"

(i) SYLE (*give*). It will be seen that this word has lost its primary meaning of *to give*, to *bestow*, in its English form, *SELL*.

(k) GYLTA. Hardly *guilts*, in our English sense; but *debts*, as in the Greek original. So, also, GYLTDUM means *debtors*, as in our authorised translation of St. Luke's Gospel: "for we also forgive *every one that is indebted to us.*"

(l) COSTNUNGE (*temptation*). Wykliffe uses the foreign word "temptacioun." The A.S. dictionary gives us COSTIAN, to *try*, to *tempt*, to *prove*; and COSTUNG or COSTNUNG, a *trial*, a *temptation*. But shall we find the old root still living? It will help us in our search if we refer to another A.S. verb, of nearly the same form and meaning, namely, CEOSAN, to *try*, to *test*, to *CHOOSE*. Now, to *choose* is to *test* (in order to select); and we may fairly reproduce this COSTNUNG as *choosing*.

(m) AC (*also*). We find this word preserved in our well-nigh obsolete *eke*.

(n) ALYS (*unloose*). It will be seen that we retain the exact word, in *unloose*, by simply changing the prefix A for UN.

(o) SORLICE. *Soothlike, soothly, in sooth; sov*, meaning *truth*.

We are now prepared to see through the secondary meaning of such words as *rich, loaf, sell, guilts, choosing*; and changing two words only, to read the prayer as English.

Father our, Thou that art on heavens, hallowed *be* Thy name; to become Thy ^e rich; *be done* Thy will on earth so so on heavens; our daily loaf¹ sell us to-day; forgive us our guilts, so so we forgive our guilters; and not lead Thou us on ¹choosing; but unloose us of evil.

Soothly.

* Unless, indeed, we may surmise *bread* to have been the flat, broad, cake.

THE EDITORS' ROOM.

I.—NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE KNOX CELEBRATION.

THE celebration of the tercentenary of the death of Knox has not been a very great affair. Several causes may be assigned for this. In the first place, it was a celebration of a death, not of a birth. In the second place, religious celebrations of this kind do not very well suit the genius of the people. We have had two great centenary celebrations in Edinburgh within the last few years—that of Burns, and that of Scott. The chief part of each was a banquet, and the celebration took the form of the post-prandial speeches that are usually delivered on such occasions. The class of people who would have been more specially interested in a celebration of Knox are not those who would feel themselves in their element at a noisy banquet. In the third place, nothing is going on at the present time fitted to arouse any very special enthusiasm about Knox. No one is very loud in abusing him. On the contrary, he has been getting to be somewhat popular. People who are listened to, no longer call him a savage and a brute. The world knows that savages don't found schemes of national education, and that brutes don't refuse bishoprics when pressed upon them by English kings. Thanks to Dr. M'Crie, we have a true picture of the life of Knox. And thanks to Thomas Carlyle and to James Anthony Froude, even the literary world has come to see that the man who, in the words of the latter, created a nation as well as reformed a church, must be one of the greatest men of his own or of any time. The Scotch people look upon this change of feeling about Knox with calm satisfaction, but not with extravagant enthusiasm. They ponder these things and lay them up in their hearts, but they do not let them out in a burst, like bottles of ginger beer. The feeling that has been roused will probably embody itself in different ways in the case of different persons. Some will contribute more or less to build a monument in Edinburgh. Others will feel impelled, quietly but decidedly, to do all they can to promote the success of the new national scheme of education, which at length presents a fair probability of the accomplishment of Knox's ideal—the "devout imagination" which the nobles ridiculed. And others will feel that the best way of showing honour to his memory is to promote a closer fellowship, something like an ecclesiastical federation, among the millions of English-speaking men, in Britain, in the United States, in India, and in the colonies, who not only share his belief, but follow the form of church polity which he established.

If Knox were here he would be pleased with much, but he would be sad for some things. Pleased he would be at the vitality which has attended his system, and the marvellous expansion it has undergone in three centuries. Following its fortunes, his heart would rest, with special interest, on the great American Church which still calls him its father. Pleased

he would be, likewise, at the efforts we are at last making for the extension of common and of college education. Pleased, too, he would be to see lay elders still held in honour, and the system esteemed more and more in other lands and in other communions. But he would be sadly vexed at the Poor Laws, for the "paup," in his view, were God's charge to the Church. He would be sadly vexed at our ecclesiastical divisions. He would be sadly vexed at the ecclesiastical divorce of England and Scotland. And he would be sadly vexed at the isolation of the nobility, not only from the Church, but from the people of the country. Most vexed of all, probably, at the too feeble pulse of spiritual life, and the faintness of the brave old spirit that was willing to give "all for the Church and a little less for the State."

ATTACKS ON MISSIONARIES.

The proposal, which will have been carried into effect before this number of our Magazine reaches our readers, to observe the 20th December for earnest prayer on behalf of foreign missions, has drawn forth an angry philippic from one of the high priests of high churchism, Dr. Littledale. Not that he objects to prayer for missions—far from it; but his soul is distressed on account of a proposal by Archdeacon Allen to have evening communion on that day. Now, evening communion is to Dr. Littledale an awful profanation. Have not the Church councils of the last twelve hundred years decreed that the communion should be received fasting? And *dare* any good man receive it otherwise? For our own part, we could not help thinking of a company of good men that met in an upper chamber one evening, and, *after supper*, their Master took bread and brake it, and gave it to them, saying, "Take, eat." Then we thought of another occasion where certain disciples were gathered together, and a certain Apostle came among them; and though he had been at Troas a whole week, and might well enough have observed the "breaking of bread" in the morning, he put it off till the evening, for the speech which he delivered on the occasion lasted till midnight. We confess we were simple enough to think that Mr. Allen might safely follow these precedents, older than even eighteen hundred years; but Dr. Littledale and his friends must be able to say, "Nous avons changé tout cela!"

But it is not to comment on that circumstance that we advert to Dr. Littledale. He is highly displeased with modern missions. He says they are not conducted after the manner of the successful apostles of former times. Well, if he can point out wherein "the doctrine on the church, the sacraments, the atonement, the ministry, and the operation of grace," as taught by our modern missionaries, differs from that taught by Peter and Paul and John, we shall be very thankful. But that is not the point at all. The doctrine may be the same as that of these apostles,

but Dr. Littledale's apostles are quite another set of men: they are mediæval apostles; they are "the men that converted the invaders of the Empire in the fifth and sixth centuries, and won Russia and Scandinavia to the Gospel in the tenth century."

We remember hearing of a foreign missionary lamenting to a brother churchman that there was so little of conversion among the natives. "How could you expect them to be converted," was the reply, "when your church is not built east and west?" How can we expect missions to prosper, virtually asks Dr. Littledale, if missionaries do not receive the sacrament fasting?

More than that, how can we expect missionaries to be good men, if they are so profane? And good men they are not. "I find it," he says, "reiterated in the most explicit language from every quarter of the heathen world, by dispassionate lay-travellers, the laziness and self-indulgence of Protestant missionaries, whether nominal Anglicans or Dissenters. There is absolutely only one voice on this head."

Dr. Littledale has such a power over facts that it may be rash to contradict him even here. Still, "methinks he doth protest too much." He has vaulted so high as to land on the wrong side of the horse. To say that there is absolutely only one voice on the character of missionaries, and that that one voice charges the whole fraternity with laziness and self-indulgence, is so absurd and so untrue a statement that the value of the whole assertion comes to nothing. Did Dr. Littledale ever hear of Lord Napier of Merchistoun, or of Sir Bartle Frere? Did he ever hear of Sir Henry Lawrence, or Sir Herbert Edwards? Is the name of the gallant and excellent Sir Donald Macleod, who met his death the other day in a way so distressing, quite unknown to him? Who constitute the chain of dispassionate lay-travellers that unanimously accuse our missionaries of leading a life so disgraceful in men holding their office? Or let us see how the charge fits to some well-known names. Take churchmen first:—Henry Martyn, Allen Gardiner, Bishop Mackenzie, Bishop Patteson? Take Nonconformists or others:—John Williams, Robert Moffat, David Livingstone, Alexander Duff, William Burns? Need we go further? The reckless folly of such a charge recoils on the head that fabricated it. Its use is simply to indicate the intense dislike with which every enterprise conducted in the evangelical spirit is regarded by the more advanced high churchmen. The step would not be a long one from such a spirit of hatred to deeds of persecution if there were the power.

THE ASSYRIAN TABLET OF THE FLOOD.

The Moabite stone has yielded the palm. For though neither Dr. Tristram nor any of his fellow-travellers has discovered any other tablet in Moab to be placed beside what is still *the* Moabite stone, a discovery has been made in the heart of London that reaches back to a much more distant point of time than even that of the royal sheep-master of Moab. Mr. Smith, of the British Museum, has been search-

ing among a mass of clay tablets taken some fifteen years ago from the Royal Library of Nineveh, and has discovered one which he believes to contain the story of the Flood. The tablets were much mutilated, and it was only after a careful search that he got together all the fragments that were necessary to supply the story entire. Of course, the outer world must rely in absolute trust on the few great Assyrian scholars who are capable of dealing with such documents, and the names of these might be told off on the fingers of a single hand. Conspicuous among them is Sir Henry Rawlinson, who, though in some doubt as to the proper names, has thrown no suspicion on the rendering of the narrative itself. It turns out to be a Chaldæan version of the story of the Flood, differing in some particulars from the scriptural account, but sufficiently near to throw a very interesting light on that narrative. The date of the document of which that now found is a copy can only be guessed at, but according to Mr. Smith it cannot be later than the seventeenth century before Christ. It is in the form of a narrative given to a king whose name he has not been able to read phonetically, but which by another process he gives as Izdubar. The flood destroys all life from the face of the earth. Not only were the men destroyed, but the very gods were frightened; and the document, lowering the gods in a way unknown in the sacred Scriptures, likens them to dogs cowering with their tails between their legs. The cause of the flood was sin. "The world to sin has turned; and then I in the presence of the gods prophesied evil; when I prophesied in the presence of the gods evil, to evil were devoted all my people, and I prophesied thus, 'I have begotten man, and let him not, like the sons of the fishes, fill the seas.'" The flood lasts for six days and nights. Then Ishtar opens the window, but the ship is borne along to the mountain of Nizir, where it sticks. On the seventh day after, a dove is sent forth and it returns. Then a swallow, which also returns. Then a raven, which wanders away and does not return. Then Ishtar offers a libation to the gods, and Bel comes and hands him and his wife out, and purifies the country and establishes a covenant.

Such is this new tradition. Traditions of the flood have always been so numerous, and in many of their features so much resembling the Bible account of it, that a new one is little more than a stone added to a cairn. The interesting thing is, that in these days, when scepticism pronounces a flood like that of Noah impossible, our attention should be turned to the overwhelming evidence in favour of it. We should not like to be the man who stakes his well-being, whether now or hereafter, on the chance of the flood proving to have been a myth. As little should we like to be the man who stakes his salvation on the chance of the prophecy proving to be a delusion, that as the world was once destroyed by water, it is destined hereafter to be consumed by fire.

THE WESLEYAN EDUCATION CONFERENCE.

A very important change of policy in regard to

public education has taken place in the Wesleyan body. Since the Wesleyans resolved, some years ago, to have connectional schools, the weight of their influence has been in favour of denominational education. They were not at first disposed, when Mr. Forster's measure became law, to throw their connectional schools into the general system. But of late strong reasons for moderating this policy have been operating upon them. During December, an important conference of leading members of the Wesleyan Church has been held for the purpose of giving the subject a full consideration. While Dr. Rigg, Mr. Pope, and others, showed an inclination to retain the connectional character of the schools, Mr. Arthur, and the majority, were of opinion that it would on the whole be better to merge them in the general system. Provided the Bible should continue to be taught in the schools, they were willing that they should form part of the national system. But the resolution carried did not go quite so far. A kind of compromise was agreed to, reserving existing schools under the old system, but agreeing that new schools should be embraced in the national scheme. Whether the proposal to exempt existing schools will be maintained or not, we cannot say; the probability is, we should suppose, that once the new policy has been digested a little, this restriction will not be insisted on.

It is felt that this is a very important resolution, and that it will not be without effect in connection with the national scheme. Some change, it is generally believed, will have to be made upon it; and the step indicated by the Wesleyans may not be without influence on those to whom it lies to consider what the change is to be.

II.—OUR LETTER-DRAWER.

THE BIBLE AND SCIENCES.

To the Editors of the SUNDAY MAGAZINE.

"I was very glad to meet with your answer to an inquiry concerning 'The Bible and Science,' in October. I hoped the concluding remarks of that reply, referring to the causation of light would have produced a question on, and an explanation of that, to me, most perplexing subject; but seeming to be solitary in my ignorance of the nature of those discoveries achieved by modern science, which prove that light exists independently of the sun, I have presumed to address you, hoping you will devote a short space in your next issue to a definition of the 'luminiferous substance,' and the manner of its 'vibration.'

"M. E. C."

The theory of light, about which M. E. C. asks information, now, we believe, accepted by philosophers, is, in one word, that light is not *matter* but *motion*. Sir Isaac Newton thought that light consisted of small particles emitted by the luminous body with great velocity in all directions. Since his time, however, by means of certain decisive experiments, it has been found that light does not consist of particles of matter, but of *undulations*, occurring in a highly attenuated but elastic substance, called ether, which must fill all space, connecting our globe with the remotest stars,

and pervading our atmosphere and all transparent bodies.

It is obvious that until this theory came into existence, it would be very unlikely that any one should suppose that there could be light, as recorded in the first chapter of Genesis, before the sun was formed. How then did it happen that the author of that chapter represented light as existing before the sun? The argument to which we referred was, that he must have written under the influence of a higher guidance, since the idea of light without the sun would not have occurred to him. Now that the undulatory theory of light has been established, we can understand how there should be light without the sun. The Spirit of God moving through the void might cause the vibrations in the ether which produce light. Subsequently, when the sun and other luminous bodies were formed, the vibrations were produced by them, it being the property of luminous bodies to cause the undulatory motion by which light is produced.

Mr. Ponton, the author to whose book we referred ("The Beginning"), is learned in explanations of the Hebrew words in the first chapter of Genesis. He affirms, for example, that the word *mirahefeth*, "The spirit of God moved on the face of the water" means, by consent of commentators, "the production of a tremulous or vibratory motion." Mr. Ponton argues that the terms employed are precisely such as a thoroughly scientific mind would employ to denote the process. We do not agree with him there. Commentators are not agreed that *mirahefeth* denotes a tremulous or vibratory motion. It does not seem to us to be wise to attempt to find in the Bible recondite allusions to scientific facts or laws but lately discovered, and to build upon these an argument for verbal inspiration. All that it seems to us fair and reasonable to infer either from the fact that light is said to have been created before the sun, or from the language used to describe the process, is, that the writer could not have invented the statement—he must have got it from some one who knew more about the matter than men had then the means of knowing of themselves.

PROSE SET TO POETRY.

We hardly know how to acknowledge the courtesy of "Emerald Isle," who, in a provincial newspaper kindly forwarded to us, sends back to us in rhyme echoes of our own lucubrations. Here, for example, is very good advice to the working man who has secured a better share than formerly of—

SPARE TIME AND SPARE MONEY.

(A Rhyme for the Working Man.)

Long we've fought to reach this height,
By unions, strikes, and combination,
Now, in this dawn of new-born light,
Shall we raise or sink our nation?

Day by day, and year by year,
Long we strove to reach this goal,
Counting nothing was too dear
To gain more rest from slavish toil.

Now we've won our sighed-for state,
 Rest from labour,—“softer lines,”
 Shall we “rest and thankful wait,”
 And test results by present signs ?

Are our homes made happier, say
 Does want get banished from our ranks,
 Where goes all our extra pay,
 To public-house, or “Saving Banks ?”

The future is at least our own,—
 Fight and conquer each abuse,
 Let us trust in *right* alone,
 To good fast cling, the bad refuse.

Leisure time brings leisure's cares,
 Extra pay, temptations strong ;
 Be it ours to shun all snares,
 If we would our rights prolong.

Rally round Mechanics' Halls,
 Lecture rooms, and evening schools,
 Step to the front when duty calls,
 Leave drink and sloth to sots and fools.

November, 1872.

EMERALD ISLE.

III.—GLANCES AT WHAT IS DOING ABROAD.

FRANCE.

The cauldron has been stirred again; “bubble, bubble, toil and trouble,” as before. Only the cauldron has not boiled over; the process has been arrested for the time. For the time, but we fear only for the time; the dove with the olive leaf has not yet settled down, and no one can tell what may be on the point of taking place. Good people are thankful that in one of Thiers' official documents he should have sought for France the protection of the Almighty; it is such a great thing for the President to make any recognition of God. As for the Reformed Church, men seem to be making up their minds that a disruption between the rationalist and Evangelical portions of it is inevitable; elements so opposite cannot cohere.

In regard to the Church's work, earnest men are getting to be more alive. We learn from a contemporary that the National Conferences of the South have been held and conducted in a most prayerful spirit. The first question was that of society and Christianity. Rich against poor and poor against rich; producer against consumer, and consumer against producer; systems of socialism and systems of political economy, were passed in review. The only true remedy is the unselfish love implanted in man by the gospel. With this, co-operative association were counted one of the best practical remedies. Christian men were earnestly exhorted to see that their families bore bright testimony to the holiness and happiness produced by the Gospel. Then the Synod was discussed; and, after that, what could be done to make the public services more interesting and impressive and full of life. It was felt that a *politico-religious* journal was a great desideratum; and a committee was named to consider what could be done.

The Committee of the Cologne Congress has brought out an answer to the Fulda memorial. Comparing it with what the same parties issued in 1870,

it declares that it is contradictory, and therefore a nullity. It affirms of the Alt-Catholics that they believe all that the Church believed up to July 18, 1870, and therefore they are the true Catholic Church. Therefore it is a calumny to allege that they are apostates, and that their masses are sacrilegious.

In a recent number, we adverted to the singular fact, that in protesting against the right of a Church to make the slightest alteration on its formularies, Dr. Pusey of England and Dr. Begg of Scotland,—the extreme High Church of the one kingdom, and the extreme Free Church of the other,—joined hands. It now appears that the Alt-Catholics take the same ground; but, we cannot help thinking, with infinitely more reason than either of the others.

IN THE PRUSSIAN PARLIAMENT.

Nothing can be more vigorous than the war between ultramontaniam and the representatives of the people. Several pitched battles have lately taken place. The House was asked by Reichensperger to declare that Catholic children should be exempted from attendance on Professor Wollmann, the excommunicated professor in the Bauenburg Gymnasium. By a majority of 264 to 83, the House declared that it would not interfere. Next day an attempt was made to reverse the decision of the Minister of Worship against the teaching in schools by nuns and sisters. The result was similar—a majority against the proposal of 242 to 83. Dr. Palk, the Minister of Worship, defended himself with great vigour. The State knew nothing, he said, of the Vatican decree, and as for the Bishops, the organ of communication with the Church and the Government, they had made their bargain with them before there was any Vatican decree. And as for the nuns and sisters, it was but twenty years since they had been admitted to schools, and there was no reason why the schools might not get on without them now as well as they did twenty years ago. In conclusion he said: The Church had declared war against the State, and the State was reluctantly compelled to accept it. In the Catholic itinerant meetings hot-blooded priests were preaching war with fanatical cries against the State. Alone the State could not conquer; the people must help the State to resist fanaticism and priestly intolerance.

It is said that the laws against the Jesuits are being executed with no little rigour.

The German correspondent of the *Guardian* notices a new book entitled “The Boundaries between the Church and State.” Among other points noticed in connection with Great Britain, is the Catholic Emancipation of 1829. That measure, says the writer, was founded avowedly on the principle that the papal claim of Infallibility, with all the consequences flowing from it, did not exist. Now that the Infallibility has been decreed, the ground has been cut away on which that measure rested. The English did not seem to be giving any heed to this; but the ever advancing front of the Catholic Church would bring on proceedings that would awaken them from their dream.

DR. STRAUSS'S NEW WORK.

The name of Dr. David Strauss, besides being familiar as a household word to all theologians, is known likewise to every well-informed person as that of the renowned author of the "Life of Jesus," published some thirty years ago, which did so much to discredit the historical character and accuracy of the four Gospels. By means of the mythical theory, which accounted for the Gospel miracles as myths added to the plain history by the fond fancy and credulous superstition of the admirers of Jesus, Strauss got rid of the supernatural, threw overboard our Lord's resurrection, and left no more of the old Gospel history than is left of the glory of some venerable ruin, when the ivy and eglantine are torn from off it, and nothing is left but a gaunt shapeless shoulder of stone and lime.

It was not likely that Dr. Strauss either would or could remain at the point indicated by his "Life of Jesus." He had gone on an inclined plane, and he must either abandon it, or yield to the downward attraction which is inevitable in such a position. His new book, entitled "Der Alte und der Neue Glaube"—The Old and the New Faith—shows too clearly which of these alternatives he has followed. Those who hold his views, he says with some pride, the "We" in whose name he writes, are no longer an insignificant handful, but are to be reckoned by tens of thousands. Such being the case, it is necessary that they should now take stock, ascertain their bearings, define their position. And this book is designed to show whereabouts they are. They have no intention to found a new church, for they don't believe in any church. The questions for them to answer are such as these—Are we still Christians? Have we still Religion? What is our View of the World? How ought we to order our lives? As to the first, he makes short work of that. There is no real reason why they should call themselves Christians. "My conviction is, apart from all subtleties, if we will adopt the Yea yea, and the Nay nay, in short, if we will speak as honest upright men—we must confess we are no longer Christians." And here they do speak as honest upright men, ghastly though their utterance is, and it were only to be wished that all who are of the same mind would be equally explicit in their avowal. In regard to the question, Have we still Religion? in other words, do we still believe in God, in immortality, in prayer, in duty? he is less decided. You may say Yes or No, as you please—he says to his followers. If religion mean a sense of absolute dependence, we have it; but whether our dependence is on God or on the Universe, is unimportant. In other words, our religion, such as it is, does not imply a personal God; an impersonal deity, the god of the pantheist, will do for us. Or possibly we may say that we have no god at all! As to the world, his belief is that it is the result of evolution, and though we have no evidence of such a thing as spontaneous generation, neither have we evidence that in some other condition of the world, spontaneous

generation did not occur. And on this most unwarranted guess, he builds the world, and all its inhabitants, dispensing with the agency of a God! As to the ordering of their lives he lays down pretty good ethical rules, but instead of looking to the Church for the stimulus and the consolation in ordering their lives which men have been wont to seek for there, they are to look to—what do our readers suppose?—Poetry and Music. We have heard of a lady, who on the death of her only son, when suffering a bereavement of the most excruciating kind, wrote to a friend that she found great comfort in her piano. It would appear not only that hers will hereafter be no exceptional case, but that all men must draw from that and from kindred sources all the comfort going in their heaviest trials. It will be interesting to know what instrument will be found best adapted for religious consolation. Perhaps different nations will prefer different instruments—the Italian his harp, the Frenchman his fiddle, and the Highlander his bagpipes. And this is the end of Rationalism! It takes from me a Saviour, a God, a Bible, a Gospel, a Father, a Home, an Immortality; and it sends me to Lucretius and Goethe, to Shelley and to Swinburne, to the harmonium and the piano for my loftiest inspirations and most glowing thoughts. I lose my soul, but I do not gain the world; like the dog crossing the river, I drop my piece of flesh, and with it the shadow that looked so tempting disappears for ever!

IV.—JOTTINGS FROM THE MISSION FIELD.

Irish Colportage.—In a recent article, the subject of Colportage in Scotland was brought under the notice of the readers of the SUNDAY MAGAZINE; we are happy to find that in Ireland this method of diffusing wholesome and Christian literature is prosecuted with encouraging success. One reports that he has sold three hundred Douay Testaments and Bibles to Roman Catholics, and tells of groups of persons that read the Bible which he furnishes to them with much earnestness and considerable spiritual fruit. Nor are there wanting singular instances of the Word of God being recognised in a way quite unlike other books. A colporteur goes into a house; in which he finds five men sitting idle. After some talk about the weather and his wares in general, he opens a Bible, and assures them that its contents are true. At the page at which he has opened the Bible he reads the verse, "We brought nothing into this world, and certainly we can carry nothing out." He asks if that is not a true saying? One of his hearers says, No;—for he knew an old woman who had two sovereigns, and when dying she swallowed them, as she thought they might be of use to her where she was going. Another of the men said that after all she took them only to the grave, no further; and bought the book. In the spring of next year, as the colporteur was travelling in the same neighbourhood, a man came up to him, and asked if he had not sold a

book to such and such a person (the man in the house). He added that the buyer of the book was his father; that he and his daughter had thereafter gone to America; that the daughter had read the book every Sunday to her father; and that the old man had never forgot the verse, "We brought nothing into this world, and certainly we can carry nothing out." She had written to her brother, urged him to get a book and read it for himself, and to buy two copies and send them out to her, if he could find the colporteur. Thus was "the bread cast on the waters found after many days."

At the Diamond Fields in Africa.—The interest of the Diamond Fields is often sadly tragic. A Wesleyan missionary thus tells a simple tale of much sorrow:—

"In going about among the people, day after day, as I do, I meet with some cases of touching interest. I lately buried a sweet little girl of eight years, who was the last of seven interred by her affectionate and almost broken-hearted parents! Also a young man of twenty-three, all alone on the Fields, came to increase his fortune by diamond digging; but who, after a few weeks spent here, falls sick, and dies, a stranger in a strange land, his widowed mother at home (in England) not knowing thereof for some time. This week I visited a family where the father has been suddenly taken away by death, and three grown-up children lay sick on different beds in the house. The poor widowed mother lies almost at her wits' end. One day recently I found out a man who had been nine days long suffering from dysentery, and very near death's door, but whom no one had visited, not knowing of the case! Last week I saw a man, in a fit of desperation, throw down what was in his hand, declaring there was no God, or at all events no God for him! He had been the subject, we found, of a series of disappointments, and unsuccessful all his life long; and, 'though he prayed, yet God never helped nor answered him!' To-day I have visited a man, who, living in his waggon, is under concern for his soul. He says he sees people dying around him, and feels that, if his turn comes, he is unprepared. He is now praying, weeping, and seeking the Lord in good earnest."

The Chief Justice of Fiji on its Missions.—We really can hardly tell how the Chief Justice of Fiji happens to hold that august office. His name is Sir Charles St. Julian, and he is not a member of the Wesleyan Church; but on a recent occasion, when a Wesleyan missionary, Mr. Nettleton, was about to leave the islands for a time, a testimonial was presented to him, and Chief Justice St. Julian bore a testimony to Fiji missions, which is specially seasonable after the attacks contained in the book called "South Sea Bubbles." He said, "that he did not come there to represent any denomination; but it was to him a pleasure to attend on that occasion, although belonging to a different sect to the Reverend gentleman. He appeared before them as an admirer of Mr. Nettleton. From his position he was a critic, and as a lawyer and a judge was accustomed to find faults, yet to give every man his due, and to act impartially. He had been a close observer of the Wesleyan mission, and when he came here was hardly

prepared for what he saw. If the work done by that society had only been to cause the natives to cast off bad practices and customs, it would have been a very gratifying result; but the mission had built up the foundation of a kingdom. He had heard of Mr. Nettleton before coming to Fiji, and now knew him as an earnest and zealous labourer in the mission field, and had marked with pleasure the success which had attended that gentleman's labour. He wished to say something about Mrs. Nettleton. He thought missionaries' wives did more than the missionaries themselves. He could not say what he could wish on account of their friends being present, but he wished them a safe passage and God speed."

Light and Shade in a South Sea Island.—The island of Maupiti belongs to a group about a hundred miles north-west of Tahiti. It contains a population of but 400, who are under the charge of Hiomai, a native catechist. They had a pastoral visit in spring from Mr. Pearse, of the London Missionary Society. The reception of the missionary was all that could have been wished. A boat manned by young men from the Bible class comes forty miles to convey him. Nearly all Maupiti turn out to greet him. On the Saturday the mission party are presented with two large heaps of native vegetables, pigs, fowl, fish, and native puddings, one from the church, the other from the school. On the Sunday the church is filled. The preacher observes pencils busily at work taking down notes of the sermon. The singing is lively and hearty, especially in the Sunday School, which contains no fewer than 126 children. Then there is a missionary meeting of the grown-up people, and upwards of thirty-six dollars are subscribed for missions. Another day there is a missionary meeting of the young people, who outstrip the old in liberality, contributing upwards of thirty-seven dollars. All this is very bright; but turn round the picture, and you see things in another light.

You find that there have been ongoings which remind us of the story of Baal-peor. Some time previously a feast had been given in honour of a royal birthday. The young people were invited and went. After some harmless preliminaries, old heathen dances were introduced, followed by old heathen songs, full of ribaldry and all uncleanness; and after the excitement had become very great, the usual excesses followed that in the days of heathenism had made these festivals abominable. The native teacher in charge of the Christian Church, after trying other means of putting an end to these revellies, resorted at last to discipline. Out of 105 church members, he suspended 52, the largest number, probably, or the largest proportion, in whose case that step has ever been taken. Some submitted; but though the missionary packed the catechist, a number showed a great reluctance to humble themselves. At last, however, matters were brought to a more favourable pass; and the missionary left the island, in the hope that the heathen festivals would be abandoned, and a better spirit prevail.

We like to read in a missionary journal an honest

statement like this. No intelligent friend of missions will be surprised at outbursts of the old spirit, or will deem the reports of missionary progress untrue, because such dark clouds are liable to come and overcast the bright blue sky.

A Romish Mission to the Negroes of America.—It is a considerable time since one of the present editors of the SUNDAY MAGAZINE, writing on the subject of the United States, and on the future of the negroes, drew attention to the fact that the Church of Rome had an eye to their conversion. It was remarked on that occasion that this was far from an unlikely enterprise. The negroes are ignorant, superstitious, excitable, and fond of gaudy display. There are many things in Popery that are attractive to them. The only safeguards against Rome would be, either such spiritual experience as the Romish religion cannot satisfy, or such intellectual training as the Romish superstition must shock and repel. It appears that the Romish project has now taken shape. The conversion of the negroes is to be entrusted to the Roman Catholics of Great Britain, and Archbishop Manning, it is said, is full of the enterprise. The society entrusted with the scheme is called the St. Joseph's Society, and already has a foreign missionary college in London, under charge of Dr. Vaughan. The Archbishop of Baltimore is the chief promoter in the United States; he proposes that the capital of what was once a Roman Catholic settlement should become the head-quarters of the movement. Already five priests have gone to begin the mission. The number is to be increased to fifty as soon as possible. The difficulty of finding priests, however, will be a somewhat serious one. The United States cannot provide priests for their own use, still less for missionary purposes. Still the enterprise is an important one, and to withstand it will require all the vigilance and prayerful efforts of the Christian friends of the negro. We hope that such institutions as the Howard College, of which an account was given in these pages, will be found eminently serviceable in the right development of the negro.

A Mistake corrected.—We regret to find that the account which we gave in a recent number, of the conversion of a Mahometan, said to be a grandson of the late king of Delhi, and taken by us from one of the most trustworthy missionary journals—*The Church Missionary Intelligencer*—turns out to have originated in a case of imposture which the writer has since discovered and exposed.

Medical Mission in London.—It is now several years since Dr. Burns Thomson began a medical mission in Edinburgh. It was planted in the Cowgate, in the very heart of one of the poorest and most miserable localities in Edinburgh. It has proved a signal benefit to the town. For a long time under the charge of Dr. Burns Thomson, that mission centre is now occupied by other labourers; while Dr. Thomson himself pursues his benevolent work on the outskirts of the Canongate, the twin-sister of the Cowgate in destitution, dirt, and misery. Besides prescribing to the wants both of body and soul to

thousands of the poor, Dr. Thomson added to his establishment an institution for the training of medical students and nurses in connection with mission work. Then the Madagascar medical mission was an offshoot from his institution, and more recently a Convalescent Home. The work has been a spreading work, reminding one somewhat of the parable of the mustard seed, or of Hosea's emblem of the thriving Israel—"his branches shall spread."

These spreading branches reached, a year or two ago, as far as London's famous town. An Edinburgh institution taking root in London kindled a spark of the old feeling in the capital of Scotland, doomed so frequently to feel herself extinguished by the colossal metropolis of the Empire. We have seen in a London contemporary a notice of the London institution. Under the charge of Dr. Saunders, C.B., the various operations are carried on. Here is an account of them:—

"On the days set apart for prescribing for the patients and dispensing medicine to them, there are short devotional services, part of which consists of a simple religious exhortation by the superintendent, designed to set before the hearers the truths of the gospel in a truly catholic form, and so as to be understood by the most ignorant. Dr. Saunders is assisted in his labours by a Bible-woman, who acts as a nurse. When patients are unable to attend the dispensary, they are visited in their homes, and these are of the most wretched description, squalor and poverty being the staple character of the locality. Christian instruction is thus carried into quarters where the ordinary city missionary would be helpless, and great good is said to have resulted. Every Sunday afternoon a Bible-class is held for adults, and also one for children, and the gospel is preached in the evening. During the last six months over 1,400 new patients have applied for advice, and these have made upwards of 5,500 visits to the dispensary. Over 1,500 visits have been paid by the missionary physician to 250 patients whose ailments confined them to their own miserable abodes."

In Liverpool, we are glad to say, where, in imitation of the example of London, a similar work has been going on, the success has been so great that larger premises have had to be taken. The work is entirely unsectarian, and well deserves the support of the Christian public.

V.—OUR LIBRARY TABLE.

Rational Theology and Christian Philosophy in England in the Seventeenth Century: by John Tulloch, D.D., St. Andrews,—a handsome book in two octavo volumes, treats of a very important subject, and a very interesting class of men. We have sketches of the lives and views of such men as Lord Falkland, John Hales of Eton, Chillingworth, Jeremy Taylor, and Stillingfleet, of Benjamin Whichcote, John Smith, Ralph Cudworth, and Henry More. Of the latter group especially, several were brought up under Puritan influences; and it would be of very great service to us, who seem to be entering upon an experience similar to that which followed the Puritan age in England, to have a faithful picture of these

men, and to understand the reasons that led them to move away in some degree from their Puritan moorings. We regret to say that the work before us does not (in our judgment) fulfil the highest purpose of such an undertaking. It is the work of a partisan—of one who, under very peculiar circumstances, has committed himself to “rational theology,” and who labours to find, in the subjects of these sketches, men sharing all his own views. When the author finds that a man goes with him in one point, he is prone to represent him as substantially at one with him in all. It does not follow that because some of these men shrunk from the extreme of Puritan dogmatism, had a great dislike of controversy, and were more interested in the practical outcome or fruit of divine truth than in doctrinal warfare, they were what is now meant by rationalists. They would have been as far as possible from relishing the fellowship in which Dr. Tulloch places them. We object, too, to the vague sense in which the term “reason” is used. It would at some times appear as if he thought that evangelical theology assigned no place whatever to reason in connection with God’s Revelation; and whenever Dr. Tulloch finds, in one of his old writers, a decided statement in favour of reason as having to do with theology, he writes as if the author of that statement could undoubtedly be claimed for the school of modern rationalists. This is quite out of the question. There is really no controversy at the present day as to reason having a place in connection with revelation; the real question is, whether its place is supreme? Dr. Tulloch avoids the great question, which, in writing such a book, he ought to have made as clear as noon-day. Does he consider it to be the function of reason to sit in judgment on the specific contents of revelation, and to reject those parts of the book which it is unable to verify and indorse? If he thinks so, it is impossible for him to claim the men whom we have named as concurring with him. If he does not think so, he ought to make it plain on what ground of “rational theology” he desires to stand.

The late Professor John Duncan, of Edinburgh, has become an object of singular curiosity, alike to intellectual men, who like to find a mind of remarkable type, and to spiritual men, who are even more interested in an unusual development of Christian experience and life. Three books have now been written on him; Mr. Knight’s “Colloquia Peripatetica,” which sets forth chiefly his intellectual character; Dr. David Brown’s “Memoir,” which combines both the intellectual and the spiritual; and now the third appears from the pen of Mr. Moody Stuart, dwelling mainly on the spiritual. Mr. Moody Stuart’s *Recollections of the late John Duncan, LL.D.*, were at first intended to fill a niche in Dr. Brown’s “Memoir,” but, extending as they do over a period of forty years, it is little wonder they have swelled out into the dimensions of a volume. A single remark of the writer, embodying a single ex-

perience of the subject of his recollections, will give some idea of the man and of the book. “Language,” says Mr. Moody Stuart, “can hardly embody a stronger utterance of desire than in the words:—‘Every fibre of my soul winds itself round the enjoyment of God for ever, with unutterable, sickening, fainting desire;’ and every one who knew the writer can attest his transparent sincerity, and the clear evidence of the strength of his thoughts exceeding the force of his words.”

Among other publications of the day we may simply note, *Essentials of New Testament Study: intended as a Companion to the New Testament.* By William Edensor Littlewood, M.A.,—a useful and careful introduction to all the books of the New Testament, along with a Dictionary of Biography and Geography, a Harmony of the Gospels, and much other useful information; *Disciple Life*, by Rev. D. M’Coll, author of “*Work in the Wynns*,”—a series of thoughtful, substantial, earnest discourses on the lessons which the disciples derived from the ministry of Christ; *The Ministry, addressed to Students of Divinity*, by Charles F. Brown, D.D.,—a reprint of practical addresses, in which the writer strives to make students of divinity seize and project into the souls of their hearers the very pith and marrow of the Word of God; *The Resurrection of the Dead*, by William Hanna, D.D.,—a beautiful reprint of the exposition of 1 Cor. xv., which appeared in the successive numbers of the SUNDAY MAGAZINE of last year, characterized by all Dr. Hanna’s grace, tenderness of feeling, and fervour of utterance.

VI.—OUR MEMORIAL RECORD.

SIR DONALD MACLEOD, K.S.I.

While all the kingdom is deploring the tragic manner of Sir Donald Macleod’s death, through his falling before carriages in the Metropolitan Railway, it is but right that, with the smaller company who loved and honoured him for his Christian worth, we should express our sense of bereavement. Born in India, and educated at home, he was impressed at an early age with divine truth, and spent his life working for his Master as well as for his country. The man who was five years Governor of the Punjab, and whose services at the mutiny and in other very trying times were eminently useful, could not but be a valuable servant of the Crown; the friend of missionaries, the active helper in mission work, the bright, cheerful companion, the friendly visitor of the poor, the liberal supporter of every good cause, was an equally valuable member of the great catholic church. It is a great comfort to his many friends to know that, notwithstanding the horrible nature of his accident, his death was without torture of body, and with much peace of mind; and his last spoken words will not be readily forgotten—“Praised be His holy name for ever and ever.”

CROOKED PLACES:

A Story of Struggles and Hopes.

BY EDWARD GARRETT, AUTHOR OF "OCCUPATIONS OF A RETIRED LIFE," ETC.

PART III.—MILLICENT'S ROMANCE, AND WHAT IT WAS MADE OF.

CHAPTER I.—WHERE TWO STORIES MEET.



N all the outskirts of London, there could be scarcely a gloomier dwelling than Blenheim House, Hackney. It turned its side to the high road, a great, dirty, brick side,

only broken by two lights, a barred window on the ground-floor, and another, high up, on a staircase. The front of the house looked into its own dank, green garden, amid dreary walls with their deep-set, olive-green door, bearing the inscription—"David Maxwell, Surgeon."

The interior was as dismal. The rooms could never have been cheerful, but they had once been handsome. Now, the marble mantels were discoloured by neglect and careless usage, the wood-carving had been chipped and never repaired, even the windows had been cheaply mended with coarse defective glass. Whatever colours the heavy sprawling-patterned carpets had once possessed, were worn away under the steps of many years. The only pictures were a few engravings after Benjamin West, and a set of Hogarth's "Rake's Progress." The mirrors were framed in ebony. But there was none of that stately precision which gives dignity to gloom. There was always a clay pipe on the mantel-shelves, and Mr. Maxwell liked to drink his ale, at all hours, out of a pewter-pot.

The inmates were like their home, as they

generally are, since they either make it or it makes them. They were only four in number—master, mistress, son, and servant.

The surgeon had belonged to respectable connections of Scotch origin, but long settled as manufacturers in an eastern county. He did not belong to them now. He had found his own level, far below theirs. His closest ties were dead, and what slight communication passed between him and those who remained, were due entirely to their pitiful regrets for one who had sunk so low that he did not know his own degradation. Mr. Maxwell was a thoroughly coarse man, not without a kind of rank cleverness, which he would have been better without, for while too idle and unscrupulous to earn or deserve a honest professional confidence, this afforded him a slippery back staircase to a small, doubtful celebrity, which he valued more for its excitement than even for its uncertain profits. He was the easy-going doctor who asked no awkward questions in sundry matters connected with births and deaths, whose decorous certificate was always forthcoming,—and he liked to reckon how many reputations he held in his mercy. Yet his professional income was not nearly so large as the decent, humdrum parish doctor's, and had he not possessed some small private means, he could not even have maintained the dismalness of Blenheim House, even though he was not very particular how he took payment. The only handsome modern article in Blenheim House was a velvet pile table-cover, which had come from the scene of the suicide of an old wicked patient of his. It was as good as new, except that there was a little stain on one corner, which nobody could tell was not port wine. But Mr. Maxwell did a great many dirty deeds for nothing, and therefore fancied himself a liberal man, though he never entered a shop without beating down the shopkeeper, nor paid a bill till he had been dunned many times. Mr. Maxwell professed to despise society, and called all visiting "rubbish and nonsense," which simply meant that he found his most agreeable companions in pot-houses; and that he begrudged to give that hospitality which reserves the minimum of sensual gratification to the host.

And it was very easy for him to scoff at respectable tea-parties and neighbourly gatherings; but the fact was, he had really put himself out of society many years ago, and he knew it.

There had been two "Mrs. Maxwells" at Blenheim House. The first, who had been dead before Mr. Maxwell came to Hackney, had never had any right to that style—the second had only acquired it, after tardy years, at the urging of some well-meaning and wealthy connection of the surgeon's, who had vainly hoped to purify two corrupted and unrepentant lives, by a spiritual salt, which became a savourless formula the moment it touched them.

Of the mistress of the house, it is therefore needless to say much, for she was just what might be expected, except perhaps, that having become a wife when she least thought to be one, she measured the honour, not from its proper basis, but from the depths of her previous degradation, and by her rampant self-sufficiency and insolence, justified Solomon's description of "the odious woman when she is married." She had not her husband's contempt for society. She hankered after it, as the stage whereon to strut and display her bran-new morality. Her vanity assured her credulity that nobody knew anything of her past, and she understood none of those finer feelings which shrink from taking credit beyond capital. She went regularly to church, though Mr. Maxwell never accompanied her. She angled for, and hooked an occasional invitation. Some people thought the floating rumours of the district might be only scandal, founded on her husband's undeniably bad character, and that if she were the virtuous, though common and disagreeable wife, of such an abandoned man, she deserved a little countenance, while one or two social ghouls who believed the worst, accepted her acquaintance in the hope of getting a real peep into the Blenheim chamber of horrors. But Mr. Maxwell never encouraged his wife to return the invitations she received.

"You'll make a fool of yourself, Poll," he said, "but you shan't make one of me."

And so, when one of the ghouls came, he had his cup of tea sent out of the parlour into his surgery, but came into the room after, and behaved with such a mixture of coarse repulsion and coarser familiarity, that even the ghoul retreated in dismay, and reported "that it was quite impossible to visit poor Mrs. Maxwell, the surgeon was so very peculiar."

And so Mrs. Maxwell presently became content to pay a limited number of visits on the understanding that they were not returned, on account of her husband's "eccentricities." And she did not object to the arrangement, so long as it could be thus made without blighting wholly her social ambitions. Nevertheless, she had her Mor-decai, and that not merely at her gate, but within it.

Many a respectable matron in Hackney, troubled, even in those days, with raw servants, that came and went, burning the linen, smashing the crockery, and diversifying the monotony of this by occasional larcenies, wondered how it was that dreary Blenheim House had won a domestic treasure which they could not find for their own snug habitations. For Phœbe Winter had been in Mr. Maxwell's service for more than twenty years at least. She had arrived, perched behind his goods, when he came to Blenheim House. She had seen the home-coming of its present mistress. She knew all about everything. Phœbe Winter wore a wedding-ring, and was doubtless a widow. In years as in residence, Phœbe was older than her mistress. She could never have been a pretty girl: but she was grand now. She was like some great majestic rock, which has been stripped of all its clinging herbage. An artist once stopped her in the street and asked her to sit to him. Phœbe was savagely indignant. "Am I to be insulted at my time of life," she asked, "that nobody dared insult when I was a gal?" He wanted her for a model of Jael, the wife of Heber. Fancy what she must have been, for him to detect her fitness in her coarse, clinging dress and rough kitchen cap!

Mrs. Maxwell had to bear many congratulations about her "faithful old servant." When the ghoul called upon her, the ghoul considered it "only a fit mark of respect to such a commendable domestic," to try to open a little conversation with her, when she attended while the ghoul resumed her clogs. Just a little harmless patronising conversation, which, had it been received with grateful cordiality, might have led to a few more words if the lady and the servant chanced to meet in the market or at the church door. But Phœbe Winter was not cordial.

Mrs. Maxwell wanted to get rid of Phœbe. Phœbe was determined not to go. And Phœbe had her way. If Mrs. Maxwell blustered, Phœbe did not care. If Mrs. Maxwell assumed kindness, and urged her to better herself, she only grimly answered, "that folks

had their own ways of taking care of themselves." If Mrs. Maxwell taunted her for her poor spirit in staying to earn a girl's wage of six pounds a year, and no perquisites, Phœbe coolly said "that she'd seen such a many draggle-tails marry-come-up in their satins and cambrics, that she didn't covet any better than a honest lirsej-woolsey for herself." This generally dispatched Mrs. Maxwell to her own business in the parlour. She never took courage to give Phœbe a direct notice to quit. She knew by heart all that Phœbe would say to her side-hints, but she was not at all sure what Phœbe might say to that—and she preferred not to know.

After all, many people might have as old servants as Phœbe, if they were prepared to endure such service as hers. She certainly worked hard, but she did not know how to work. She could not have entered service till her ideas were set beyond readjustment, and they had surely been formed in a country labourer's cottage. Every detail showed it. She could cook well in flour, milk, or potatoes, but her meats were either raw or cindery. She could scrub, but she could not dust; she could wash, but she could neither starch nor iron. Twice or thrice Mrs. Maxwell had supplemented her deficiencies by another servant. But no other servant would stay long at Blenheim House. Some were afraid of the master. Some declared they would not stop in a place where the mistress did not think they were of the same flesh and blood as herself. They each poured out their grievances to Phœbe before they went away. Phœbe pursed up her mouth, and said nothing.

Such was the woman who lived in Blenheim House kitchen, with its prospect of dust-bin and pump. But wherever the Blenheim House skeleton cupboard was, it surely had a door into that kitchen, whether the master knew it or not, and although Mrs. Maxwell had never found it—perhaps because she feared to search too close.

But there was one young life in the dismal, hopeless place. There was one who had played—faintly and quietly, perhaps—about the gloomy rooms, Little David Maxwell, as he was called by repute, had not arrived in Hackney with Phœbe in the goods cart. He had been brought up next day by a maid who had a box and baggage of her own with her, as if she expected to stay, but who presently went away again, box and all, counting money in her purse.

Phœbe had the sole charge of him, from then, till the new Mrs. Maxwell came, seven

years after. Since then, she might be said to have had double charge of him—not only to preserve, but to defend.

Little David had sat at meals with the surgeon and his wife. But he had learned his lessons in the kitchen. He had had his playmate there too, in the shape of a great good-tempered cat; but when the new mistress came home, she ordered this to be sent away, saying—

"Some little boys should be thankful to be fed and clothed themselves, without expecting money to be wasted on meat for useless animals."

She wanted it to be destroyed. She would give a man sixpence to do it, she said—"Last money need never be grudged." But with apparent indifference Phœbe had suggested that she thought this expense might be spared, she knew where she could find a home for David's favourite.

So she did. That very evening she carried it off to an almshouse near. David went with her, to see his pet completely installed on a soft cushion in an old woman's snug domicile. In his passionate childish grief at leaving his playfellow, he did not much notice that old woman's garrulous assurances.

"'Deed, mem, an' it shall be taken care of. I'm fond of beasts—cats in particular, an' I'd have had one long ago if I could afford its keep, and it shall have its cat's meat and milk just as you say, mem, and you're welcome to look in, an' see that I'm a-layin' out your money as you mean it to be."

"There, there, Davie," said Phœbe, as they walked home, "don't cry, you'll be able to come with me and see Tommy now and then."

"But I shan't have him always any more!" sobbed the boy.

"Pussy is quite comfortable," Phœbe assured him; "he is better off than with us, for that nice little room will be warm all night, much nicer than our damp kitchen. If you care for poor pussy, David, you shouldn't mind giving him up for his own good."

Fivepence a week for cat's board was a heavy tax on six pounds a year. Phœbe could not have clearly explained why she paid it. But David growing satisfied in the dull kitchen, because he had a glimpse of his favourite, sleek and snug on the almshouse window-sill, had learned the childish version of a priceless lesson.

David went to school, and won the favour of his master. His schoolfellows did not know him. His solitude, and the dispiriting sense of an unintelligible inferiority, forced

on him by his stepmother, had not taught him how to make friends. He would decline a share in sports which he was really longing to join. If there were any lad for whom he felt a particular admiration and warmth, from that boy he especially shrank.

At fifteen, he closed his career as a pupil. Instead of the dozens of friends which most youths fancy they have made for life, David Maxwell had but a trembling possession of one. This was a boy named Fergus Laurie, the son of a very needy widow, who had given him the advantage of a year's "good schooling" before putting him into a neighbouring manufactory.

David and Fergus were about the same age, and Fergus was set to earn his bread two years before David left school—a fact whereon Mrs. Maxwell made many edifying comments. There were many points of sympathy between the boys. For both, it was desirable that the friendship should be an out-door one. David had never called forth express injunction on the subject, but he quite understood that no acquaintance of his would be welcome at Blenheim House. On the other hand, Mrs. Laurie lived in a perpetual muddle, and was a woman who would never admit any stranger to a sight of the scanty fare which she could scarcely get for her own children. For though she would often put herself into protracted difficulties by a burst of extravagant indulgence in the table luxuries, after which she constantly hankered, yet to share such dear-bought luxuries with others formed no part of her enjoyment.

Fergus's life would be hard if David's was repressed. Fergus was like a plant left open to battle with the storm. David was like one shut up from light and air.

Fergus gave David his first great pleasure—the exquisite delight of having something to give worthy of another's taking. Fergus's education was broken off just at the climax of his longing for knowledge. As David advanced beyond his friend, he discovered that he might help him forward.

There was a pathetic humour in the lads' shifts. They had to carry on their studies wandering in the streets. Sometimes they would snatch a chapter of history by the friendly light of some shop window. Once, on a frosty night, David bought a pennyworth of roast chestnuts, that he might seek out the derivation of a word by the warm light of the chestnut vendor's fire. David lent his school-books to Fergus between the respective class days: David even lost a

prize, because Fergus forgot to return one in time for him to get up an important task.

The two lads were "confirmed" at the same time. They went together to the vicar for preparation. Mr. Devon was considerably interested in them both. Mr. Devon was one of those who believed no more of the queer reports about the Maxwells than that the surgeon was a very bad man, the shadow of whose vices had fallen on two probably innocent wives. He was rather annoyed that Mrs. Devon persisted in being very freezing to Mrs. Maxwell whenever she called at the vicarage. Mrs. Devon never contradicted him when he asserted his view of the case, which discreet reservation only made it the harder for him to blame her for a very subtle line of behaviour, which, had the good gentleman only known it, Mrs. Maxwell was far too hardened and arrogant to feel, or to care for.

"That young Maxwell has really a remarkable scriptural knowledge, and a child-like clearness of belief," said the vicar to himself. "I cannot suppose he acquired it at school, for I fear there is not much lively evangelical truth taught in the Academy. He must owe it to his stepmother, after all, coarse, vulgar woman as I must own—not to Mrs. Devon—that she appears!"

That same night, speaking with her nurse-like freedom, which she had never resigned, Phœbe inquired—

"Well, David, could you answer the parson's questions?"

"I think so, Phœbe. Thanks to you, if I did. You must have taken a great deal of trouble with me."

David had not long left the Academy before he returned to it as a teacher. Apart from Mrs. Maxwell's taunting hints, he had a right-minded boy's desire for independence, and, in his father's utter apathy, only too eagerly seized on what first presented itself as a road thereto.

Fergus Laurie stoutly blamed him for entering a line of life with such narrow, dim prospects. Fergus was already advancing in his manufactory, and had made up his mind to die a merchant prince. Fergus Laurie was a slight, small creature, but strong and sound in his very delicacy, and possessing that nervous-bilious temperament which always carries so much before it. He had hazel eyes for David's grey eyes, stiff, drab-brown hair for David's chestnut locks, and though they were both equally taciturn, when Fergus Laurie spoke, it was not with David's timid proffer of idea, but with authority, and

the air of one who would have spoken long before had he cared to take the trouble. Fergus Laurie had fronted the world, compounded family debts, negotiated family loans, and learned how to make sixpence represent a shilling; while David Maxwell had had nothing to do but sit still, and accept the hard fact that his parents were not like other parents, nor his home like other homes.

Fergus Laurie decorated his bedroom with such texts as—"The hand of the diligent shall bear rule;" "Be strong and of good courage: be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed." He transcribed them himself, on cartridge paper, in quaint characters, that made every letter a capital one.

In David Maxwell's pocket Bible the marker lay ever on the ninety-first Psalm, and had it been removed the book would still have opened there.

He did not develop into a strong man. Perhaps it was not likely that he should. But like many another, nobody noticed that he was only struggling on till he dropped. There came an evening when he met Fergus Laurie for their accustomed walk, and was obliged to ask him not to practise his French upon him that night, he felt so queer and misty. And Fergus, who was very anxious to get on with his French at that particular time, hinted to him that he "gave way" very easily. But next morning David was not in the teacher's seat at the Academy. And he never was there again.

He did not die. He went to the very gates of the grave and struggled back again. It was in the days of doubt, that Fergus Laurie first made his way into Blenheim House.

Phœbe let him pass very easily, and he boldly presented himself at Mrs. Maxwell's parlour door.

"I don't ask to see him to-night," he said, "but I cannot rest satisfied without getting the report from head-quarters, and then, of course, you will tell me, as soon as ever I may venture in."

Fergus meant to gain admittance, and he gained it. Was he, Fergus Laurie, who meant to conquer the world, to be exiled from his only friend by a woman whose measure he took as he did Mrs. Maxwell's? It was no use shutting moral doors in his face, he walked straight through them all. He could see no reason why Blenheim House should maintain such seclusion, since it certainly had not his own family reason of proud and selfish poverty. When David got better—and he would be sure to get better—how

much more comfortable it would be for them to sit and read together in any of these vacant chambers than to wander in the streets!

David did get better, but his had been an illness which entails years of convalescence. His father opened his purse-strings a little, and gave him change of air in lonely sojourns at dull watering places, and whenever some old, old parsimony made itself unpleasantly manifest in the household, Mrs. Maxwell sighed and made appropriate remarks about "the expenses one must incur for poor afflicted invalids."

For a long time, David hoped that each succeeding week would find him fit to recommence battle with the world, and on some more independent scheme—if not, oh, beautiful mirage, on an altogether new battle-field. But it was no use. He presently became convinced that this dreary page of life was too large to be left blank. He must fill it in as best he could.

His father discussed each of his suggestions with as much interest and gravity as if they had related to the politics of Lilliput, instead of the welfare of his own flesh and blood. Mrs. Maxwell dashed them by reproachful hints that "he was not grateful for his good home, and that he'd be better employed thinking of his duty to the father to whom he owed so much, than worrying about his own affairs."

David at last did the only thing that it seemed he could do. He went into the surgery. He could make himself useful there in many small ways, in lieu of young men whom his father had hitherto hired, for miserable pittances indeed, but the sparing of which would certainly cover the expenses of his board. His father had often talked of taking a pupil instead of these assistants, saying that one would be quite as useful, and save the salary. David would be this pupil. Had he known more of the world, or had a less simple-minded forgetfulness of himself, he might have been daunted by the miserable prospect before a delicate man as a medical practitioner. Nor did he know what Mr. Maxwell was as well as everybody else did. From the inside and from the outside things show differently. And the very habit of household life, however miserable, begets a kind of confidence and fetters the critical powers. But David just did the best according to his judgment and knowledge, and it is sometimes well that one's judgment and knowledge have limits. To be over prudent, is to be less than wise.

Henceforth David almost lived in the sur-

gery. In the evening Fergus Laurie came there, and was still helped forward in his general studies. In the morning David sat behind the barred window and read his medical books. It was sitting so, that he first noticed a neat, brisk little figure that constantly went by, always carrying a drawing portfolio. He grew to look for her. Perhaps it was the utter absence of any such figure from his own life that invested it with such a peculiar charm. He wondered what the house must be like, where she lived.

"Don't you know who that is?" Fergus Laurie asked, one morning when he had happened to call in at the surgery, and perhaps observed that David's eyes followed the little passer-by as she went down the road. "That is Miss Millicent Harvey. She lives with her mother in a little house in Grove Lane. She works for our firm."

"Does she, really?" David asked, adding with a tell-tale blush, "Isn't she very sweet-looking?"

"Is she? Well, yes, I suppose she is," admitted young Laurie.

"What does she do for your firm?" David asked.

"Designs patterns," said Fergus.

"I should think she's clever," commented David. "I should think she might be able to do something above designs. She has eyes which look as if they saw a great deal. And I've noticed her looking up at the sunsets, and how few people do that—I used not myself. I suppose you know her to speak to?" he added, with ill-affected indifference.

"I require to speak to her sometimes," Fergus answered. "Have you never seen her at church? No,—you can't, they sit in a corner that you don't see from your pew, and they come in and out by a different door. She has a mother and a brother. He writes for the papers."

This was all that David Maxwell ever knew of Millicent Harvey till the night when, after much demur and shrinking, he accepted the vicar's unexpected invitation.

He went home from that party with a springing step. It had come naturally to speak to her, and she had been so pleasant. He flashed upon the brutalised surgeon and his sullen wife in their forlorn parlour, like a lamp suddenly shining into a dark place. He had the same effect. The brightness stirred and irritated them.

"What's up now, Dave?" asked Mr. Maxwell. "Are you fancying some girl has fallen in love with you? Hope she's got money."

"I should think David has too much sense," said Mrs. Maxwell. "He has got something else to think of besides falling in love. He has to get back his health and make money before he dreams of that nonsense. And girls must hold themselves very cheap, if those that have a chance to visit at the vicarage would look at David."

The darkness seemed to conquer. The light went out. David went up to his bed-chamber, feeling as if it would never again be so easy to speak to Millicent.

But did the light go out? or was it only shaded and screened from the cold cruel blast? He had caught a glimpse of beauty and joy and courage possible even in the same world as Blenheim House. The world could never be the old, dull world again. There was a yearning within him for that brighter, freer life of which he had caught a glimpse. It could not have been satisfied by the mere shadow which had awakened it. Had he been able to seize that shadow, his grasp would have swept the glory from it, as the gold perishes on a caught butterfly. But it passed softly away from his life, only to find refuge in his very soul, and to be elevated into that pure ideal, which the Saviour surely meant when He said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."

Next day, David took a leaf from Fergus's book. He, too, wrote out a text, but he did not put it up on his chamber wall, but laid it in the secret drawer of the old bureau which Mr. Maxwell had said he might use as his own.

This was the text:—

"Delight thyself in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desires of thy heart."

CHAPTER II.—A SHARP YOUNG MAN.

AFTER David Maxwell's comments, Fergus Laurie took more notice of Millicent than he had ever done before. He discovered that she really was pretty, when one came to look at her. Business prevented him from being one of the vicar's guests, on the occasion when David introduced himself to Millicent, and perhaps this accidental loss incited him to greater zeal next time he met her, in the ordinary way, in the counting-house.

Once, something obliged her to wait there awhile. Fergus set a chair for her in just the most agreeable position. Fergus had often been very remiss in such common civilities. He had a nature in which politeness was not an instinct; and the occasional attentions of such are often set at a different value

to habitual courtesy, except by very wise people. We need not pity those who form this false estimate, for it is generally vanity that betrays them into it, as the civility which is not of natural grace has a delicious savour of special personal tribute.

Then Fergus began to talk about her designs, and told her of praise which the head-partner of the house had privately bestowed upon them. Next he asked, if she ever sketched.

Millicent hesitated. "I am seldom in the country," she said. "I have never seen such scenery as people care for. But I have tried a few things that took my own fancy; tumble-down cottages; and the church tower, trifles that nobody could see any beauty in."

"Perhaps, because they have not learned to use their eyes," Fergus answered, with an emphasis on the nominative. "But whoever does one thing well can generally do many things tolerably, and if you can sketch half as well as you design, I should think you might develop into a good artist. You must have had first-rate teaching?"

"Only my mother's," Millicent replied.

"Ah,—well,—doubtless she must have been a good teacher, and yet perhaps we only learn what we teach ourselves. You have only had a home training in art, and I only had one year's good schooling, and yet I think we have known greater dunces than we are, Miss Harvey," he concluded, with a slight laugh, as he turned away to his ledger.

Millicent was interested. The suggestion of the "one year's good schooling" touched the sympathies of George Harvey's sister. And then Fergus had hitherto been so blunt and curt, that this burst of friendly candour made one wonder what more lay hidden within him. Wonder is ever credulous. There was hardly yet a locked-up room which was not credited either with hidden treasure or a ghost, and yet rooms are sometimes locked up, simply because they are out of repair and are not wanted!

"He must have had his troubles too, poor fellow," Millicent thought, "and troubles are apt to harden and chill one on the outside."

In those days, though only about forty-five years ago, art was in a very different position from what it is in at present. Pictorial works were costly, and consequently rare; and of the pictures which then passed as beautiful, many would now be condemned as spiritless and conventional. Yet, at the same time, art was not then degraded into a "regulation property," and if comparatively few authors saw their thoughts reflected back in pictures,

at least they were not so liable to see them distorted therein. Artists were not then assured enough to ride their pet model rough-shod over a poet's conception, till the reader is fairly puzzled between the womanly woman who lives on the page, and the brazen vixen who stares him out of countenance from the "cut." And there was also more scope for individual fancy, ill-trained as it might be. Wealthy people of taste had not then left off having favourite poems illustrated, and special places sketched, to their own particular order. A bride, who wished to remember the church of her wedding-day, and a widow, desiring to recall the grave of her hopes, could not then make a facile purchase of the same photograph, to serve equally as a memento of joy and sorrow. No; the bride had a sunshiny painting of the old church porch, the beech avenue, and the lych gate; while the widow procured a moonlight view of the yews among the graves behind the church, with the great east window illuminated by some evening service within.

Now one of the partners in Mr. Laurie's firm, a Mr. Smith, was greatly addicted to this kind of dabbling in art. He had made a good deal of money in business, and had a childlike enthusiasm for poetry, which he only half understood. Wordsworth was his especial adoration. The man whom necessity had chained half his life in city alleys, and whom fashion now kept in a West-end square, was yet captivated by the mountain bard's sweet pictures of

"Old places, full of many a lovely brood,
Tall trees, green arbours, and ground flowers in flocks,
And wild rose tiptoe upon hawthorn stocks;"

and only wondered that such "a poet of nature" could ever have been so forsaken as to think there was something worth writing about in "the filthy waterside corners one sees from Westminster Bridge."

This gentleman (who went in stoutly for every kind of reform, except the Catholic Emancipation Bill) had paid considerable sums of money for a series of illustrations of the "White Doe of Rylstone." He kept them in tissue veils, and paper cases (for the preservation of their mounts!), in a portfolio in his drawing-room. He had put each of their prices on their backs, for their recapitulation was part of the show, and he did not want to make mistakes. And his good lady thought her husband entirely what she called him, "quite a Macenas."

His attention had latterly been drawn to the noble poem, "Resolution and Independence." He thought it "a fine moral piece,"

and liked to quote lines from it in the counting-house. This good-hearted man, whose faults were only foibles at which angels themselves might smile, always talked a great deal to Fergus Laurie. Fergus did not only assent in monosyllables, with the respectful stupidity of most of the young men. Fergus often dissented, or put questions which "drew on." The kindly master told his wife that this clerk was "a sharp young man," and did not dream that his well-meant conversations were recited for the amusement of Mrs. and Miss Laurie, and his truisms epitomized into household bywords.

"Yes, Laurie," he said, "that 'Resolution and Independence' is a very fine moral piece. I should like every young man to read it. I would not mind giving five pounds for two or three little sketches to set it off. They'd be an excuse for bringing the subject forward, and then I'd read the lines. Just simple little sketches, you know. They need not be fine, like my 'White Doe' set, because I don't want these so much as a matter of art as of doing good."

"And of course, it is desirable to do that as cheaply as possible," said Fergus gravely.

"Yes, of course," answered the merchant in his simplicity, "for then one can do the more of it."

"I think I know somebody who could do what you require, sir," said Fergus.

"Indeed!" and out came a little private note-book, where percentages and shipping rates mingled oddly with quotations in rhyme, and wise adages. "If you'll just give me the name and address, Mr. Laurie, I'll be vastly obliged."

Fergus hesitated. "Will you mind giving me the commission, sir?" he asked. "I will name your terms, but will not pledge you to pay anything till at least one sketch is finished and approved of. There are circumstances that make it better the artist should not be known unless the work is successful. And it may not be successful: the artist is untried in this way; but I think, worth trying."

"Eh, eh, young—rising, eh? I like to give a turn to such. Very much indebted to you, Mr. Laurie. Leave all to your discretion. Shan't mind raising the terms a little if I'm very pleased. But leave all to your discretion."

Fergus knew the way to the Harveys' house well enough. Indeed, he had called there once or twice about business, and had left messages with Mrs. Harvey for her daughter. But he required first to look in at

Blenheim House, where David Maxwell was expecting him.

David was sitting, as usual, in the surgery, with a volume of Plutarch open before him.

"I can't stay," Fergus said, in his abrupt way, "so I won't sit down. I must go on to Miss Harvey's house. I have just got a good chance for her. Our Mr. Smith wants some sketches for Wordsworth's poem, 'Resolution and Independence,' and I put in a good word for her, and if she does one well, she'll get the order."

"She'll do it," said David. "It's well to be you to have such chances of serving people."

Fergus accepted the congratulation as a matter of course.

"I hope I shall do greater things in that line soon," he observed.

David had already turned to the poem, in the copy of Wordsworth which Fergus had put on the table. He wanted to read what Millicent would be presently reading.

"She will want models," he observed. "If she cannot think of anybody for the leech-gatherer's figure, you might remind her of the old sweeper by the churchyard. I have often been struck with that old man's resolute, patient face. She could go into the graveyard and get a sketch of him without his knowing. I think it would spoil his look if he knew, and he seems a man who might even object, like our Phœbe."

Fergus received the suggestion in silence, and David thought that very likely he condemned it as worthless, but was too kind to say so.

"I'll go with you as far as the Harveys," David proposed cheerfully. It seemed getting near Millicent to walk with somebody who was going to speak with her. And as he went along, he revolved in his mind what other hint he could give to secure Millicent's success. He desired it with such single-heartedness, that he would risk Fergus's belief in his good taste and wisdom, by giving nineteen foolish suggestions, if out of such a bundle of blunders might come one worth consideration.

"You say Miss Harvey is to do one picture on approval—don't you, Laurie?" he asked.

"Yes," said Fergus, "and the first lines are easy to illustrate—a few trees, and a bit of brightish sky reflected in some pools."

"But I don't see that she need make the first picture the specimen," David observed. "You might tell her to take the subject that most struck her own fancy; she would be sure to do that best."

"Oh, of course I shall talk it over with her," said Fergus; "there is no use in planning what I shall advise till I see what she says."

They paused before the Harveys' gate.

"You may as well come in, too," Fergus went on. "You have met both Miss Harvey and her brother at the vicarage. Come in."

"No, I think not," David replied, with a

wistful look at the lighted parlour window. "They won't care about seeing me, and while business is being talked over, the fewer people there are about, the better."

"That's quite true," said Fergus. "So, good-night." And he went in, and David crossed the road, and stood in the dark, watching the shadows that presently wavered across the blind.



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Mrs. Harvey, Miss Brook, and Milly, were all at home, and they now constituted the whole household, for George had been married two months before the night of this memorable visit.

Fergus stated his commission in his own cold, brief way, and in the pause while Milly read and re-read the poem he laid before her, he had time to survey the parlour in which

the little family group was seated. It was a pretty little room; but what struck Fergus was that its prettiness seemed so cheap and easy. Its elegancies represented very little cash, for, with unselfish foresight, Mrs. Harvey had gently overruled George whenever he had wished to buy any article of luxury. What could have been the total cost of all the ornaments?—the home-made feather-

screens on the mantel, the cardboard frames in which were set especial bits of Milly's drawing, the hand-worked fringing of the book-shelves, the patch-work cover of the side-table. A mere trifle, that anybody could afford. Therefore, Fergus asked himself, why should not his mother and sister make their sitting-room look as well? And they were neither of them bread-winning women, as all of these were, or, at any rate, had been, till quite lately. "If we had a room like this," said Fergus to himself, "we could invite anybody to visit us—and I should like to invite people. Our place ought to look quite as well, for I'm sure our furniture is really better, and mother and Robina must have more leisure than these."

With all his sharpness, Fergus had not yet learned that those who do much, always find time for more, and that whatever does not cost money, involves a mental and moral wealth, which is not nearly so easily acquired.

"I am to draw one picture on trial?" Milly asked, looking up at last, with a catch in her voice such as people have as they brace themselves to climb a hill. It never even occurred to Milly to say that "there was no use in trying." Effort was certainly in her power, whether success was, or no.

"Yes, and take any one you like," said Fergus. "Don't feel yourself bound to begin at the beginning."

"I should prefer to take a scene that would include the leech-gatherer's figure," Milly mused aloud. "I should like the test sketch to be one of the most important, because I should not like to succeed in that, and fail afterwards."

"Certainly not," said Fergus, "but the first picture will get all the criticism. Succeed brilliantly in that, and the others will be trusted. It is like when artists or authors make a name, people take the rest of their work on credit. Nobody is always inquiring into things. Get a reputation for early rising, and you may sleep till noon-day."

"Humph!" said Miss Brook, from her corner.

"Perhaps I may suggest that if you want a study for the leech-gatherer you may find one in the sweeper by the churchyard," Fergus went on. "Just go inside the palings, and take a look at him, and perhaps you may get from him two or three good lines to give individuality to your lay-figure's correctness. Have you any lay figures, Miss Harvey?"

"Oh yes," said Milly, "I bought one a long while ago."

"If not, I was going to offer to bring one for you, as I shall be in the West-end tomorrow. So, I suppose you have had thoughts of this kind of work before?"

"Scarcely," Milly laughed; "but I like it, and I thought my designing would be none the worse for it."

And then Fergus rose, and departed amid Mrs. Harvey's thanks and Milly's grateful assurances that he had already given her some most valuable hints, and that any more he might think of would be extremely welcome.

"And if your friend" (who he was, remained a secret from Milly) "is not quite satisfied with my first attempt, tell him I shall be most happy to throw it aside and try again, if he will let me," she pleaded.

"Oh, of course I shall see it first," Fergus answered. "and I who know his ideas, and exactly what he requires, will be able to judge whether it will do; and if you give me leave to tell you if I think not, you can try again, without his knowing anything about it."

"Give you leave!" echoed Milly. "it will be the greatest kindness you could show me. And I will set to work diligently, that I may have time for three or four failures."

And as Fergus came out of the bright little passage, with the eagerly grateful faces of the mother and daughter beaming behind him, David Maxwell turned and fled in the darkness; and then presently, fearful lest Fergus might see him in some sudden cross light, stepped into a deep, shady porch, and stood there breathless, till Fergus's springing step had passed far down the road.

CHAPTER III.—HOW FERGUS LAURIE GOT HIS OWN WAY.

MILLY set to work upon her sketches with all energy. Fergus Laurie presently sent her a note saying that he would take care that she was not called upon as early as usual for her regular supply of designs, and she wrote back, thanking him, and saying this would help her forward with the "sense of freedom." But he found that her designs arrived on the same day as usual.

Fergus presently made up his mind that he would take his sister Robina to call on the Harveys as a preliminary to inviting them to take tea with his mother. To name such schemes was to produce a revolution at home.

"I hope you've counted the cost before you think of beginning such things," said Mrs. Laurie.

"What cost can there be?" said her son serenely. "Will it ruin us to buy another

half-pound of tea and some currants and candies for Robina to make into a cake?"

"I'm not going to make a cake for people to laugh at," observed Robina. "Don't do these things at all unless you mean to do them properly."

"Well, at any rate, come with me to see these people," Fergus pleaded, "and afterwards I'll settle everything exactly as you like. Only come," and he added an argument likely to be more effectual in these quarters. "We shall never get on, or be able to afford anything, if we shut ourselves up like hermits."

"I've seen these Harveys at church," said Robina Laurie. "They are always very particularly well dressed. I would like to pay visits as well as any body, yet unless I can get something better to wear than my last winter's bonnet, I'd rather not go."

"What would it cost to get a bonnet as good as Miss Harvey's?" Fergus asked, in helpless masculine ignorance.

"It could not be bought under a guinea!" said Robina, with triumph. "Yes, indeed," she added, spitefully, "it is very easy to be always hinting how neat and pretty she looks, but neatness and prettiness cost something, I can tell you, sir; and if one is to have them, somebody must pay for them!"

Fergus was astounded. This put all his calculations about economy at fault. But he knew enough traditionally of the Harveys to feel sure that they had no private income, and he jumped to the conclusion that if their means justified such expenses, so did his own: a very common conclusion, though scarcely worthy of Fergus's reasoning powers. But he wanted his will, and would not let even his own logic stand in its way. And how was he, poor male creature, to know or suspect that the Harveys' bonnets were all home-made, and came out year after year pleasing and apparently new, but at only three or four shillings of fresh cost? Still some vague notion of such possibility came across him.

"Can't you make a bonnet for yourself cheaper than that, Robina?" he asked.

Robina bounced out of the room. She could bounce, though she was a little mite of a thing, after her brother's mould. She came back with her marketing bonnet in her hand. It was a coarse straw bonnet, badly dyed, with a piece of washed ribbon strained awry across it.

"There," said she, "that's the sort of thing people who have never learned millinery can get up at home. Would you like to take me visiting in that?"

This settled the question. "Get whatever you must have," Fergus conceded; "I'll pay for it. But I can't believe that you need to make all this fuss about paying a call to people no better off than we are ourselves, if so well off. For everything put together, including whatever allowance they get from the son since his marriage, I should not think they have more to live on than my salary, and we have mother's pension beside."

"Ah, you'd better think of letting that accumulate for us, than go wasting your money to show off to strangers," sighed Mrs. Laurie. "And how do you know what people have? They have a good lodger, anyhow."

"I was just thinking so might we, mother," said Fergus. "We have two rooms standing empty."

"I'll not have any one but ourselves in my house," Mrs. Laurie returned. "I've not been used to that sort of thing. Still it's profitable for those that don't mind it."

"In my father's time, and until I paid the rent," said Fergus, "you were not 'used' to live in a house where there was a room to spare." Fergus had struggled stoutly for his family, and took a kind of pride in connecting all his ambitions with them; but he was not dutiful with his tongue. Indeed, the whole Laurie family affection was of the curious kind which thinks itself above courtesy or restraint, and delights in proving with what immunity it can give and take thrusts which would prove deathblows among outer-world friendships. But it was only a compound form of selfishness; and the good-nature with which they each took the other's home-truths was only as real as the frankness with which some men are wont to accuse themselves of pride, hastiness, or folly.

However, in two or three days, Robina announced to her brother that she was ready to accompany him to the Harveys whenever he chose, and so they went together that very evening.

Hatty Webber happened to be visiting her mother, and was sitting chatting with Mrs. Harvey and Miss Brook, while Milly was hard at work on her sketches at a side-table. Hatty Webber never took work with her to visit; she would no more have thought of carrying the children's stockings in her reticule, than Milly would have dreamed of taking her pencils and india-rubber when she went to tea with the Webbers. "Everybody must rest sometimes," was Hatty's dogma, "and whoever is always at work before people, must take it easy behind their backs."

Of course, Milly's drawings were the first

topic. She was just putting the last touches upon the test picture. Fergus looked at it, but approved so coolly that Milly got frightened, and eagerly begged that she might do another.

"Oh, no, there is no need for that," Fergus said. "I have no doubt this will do well enough. Only the figure is almost too much like the old crossing-sweeper. A little more fancy—a little idealisation would have been better, perhaps. Still, tastes differ. And I daresay the gentleman who has to judge this picture will not know about the crossing-sweeper."

"But what can it matter if he does?" asked Hatty.

"Oh, he might think it was commonplace," Fergus explained. "It is easy to reverse this old leech-gatherer—a particular branch of poverty we are never likely to come across; but it spoils the romance to confound him with an old beggar, to whom any of us can give a halfpenny when we choose."

"A crossing-sweeper is not a beggar," said practical Hatty; "for whenever we use his crossing without paying him, we have more occasion to say 'thank you' to him, than he has to us, when we do pay him."

"You are like a friend of mine," Fergus answered. "When there has been a particularly poor abject-looking being standing at a crossing, I've known my friend go sloshing through the mud, rather than pass him without a fee."

"Is that Mr. Maxwell?" asked Milly simply. She had often seen him with Fergus.

"Ah, you know him. Yes, it is he."

"And now," said Miss Laurie, addressing Mrs. Harvey, "I must give you our special excuse for this intrusion. We have come to invite you and Miss Harvey to take tea with us this day fortnight."

Mrs. Harvey glanced at Milly. Milly looked bright and eager.

Therefore Mrs. Harvey answered—

"Thank you. We shall be very happy to come."

"We are very glad to have the opportunity of making such friends," Fergus observed, with that touch of reserved warmth in his tone, which suggested so much.

"Yes, indeed," said his sister Robina aside to Mrs. Webber, "for paying a visit or receiving one has grown quite a novelty with us. We have been so very poor, that it has been quite impossible for us to keep any equal terms with such people as we would wish, and we are rather too proud to accept friendship on any other footing."

"We have been very poor, too," said Hatty, but she spoke stiffly.

"We are going to invite Mr. and Mrs. George Harvey," Fergus went on. "Very likely they will not despise an opportunity for a long evening with you. And we shall be delighted to see you and Mr. Webber, too," he added, turning to Hatty. "My mother and sister will do their best to entertain you all."

"Oh, yes, we'll do our best," said Robina, "only my brother knows a great deal about it, you know, and fancies it is quite as easy to receive twelve people as six. But do come—if you'll only look over shortcomings, and take us as you find us."

"Thank you very much," Hatty answered, with the chill of her manner setting into hard frost; "but we do not go out very often, and cannot see our own old friends as often as we would wish. So you must excuse us."

And then Robina Laurie felt she had done something wrong, and that she would have a scolding from her brother, and would have been glad of a little more delay, before he requested that Milly's drawing might be wrapped up, and put in his charge, and then took leave.

"What do you think of them, Hatty?" Milly asked eagerly, when they were gone. Fergus Laurie had been such a prominent subject in all her recent conversations with her sister, that she was delighted to hope that this personal acquaintance might give them a mutual interest in him.

"Well, Milly, I can't say I fell in love with either of them," Hatty returned.

"I don't think you understood him," said Milly. "You thought he himself meant what he said, whereas he was only stating the general feeling of most people."

"Well, at any rate, I don't like the sister," persisted Hatty, "and as they are people who are so particular to have their friends on an equality with them, they have no right to invite our George."

"Oh," said Miss Brook grimly, "don't you know that equality generally means that one's as good as one's superiors, but better than one's equals, and above touching one's inferiors?"

"I don't know more of Miss Laurie than you do," Milly conceded; "but I cannot understand how she gave Hatty so much offence. She owns that she has lost the habit of talking to strangers, and I daresay it is a kind of nervousness which makes her over open. In a world where we all require to have so much patience with each other, it is surely easy to be patient with that. You

are generally so good-humoured, Hatty—a great deal more good-humoured than I am. But Miss Laurie saw you were affronted.”

“I can't endure being patronised,” said Hatty. “And if she did not find it a pleasure to have us, why should she think it could be a pleasure for us to go?”

“Children, children,” put in Mrs. Harvey, “don't forget that the Bible exhorts us to that charity which thinketh no evil. Better to be disappointed in people, than grow so wise as never to trust, or to forgive in little matters where there may be mutual misunderstanding.”

“Do you think I have much of that wisdom, mother?” Hatty asked pitifully. This married daughter was always keenly touched by the least reproof from Mrs. Harvey. “I'm sure I don't want it,” she added; “and I'm quite ready to own that perhaps I didn't take to the Lauries, because I couldn't help wondering what they would have thought of me, in the happy old days when I scoured down the house at Mile-end.”

“They would have loved and admired you,” cried Milly: “at any rate, he would. In spite of his cold manner, I am sure he is very warm-hearted and far-seeing. They are but shallow people who fancy warm manners and warm hearts must go together.”

Shallow indeed! But scarcely more shallow than the sentimentalists who think that warm hearts are always hidden in cold exteriors.

Meanwhile, Fergus and Robina trudged some distance in silence. Robina was afraid to speak, lest she should bring out the lecture which she felt was due. It came soon enough.

“I don't know what you can think of yourself,” said her brother. “I extend my invitation to somebody who is accidentally present when the original one is given, and you back it up by saying what an immense deal of trouble it will give if it is accepted! You have no breeding, Robina. But you might have a little regard for me. I think I am the first person to be considered in these affairs. The entertainment is mine, and if you find I am putting too much work upon you, you could but tell me privately that you must have assistance.”

“I'm sure I'm very sorry,” said Robina, in a tone curiously balanced between conciliation and defiance; “but I did not think you could really want the Webbers' company. The man keeps a shop in the Mile-end Road, and speaks like a person who has never been to school. You spoke of going a

little into society because it might help you to get on: I don't see that the Webbers' friendship could be any advantage to you.”

Robina had only quoted his own words, though certainly with that added shade of meaning which quoted words always have. He could not deny them, but they jarred him now. They had been uttered less as his own sentiment than as a motive which would appeal to his mother and sister. Fergus had genuine hospitable and social instincts. His greatest fault was his egotism, with its strong self-will. But then that is the lean kine which swallows many fat ones. He would have his own way, and whoever refuses to turn aside in that path must certainly often wade through dirty places.

“I dare say Mrs. George Harvey will not be sorry not to meet her brother-in-law,” Robina put in, emboldened by her brother's silence. “Now I do hope she and her husband will come. I wonder what the Devons will think of our inviting their niece? But we have quite a right to do so. You are able to serve Miss Harvey, and Miss Christian was not above marrying Miss Harvey's brother. Besides, I don't know what Mrs. George Harvey's own father was. Her uncle Robert, who adopted her, was only a book-seller.”

Fergus heard and did not hear. He was ready enough at times to listen to such talk and to join in it; but it was not what pleased him best. Still it was one of the influences of his life. If he had taken one of his own minor wills he would have silenced it, as small, mean, and unworthy, but then he had a larger and more material will, in gaining which it seemed to him that his sister Robina might be useful. And though their view of family affection gave him freedom to gibe at Robina, it was unprecedented among the Lauries to administer that kind of firm, loving rebuke which claims an altered course of speech or action. Robina would not have borne this; Fergus would never have thought of giving it.

Next day Milly received this note:—

“DEAR MISS HARVEY,

“Your sketch is accepted with great approbation, as I expected and as it deserved. Go on as you have begun. I hope to get better terms for you than those I first stated. But, with your leave, I think it best to keep you and my friend in your present mutual ignorance till this transaction is concluded. I do not think you will lose if you repose this much confidence in me.

"With my respectful greetings to your mother, I remain,

"Faithfully yours,
"FERGUS OGILVIE LAURIE."

"She's done it," he announced to his friend David Maxwell when he met him that evening. "It's my belief that she'd do whatever she took in hand. And she does it in such beautiful simplicity. Tries and succeeds, and doesn't seem to know it! But I think she wants somebody to tell her what to try. She doesn't feel her own strength enough. It is not sufficiently stirred within her to goad her to put it forth on something. She wants leading out."

"What line did she choose for the first picture?" David asked.

"Motionless as a cloud the old man stood,"

quoted Fergus. "And she made a downright portrait of that crossing-sweeper. I was afraid at first that it might be too literal to be pleasing, for it was wonderful as a likeness. But Mr. Smith never dreams of noticing a face out of a picture."

And then David Maxwell, left to himself, fell into a train of thought which had never troubled Fergus or occurred to Millicent. He thought to himself that if the outward man of this parish crossing-sweeper would serve so well as a type of the grand simple old hero of the poem, might not the fitness rise from some spiritual resemblance? Was it quite fair to take him as a type of patient endurance, and not try to lighten his burden — if by ever so little? This old man had unconsciously done Millicent a service

which she must have missed had he not kept his face noble and steadfast amid all the cares and squalors of bitter poverty and decrepitude. David, loving Millicent in his silent romantic way, felt a yearning to show kindness to him for her sake, as well as sympathy for the possible sufferings and character which might have made him so fit a form for a fine ideal. David did not understand the too common enjoyment of rubbing up one's emotions without producing one electric spark of action. Never mind that all he could do in this case was to buy his winter gloves of Berlin thread instead of kid, so that on the next Sunday morning, when his stepmother happened not to be with him, he was able to slip half-a-crown into the sweeper's hand.

The old man looked up suddenly, but without a start.

"God bless you, sir," he said. "I knowed it would come, for things was just about down at their worst, and something allays does come then. God bless you, sir."

Next Sunday the old man was not in his accustomed place. He was dead. He had died suddenly of heart disease, and the parish people found a whole shilling in his little canvas bag. David's charity had gone with him to the end.

"I cannot think how that Mr. Maxwell can choose to wear Berlin gloves," thought Milly to herself, "he must be very stingy."

She little dreamed that if there were more of his genuine appreciation of the truths which all art is only created to illustrate, there might be fewer subjects for sad pictures and pathetic poems and—more Berlin gloves!

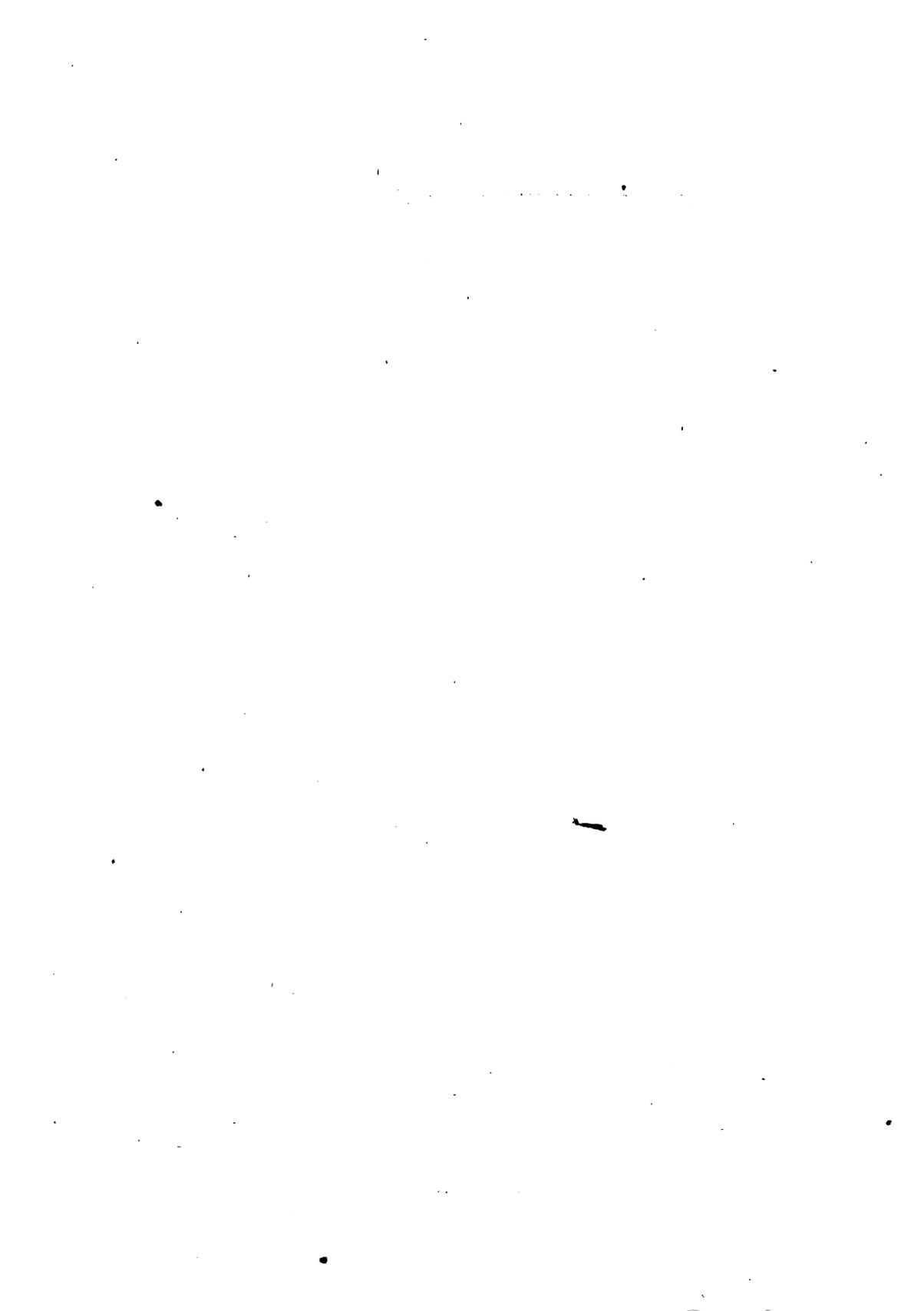
"THE LORD BLESS THEE AND KEEP THEE."

"THE Lord bless thee!"
How shall He bless thee?
Not with earth's vain empty blessing,
Joys that fade in the possessing,—
Not with earth's poor fleeting treasure,
Not with earth's mean scanty measure;—
But with the blessing of Him
Whose light cannot fade nor dim;
Whose boundless store
Yields ever more and more;
Whose mighty strength
Knows neither shortness nor length;
Whose wondrous love
Outspans the heavens above:—
With the gladness that knoweth no decay,
With the riches that cannot pass away,
With the sunshine that makes an endless day:—
Thus may He bless thee!

"And keep thee!"
How shall He keep thee?
Not with earth's poor feeble keeping,
Eyes that cannot stay from sleeping,—
Not with earth's fast tiring power.
Strength too weak for trouble's hour;—
But with the Keeping of Him
Whose Eye can never grow dim,—
Whose potent Arm
Can ward off each alarm;
Whose untiring zeal
No weariness can feel;
Whose tender care
Sends just what we can bear:—
With the all-covering shadow of His wings,
With the strong love that guards from evil things,
With the sure power that sale to Glory brings:—
Thus may He keep thee!



"CROOKED PLACES."



OUR DISTRICT.

BY A RIVER-SIDE VISITOR.

V.—GRASS-WIDOWS' ALLEY.



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phrases
to be able to state when or why that of
“grass-widow” first came to be applied to
married women whose husbands were living
away from them. For my present purpose,
it is only necessary to mention that the phrase
is common alike to fashionable slang and the
slang of low life, and has much the same
meaning in both. There is, however, one
very material point of difference. In upper
and middle-class circles the grass-widow is
usually found receiving a comfortable allow-
ance from the absent husband; but among
the lower classes the grass-widow is, generally,
a *deserted* woman—a woman, therefore, who
has to “scratch” for herself and for whatever
children she may happen to have, and who,
as a rule, makes a very poor scratch of it.
Ours being a waterside district, grass-widows
were, unhappily, numerous in it. Some of the
deserted women were the wives of men who,
though not sea-going, had become so for the
nonce, to the extent of stowing away or work-
ing their passage out to America or Australia.
This class of deserters, it is perhaps worth
while to note in passing, would—if they could
write at all—generally leave a scrap of paper
behind them, intimating that they had taken
their departure. “Good-bye to you and the kids
—I’m off for good,” was the commonest form
of these messages. Occasionally it was rather
unnecessarily added, “You must do the best

you can.” Sometimes there was the promise,
rarely fulfilled, “If I get on, I’ll send for you.”

The bulk of the grass widows of our dis-
trict were, however, as they would inform
you, when telling the story of their troubles,
the wives of sea-going men who were “away
somewheres foreign, and not a sending any-
think home, not even so much as the scrape
of a pen, and which they might be alive or
they might be dead, or they might turn up
again or they might not. Howsunnever,
it was a cruel hard thing on them and
their children; which they had never given
any provocation, but the other way about.”

With so much premised, it is scarcely
necessary, I think, to explain why a cer-
tain street in our district was nicknamed
“Grass-Widows’ Alley.” It was the favourite
place of residence for the grass-widows, who,
like other birds of a feather, flocked together.
It was the poorest, most wretched, most-to-
be-pitied spot in all Our District; and that is
saying a good deal. It was not exclusively
inhabited by grass-widows; other widows,
widows in full, as they were called by way
of distinction, lived there in considerable
numbers. Some families of the poorest
labouring classes, which counted both hus-
band and wife in their number, also found
dwellings there, and, as in most other very
poor spots, there was a sprinkling of both
men and women of the undesirable class who
are usually described as having no visible
means of support. It was a long narrow
street running between the two principal
thoroughfares of the district, and any person
passing along either of those thoroughfares,
who had cared to glance down it, would have
seen that it was also a dirty, dismal, un-
healthy, overcrowded street. But few passers-
by *did* care to pause to look down Grass-
Widows’ Alley—and for reasons good. At
either end of the Alley, and having entrances
in it, were “corner” gin palaces, which to a
considerable extent were very visibly sup-
ported by the no-visible-means-of-support
class. Around their doors were generally to
be found loafing a number of slouching, low-
browed gentlemen of the stamp that decent
citizens with portable property about them
instinctively avoid. This, added to the facts
that the Alley was known to be a hotbed of
contagious diseases, and was at all times
pervaded with foul smells, led to the general

public hurrying by it holding their noses, and keeping their eyes on their watch-guards, rather than pausing to gaze down it and note its outward aspects. Curious and characteristic enough those aspects were if taken merely as a "sight!" Heart-breakingly dreary and sad they were when you considered the terrible poverty and suffering of which they were the outward and visible sign. The "march of improvement" had marched past the place, and though the Inspector of Nuisances probably knew of its whereabouts, he had left it all alone, perhaps on the ground that his powers did not extend to removing it altogether. It was unpaved and undrained. Down its centre ran a stench-emitting gutter, choked and spreading out into more or less extensive mud pools at every few yards. What were by courtesy called the footpaths, were thickly strewn with all manner of refuse, and in the gutter swarmed innumerable hungry-looking, ill-clad, dreadfully dirty children, who for the most part had known nothing of "childhood's joys," and who were growing up to be street arabs in their girlhood and boyhood, worse in their man and womanhood. The houses in the Alley were six-roomed ones, and were let out in apartments by the superior landlords, the plan of allowing sub-letting tenants having been tried and proved a failure, as the sub-letters made a practice of going off without paying their own rent, after having received that of the sub-tenants. In so poverty-stricken a neighbourhood, arrears of rent were, of course, common. There were no goods worth distraining upon, or to repay legal expenses, and so taking the law into their own hands the landlords or their collectors summarily "bundled out" old non-paying tenants to make room for new ones who it was presumed would be paying ones—for a time at least. These ejections were often very painful affairs, but often too they had at least one pleasant feature connected with them, the manner, namely, in which they brought out into practical action the kindness of the poor for the poor. In many and many an already overcrowded room have we seen a corner cheerfully given up to shelter the ejected; many and many an already too scanty meal freely shared with them; shelter, food, sympathy being given in the most unostentatious spirit of charity.

The dwellings of the Alley presented an almost incredible state of dilapidation. They were old, had stood all the sack and destruction to which the desperately poor are wont to subject house property, and had never

been repaired. When I came to know the place a knocker was a rarity in it, and metal door numbers, door handles, scrapers, and spouting had all long gone the way of the marine store dealers, while in not a few apartments even the grate had been taken away. A window with half the panes of glass remaining ranked high for light and respectability, many of them being utterly denuded of glass and roughly boarded up. Inside, the houses were equally dilapidated. The roofs let in the rain more or less freely, the ceilings and walls were smoke blackened, the stair-cases were dangerously rickety, and the floors broken. One noteworthy feature of the internal household arrangements was that, just inside the door of almost every house, a rough hole was knocked through the partition between the lobby and the front ground-room. It was large enough to admit the head and shoulders of a woman, and through it the tenant of the front room usually answered the door. It was "handy" in a variety of ways, but notably so in those cases in which women had been driven to pawning or selling their clothing to such a degree as left them scarcely sufficient to make themselves decently presentable—a state of things by no means uncommon in Grass-Widows' Alley.

Itinerant traders of the poorer kinds abounded in the Alley, and their "shallows" and baskets were at certain hours of the day to be seen piled in front of their dwellings, while at all times there exhaled from numbers of the houses an odour of stale—not to say stinking—fish, which, taken in conjunction with the knowledge of the sort of places in which the humble traders of the Alley *must* keep their "stock," was highly calculated to create a *disrelish* for such tea and breakfast relishes as shrimps, winkles, herrings, and haddocks. Speaking of the shallows and baskets only being visible at certain hours reminds us that the appearance of the Alley would, to any one glancing down it, have been somewhat different—and characteristically so—at various periods of the day. As early as three o'clock in the morning lights would be seen flitting about in some of the houses, indicating to the initiated that the buyers of the Alley were making ready to tramp up to Billingsgate, Covent Garden, and other central markets. A little later—especially in the summer months—the more industrious and more robust of the seamstress division of the Alley—the shirt-makers, button-holers, and "hands" of the slop-shop "sweaters"—would be seen at their windows, commencing their weary and ill-paid labours. From half-past

five to six the few regularly employed labourers living in the place would be going off to their work. About seven, there commenced a scene of bustle. At that hour the buyers returned with their small stocks; and then it was a case of all hands to the pump to prepare the stocks for retailing—to tie the water-cresses into halfpenny bundles, sort herrings and haddocks into sizes, and so forth. With the hawkers of "relishes" set out also the hawkers of hearthstones, and a band of the girls technically known as "steppers," from their seeking work at step-cleaning. The other

itinerants of the Alley—a couple of chair-caners; a tinker-and-grinder; a gentleman who made day hideous by going about the streets playing on a cracked cornet; an eccentric individual, known as "Look-at-the-Quality," who sold the mats that his wife and children made; and a collector of old hats and umbrellas—these would not start on their rounds till later. Between nine and ten the children begin to turn out for their day's play in the gutter, and a little later the relish hawkers begin to return; and, having breakfasted, the younger ones of the juvenile por-



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tion of them join the gutter brigade, while the elder ones go for a rake 'long shore until it is time to prepare for the afternoon round. From eleven till noon there is generally a sort of lull, and it is mostly about this time that the few outsiders, whom business takes into the Alley, are to be seen in it. The parish doctor and the relieving officer are often visiting there, and the sight of the work-house, fever, small-pox, and general cabs are familiar in it; and still more familiar is the sight of the parish hearse. Brave Christian-minded volunteer visitors also make their

II. N.S.

way into the Alley on missions of love and mercy; but the outsiders most frequently seen in it—alas that it should be so!—are the potmen from the corner "publics," already spoken of. Each morning they collected a string of pots from it; for, amidst all its poverty, as there generally is amid all such poverty, there was drinking. On each Friday morning a special scene was to be witnessed in the Alley. Numbers of its widows, both grass and full, were to be seen trooping out with cloths under their arms, and looking comparatively jocund—as well they

might, for they were among those who received out-door parochial relief, and they were now on their way to receive their weekly allowance of money and bread. For this day at least they and their children were sure of "a good rough fill;" and the children as well as the parents knew it, as they showed by the eager manner in which they ran to meet their mothers when they returned laden with the loaves.

Such, so far as I have been able to describe it, was the outward appearance of Grass-Widows' Alley, the poorest spot, as we have said, in all our poor district, and one such is to be found in most of the poor districts of our great cities. Cheerless and wretched, however, as was Grass-Widows' Alley in its material aspect, it was of course in the home and inner life of its inhabitants that the sorrowfullest aspect of it lay—in their hand-to-mouth life, their desperate heart-breaking struggles to keep body and soul together. Ah me! when I think of these things, what mournful memories the name of the Alley conjures up! What remembrances of children young in years but old in suffering—of gaunt, hunger-pinched faces, of women with "only the ghosts of garments on," who do not sing, but *live*, the song of the shirt, labouring from weary chime to chime for a crust of bread, and rags.

What recollections of crushed and broken lives, hopeless and despairing hearts—sin, and sorrow, and death! As I write, such memories throng thick upon me, and standing out clear from the rest is the remembrance of a dead two-year-old little girl with the angel-look already upon its face—the child to whose death my first introduction to the Alley was incidentally owing.

On a rather warm October morning, I had occasion to call at the shop of one of the largest tradesmen of Our District who was not better known among those of his own standing as a shrewd and successful business man, than he was to the poor of the neighbourhood as a charitable one. To invoke his aid in this latter character was the purpose of my visit; but finding him with his hat on just about to go out, and the matter I had in hand not being pressing, I said that, seeing he was busy, I would call upon him some other time, when in a hearty tone he answered—

"Oh, I'm not in such a desperate hurry as that comes to; in fact I'm rather glad you have dropped in just now—but after you."

Taking this as an invitation to state my business, I did so. Having readily promised the assistance I had come to ask, my friend,

taking a dirty, ill-written document from his pocket, asked as he unfolded it—

"Do you know anything of a Mrs. Cooper, of Grass-Widows' Alley?"

I replied that I had never heard of either the person or place, and finding that such was the case, my friend in a few words explained where in Our District the Alley lay, and why it was so nicknamed, and then placing the paper in my hand concluded, "As to Mrs. Cooper, why she is just the Mrs. Cooper of that; what do you think of it?"

Spreading the document upon the head of a barrel that stood convenient, I saw that it was headed in a sort of text hand:—"The humble petition of Mary Cooper, of C— Street, in St. N—s Parish, Shewith," and made out—not without difficulty, for in addition to being ill written, it was couched in a sort of semi-legal jargon—that the object of the petition was to solicit subscriptions towards paying the difference between the price of a pauper coffin and a plain coffin of the ordinary type. So far it was commonplace enough. My friend and I had seen scores like it; to save relatives, and more particularly children, from a pauper coffin, was a thing for which the poor of Our District would struggle more desperately than even to keep life in themselves. Some there were who, when appealed to on this ground objected to the feeling as one of false pride, arguing that it mattered not to "the departed mortals" in what sort of coffin they were buried, or whether they were buried in a coffin at all; but the general opinion of the neighbourhood was in favour of the feeling, and though it may have been—as I was often told it was—weakly sentimental on my part, I shared the popular opinion. The pauper coffins were terribly slap-dash affairs, and it was a common and recognised practice between the parish undertaker and the very poor, for the latter to pay for having the coffin "made decent" as they expressively put it—having them plainly covered and lined, and furnished with handles and plates. The additions were the cheapest of their kind, the charge for making them was not large, and petitions to raise the amount were, as has been said, frequent. What had struck my friend, what struck me, as peculiar in Mrs. Cooper's petition was, that it represented her as labouring under such a crushing accumulation of misfortunes as seemed scarcely credible—as in short suggested the petition being a fabrication, and as such martistically overdone.

"What do you think of Mrs. Cooper?" my

friend asked significantly when I had finished my perusal of the paper.

"I don't like the style of the petition," I said.

"No more do I, as far as that goes," said my friend, "but she is scarcely to blame for that. I gather that she can't write, and I know the fellow who has written it for her. He is deputy at the common lodging-house, and thinks that this style of composition shows him a 'scolard.' He is just the sort that under the melting influence of a pot of beer or two, would write a thing of this kind without either knowing or caring whether it was true."

"If it is not true," I said, "Mrs. Cooper is very much to blame; if it is true, she is very much to be pitied—and if possible helped."

"Just so," assented my friend; "if this statement of the position of the family is even broadly true, it is a case for much more substantial assistance than is asked for here. I think it is a case to be inquired into, and I'm going to make inquiry—will you come?"

"Yes," I said I would go willingly, and without further words we started.

"That must be the house," said our companion, by a glance indicating one, across the paper-patched, up-stairs window of which was fastened some old piece of white stuff to serve as a blind. Tapping at the door, we found that it was the house.

"Yes, Mrs. Cooper lives here," said the grim old woman who answered our knock, "and she's at home, but she's in about as much trouble as any poor creature well can be and live. The wonder is how she has lived through it all; but what might you want with her?"

We said that we wanted to speak to her.

"And give her a tract, I suppose!" said the old woman contemptuously.

"We want to see her about this," said my companion, taking the petition from his pocket.

"Oh, that's another matter; I begs your pardon," answered the old dame, her tone becoming more civil. "She can stand by that; every word of it's gospel truth, for I got it wrote for her, and heard it read over, and it was about all I could do for her. I've never known much else than misery myself, and I've lived among it all my life, but such a dose of it as she has got now I don't think I ever did see before. Go up to her room, and you'll see such a picture there as I'll venture to say your eyes never rested on before."

And truly my eyes never had rested on such a sight. Since then they have rested on some scarcely less sad, but at the time I

beheld it the scene in that room in Grass-Widows' Alley was the saddest I had ever looked upon. It was a picture that, if put on canvas, would have been condemned as overdrawn, and attributed to a morbid imagination, and yet there it was before us in sad and stern reality. The wretched old room darkened by the apology for a blind, the splintered hearth-stone, the rusty, fireless, fenderless grate, the shaky, uneven, disjointed flooring, the dirt-engrined walls, the ceiling smoke-blackened, and here and there fallen in, so that the rain soaked through; the bed of rags in a corner, and the one broken chair and rickety table that constituted the furniture! And oh the occupants of this so dismal apartment! On the solitary chair sat a man who, sound and well, would have been a fine able-bodied one, but who was now weak and wasted from hunger and disease. His left arm was in a sling, his right was thrown around the shoulders of a six-year boy, who was crying—for bread. On the opposite side of the fireplace from the father sat, on a rough block of wood, a patient-looking little girl of four, moaning from the pain of a badly-crushed foot, she having been run over by a hand-cart two days previously; and in the far corner of the room, heedless of our entry and all else, knelt the mother by the corpse of her youngest and prettiest child, an infant of barely two years. The dead face was the one happy-looking face in the room—the one thing of beauty amid all the wretchedness. It had been a beautiful little creature, regular-featured, blue-eyed, pure-complexioned, and, having only died in the small hours of this same morning, "Decay's effacing finger" had as yet set no unbeautifying mark upon it. It had died with a smile on its lips, and the smiling expression was still there, the eyes were gently closed, and in that dim room the bright soft golden hair cast a glory round the brow. The frail little body was laid out on the top of an old deal box, which had been draped with clean white window curtains, lent, as we afterwards learned, by kindly neighbours; and it was arrayed for its long dreamless sleep in a beautifully-white night-dress, drawn in at the waist by a band of pink ribbon. So it lay; its presence sanctifying the squalid room. Reverentially we approached it, reverentially roused the mother from the stupor of grief into which she had fallen, and tried to comfort her. She was a young woman, and had been good-looking; but now her eyes were sunken and lacklustre, her cheeks pale and hollow, and her whole expression haggard and hunger-pinched.

"Be calm!" she exclaimed passionately, in reply to something my friend had said to her, "don't you think I'd be something more than human if I could be calm, placed as I am? There's my husband, poor fellow, been out of work this seven months, with a diseased elbow. I'm expecting every day to be a mother again; you can see my one child lamed and requiring nursing, and hear my other crying from hunger; and there is my little Rose, that I think I loved better than them all—God forgive me, if it was a sin!—lying dead, and more through our hard living than anything else. Be calm, sir! I wonder I'm not mad altogether."

"Would not the parish authorities help you in your trouble?" we asked.

"They offered to take us all into the workhouse," she answered, in a tone of bitterness; "and though I'm perhaps wronging them in saying so, I believe they made that their only offer because they could see we were of the sort that would rather starve than go into a workhouse;—and we have starved, and are starving. I'm only nine-and-twenty; my husband is only three years older, and till this misfortune of the accident to his arm fell on us, we were decent independent people in our poor way, for he was only a day labourer, and unfortunately for us he was not in any club. Of course, we had to part with what we had bit by bit to get bread, and we moved into this place for cheapness, and what you see and these is what our home has been brought down to!"

"These" were a handful of pawn tickets that she took from a cupboard as she spoke.

"With pawning and selling," she went on, "and what I could bring in by washing and charring, we managed to scrape on till five weeks ago, by which time my little Rose was so ill as to require constant nursing, and then we did have the parish doctor, and parish medicine and nourishment, and now we are offered a parish coffin for her."

So far she had been comparatively self-possessed, but at this point she gave way to a wild burst of grief. Throwing back her hair and raising her voice, she continued:

"But she shan't be buried in it! Look at her, pretty little angel. Her last nest, at any rate, shall be a decent one, if I beg the money on my knees by farthings."

As she finished, she threw herself on her knees beside the dead child, and with her head lying close to its hand, sobbed hysterically.

Seeing her thus, the husband for the first time came forward, and laying his hand caressingly upon her shoulder, said—

"Don't take on so, Liza. I know you loved her dearly, and so did I; but at the same time, lass, remember that she has gone to a better place, and been took from a hard, hard world."

"I know she's better off, and that it's selfish of me to fret," she moaned, without raising her head; "but I can't help it, Jim; it tears my heart altogether; and to think how she suffered!"

"Try to bear up, lass," he said, in the same soothing tone; "my arm is on the mend now, and, please God, we may see better days again. Oh, sirs," he went on, turning to us, but still keeping his hand on his wife's shoulder, "it's a dreadful thing for a man to be chained, as you may say, and see his wife and children starving, and what is worse, being a burden upon them. If either of you could only get me anything to do for a while that a man might do with one arm, I'd be thankful. None but God and ourselves know how hard my wife here has fought against the workhouse, how hard we have all lived to keep out of it; but I'm afraid we shall have to go, after all, if we can't get some little help to tide us over the next few weeks. You may think it a poor way for a man to talk, but being placed as you see me here brings down pride, gentlemen. I'd do anything, however humble and however poorly paid, and be gladder than I can say to get it."

There was no whining in his tone, and there could be no-doubt of his sincerity. The passionate grief of the woman, touching though it was, was not more distressing to witness than the tearless agony of the man's face.

The latter indeed seemed to have the more powerful effect upon our companion, for whispering to us, "I can stand no more of this;" and assuring them that he would see something was done, he led the way from the room. Neither of us was in humour for talking, and we had got quite clear of the Alley, when my friend, drawing a long breath, exclaimed—

"Well, I shall never forget that sight the longest day I live. If I had stayed another minute, I must either have cried or choked. I can't tell you how much it has upset me, and yet I'm very glad I went. I thought on first reading the paper it was an imposture, and if—as I once thought of doing—I had taken no notice of it, and found, when it was too late to do anything, that it was really true, the thought of it would have haunted me."

"It was a case," I observed, "that showed, even more than the discovery of an imposture would have done, the advantages of personal investigation in such matters."

No more was said, but I trust it is scarcely necessary to add that something was *done*. Care was taken that the, at any rate, excusable wish of the poor mother was gratified—that the “last nest” of her dead favourite was a decent one; and help in the form most acceptable to people of their spirit was found to tide them over their time of trouble. A light employment was procured for the husband until such time as his arm was well, and he, his wife, and remaining children restored to health and strength. It is pleasant to be able to relate that within a year the family were, thanks to their own perseverance, able to leave Grass-Widows’ Alley. In a less poverty-stricken neighbourhood, they once more set up a comfortable little home, and lived happily, as they had done before their misfortune had brought them into the straits in which we had found them; though with a chastened happiness—the memory of that dark time of trouble being always with them.

Such was my first introduction to Grass-Widows’ Alley, and much of my after experience in it was also associated with death and misery—necessarily so, for they were the chief characteristics of the place, and it was curious, as well as sad, to note how calmly familiar with them were the inhabitants. While they struggled so desperately to live, many of them yet looked forward to death as a friend. I remember once speaking with one of the seamstresses of the Alley. She was a “deserted woman” with two children. She worked at the slop shirt-making, and with the aid of her eldest child, a girl of ten, could by working sixteen hours a day earn about nine shillings per week. Her other child, a boy of eight, by hawking hearthstone, brought in from a shilling to eighteen-pence per week, and this was the total income of the family when in full work, and very often they were not in full work. Their way of life was in consequence very miserable, and I was condoling with the mother upon such being the case, when, with a long-drawn sigh of relief, she exclaimed—

“Ah, well, sir, there’s one consolation—there’s no work in the grave! Thank heaven for that! There, at last, we will be able to fold our hands, and rest, rest, rest! No shirts to make there for three-ha’pence each, and no ‘sweaters’ to dock your pay on a Saturday night for pretended faults in the work; and we won’t feel hunger, or cold, or pain there—our long home is the best, after all; I often sigh for it.”

She did not speak bitterly or ironically,

but in an unaffected spirit of thankfulness and satisfaction. Others in the Alley have I heard in the same spirit express the same longing for the last folding of the hands to sleep. It was wonderful to hear not only with what resignation, but with what a matter-of-fact air the inhabitants generally would, as winter was approaching, speak of a severe or dear season “thinning them off,” and in severe years many of them did succumb, and most of them endured terrible privations. The winter with its cold wet days and long dark nights was on many grounds their most trying time. The inclement weather sadly curtails the earnings of their out-door occupations; while the seamstresses and others following in-door employments could not work so well by candle or lamplight as they could by daylight—and then there was the question of the expense of light and firing. The latter was the great winter question of the Alley. Coals in anything like sufficient quantity were beyond the reach of the general run of the inhabitants. In the bitterest cold of notably severe seasons I have seen family after family shivering about in utterly fireless rooms, or almost fighting for a share of the scanty warmth of such a fire as could be got up out of a few sticks and cinders gathered from dust-heaps by the children. More than once I have seen a family that had been fortunate enough to get a charitable gift of meat unable to cook it for want of a fire, and compelled to barter part of it with some one who had a little fire—who had perhaps been so lucky as to secure the gift of a coal ticket. Relief tickets were the best hope of those in the Alley at these seasons, the greatest, almost their only chance of obtaining “seasonable” food or warmth. The terrible eagerness of look and tone with which they entreated any one even suspected of being entrusted with the distribution of the bounty of charitable associations or individuals was a sad sight to witness. That some of them were but little deserving there was no doubt, but there was equally little doubt that in the majority of instances they were in want, were hungry, cold, and without means, and often—at least, such was our experience—it was scarcely less hard not to be able to give than it must have been not to be able to get the urgently-begged-for ticket—the ticket for which the haggard, hunger-hollowed, cold-mottled face, as well as the eagerly-anxious voice, pleaded “trumpet-tongued.”

As regarded individuals, and individual families, there were occasional gleams of sun-

light amid the darkness of Grass-Widows' Alley. From time to time truant husbands would unexpectedly return to their wives and children, bringing money with them. In some instances such occurrence would simply result in a "spree"—a few days' carousal and wild extravagance, followed by a fresh disappearance upon the part of the husband, a fresh sinking into poverty and want upon the part of the family. In most cases, however, "the return of the wanderer" meant other and better things—meant to a greater or lesser extent the redemption of the family from poverty. Sundry rather dramatic stories were current in the Alley, of men turning up "just in the nick of time;" just at a time, that was, when absolute starvation was staring their families in the face. There were other stories of men who had *not* turned up in the nick of time, who had not come back until it was too late for their return to undo or amend the mischief their desertion had wrought; until wives or children were dead or had "gone wrong." Again there were brighter and more romantic stories—mostly relating to the Australian and Californian gold fever periods—of men who had returned greatly enriched and had at once and for ever removed their families from the Alley, to comfortable and even luxurious homes, in which—figuratively speaking—they fared sumptuously every day, and were clad in purple. And in this connection it is a pleasing thing to be able to relate that, in some instances at any rate, the fortunate families did not, in the days of their unexpected prosperity, forget old neighbours and fellow-sufferers in the Alley; but, on the contrary, rendered them kindly and substantial assistance, so that the raising of one family out of the slough of despond was sometimes incidentally the means of rescuing another.

But such brighter bits of life were the rare exceptions in the Alley. Woe! woe! woe! was the rule, and of course there were occasionally cases in which the lighter and darker phases of the life of the place were strangely mingled. A picture of one such case there dwells on my mind with a vividness second only to that of the picture of that first scene in the Alley, of which we have already spoken. Generally speaking, the residents in the Alley "neighbourled" freely, but any who were so minded could "keep themselves to themselves" as closely as they wished without danger of interference or curious prying upon the part of others. Among those who did elect to keep themselves secluded was a young woman, who, as events showed, had only

come into the Alley to die in it, and it was in connection with her death that this second mind-picture was imprinted upon my memory. She took a room for herself and her child, a pretty little girl of four years. It was noticed that she looked woefully ill, was very scantily clad, and had no furniture. When at home she shut herself in her room, speaking with no one, and when she went out she communicated to no one where she was going or on what errands she was bent. Finding that her desire was to be left alone, the other inmates of the house, with one exception, ceased to take any notice of her after the first day or two. The exception was an old woman who earned a precarious livelihood by keeping a small fruit-stall. Seeing that the young woman got to look worse every day, and arguing from what she saw of her circumstances and movements, that she was slowly dying of hunger, the old woman became extremely anxious about her, and anxiety making her bold, she entered the other's room, and forcing her into conversation after a deal of persuasion induced her to apply to the parish authorities for help. On doing so she was supplied with food—but it was too late. A few hours afterwards her illness assumed an alarming character, the parish doctor was brought in, and on seeing her he at once ordered her to be removed to the workhouse infirmary; but before the removal could be made the flickering life had passed away. It was immediately after her death that I saw her, not knowing that all was over until I reached the house. The apartment was literally without furniture, and was otherwise wretched and cheerless. But to her it mattered not now, her fight was over, and there was a look of rest on the wasted face, that had as yet scarcely become rigid. She was stretched on a pile of shavings that had served her as a bed, and was covered with some old dresses; and so she lay, one of the unknown dead, for none could say who she was, and she had died and made no sign on the point. So far as she was concerned there was nothing for us to do, and as we had no doubt that the parish would take charge of the child, we did not see that we could do anything for it either; and yet, though I scarcely knew why, I asked to see it. I was informed that I would find her in old Sarah's room—old Sarah being the fruit-stall keeper mentioned above. On ascending to her apartment I saw the little girl playing about it, seemingly unconscious of any loss. Thinking that I would be better able than those around her to explain to her childish

intellect what had happened, I began talking to her. In reply to my first question she told me that her name was Milly; and after a little while I gently asked her—

“Do you know where your mother is, Milly?”

“Don to heaven!” she answered promptly, and in a tone and with a look that showed that in her own childish way she had realised that heaven was such a place that to have gone to it was a grand thing.

Old Sarah herself was seated in a corner of the room quietly regarding us, and on my looking up at her, with a pleasant astonishment, she observed—

“That’s what I’ve told her, sir, and have been trying to make her understand. I thought it was the best thing, and I hope it’s true; and if it is, death will have been a happy release for her, poor thing. When I found no one fitter came, I prayed for her myself as well as I could, and I think she understood, and bent her own mind to asking God to take her; though she was past speaking, there was a happier look on her face as she passed away than I ever saw on it in life.”

“I was truly rejoiced to find,” I said, “that there had been a praying Christian with her in her dying moments;” and I added “that I was afraid there were but very few in the Alley who could have prayed with her.”

“I don’t want to take any credit, sir,” answered the old woman, with unaffected sincerity. “I’m sorry to think that I’m not as prayerful as I know I ought to be. It’s not that I’m better than my neighbours, but I’ve had better opportunities than most of them. I haven’t always been in such places as this. I was comfortably brought up, and was taught to remember my Creator in the days of my youth. As a child my head was never laid on my pillow until I had said my prayers at my mother’s knee; while many a poor thing living in the Alley here has never been taught a prayer, perhaps hardly ever heard one. But under all their roughness they are very kind to each other. A woman that has been in prison half-a-dozen times for being drunk and disorderly nursed me through a fever like a sister, just because she saw I was alone, and because she remembered that I had once begged of the policeman to be gentle with her, while every one around was laughing at the way in which they were pulling her about. There’s plenty would have shared their own last crust with the poor creature lying dead

up-stairs there, if they had only known how bad off she was, and I don’t suppose there was one in the house but that had the heart to have prayed for her when they saw her dying, if they had only known how.”

Knowing what I did of the kindness of the poor to the poor, and the notions which many of even the most ignorant of them had of the necessity for and importance of *death-bed* prayer, I could quite believe what the old woman said, and with a brief remark to that effect, I left the house thinking sadly of the young mother lying dead in that miserable garret, and hoping that she had indeed “don to heaven,” and that the fate of the child now left alone in the world might be happier than hers. Two days later she was laid in an unmarked pauper’s grave, no mourner by, the name in which she was buried, and by which she had been known in the Alley, presumably an assumed one. The child was removed to the workhouse; but happily not to stay there long. With the closing of the grave over the mother the darkness of the picture faded away, the brighter touches, the silver lining of the cloud began to show—the poor mother seeming to be destined to serve her child better in her death than she had been able to do in her life. Though there had been no inquest, an account of the case got into a local paper, and with a most pleasing result. In consequence of reading this account, a lady and gentleman applied to the relieving officer to see the child, and finding her a very pretty and lovable one, explained that they were a childless couple, and would be willing to adopt her as their own. It was arranged that they should do so, and she was taken to their home in such a manner that none but the few necessarily in the secret knew from whence she had come, or what had been her previous history, so far as it was known, nor on reaching years of understanding was she herself enlightened on the point. Had she met one of the gutter children of Grass-Widows’ Alley she would probably have shrunk from it in fear, little dreaming that it was but a picture of what she might have been.

Such as I have attempted to describe it, was Grass-Widows’ Alley; such life in it, such death in it. When I consider what manner of place it was, the saddest feature of it has yet to be named—to wit, that it is a typical neighbourhood. Such places are to be found by the score in the metropolis alone, and the thought that it is so, may surely make us humble, thankful, and charitable.

NO ROOM IN THE INN.

THE inn is full—but is there none to yield?

She is so weary—must she go afield?

O had I chanced that night to be a guest,
Thrice welcome Mary to my place of rest.
Are such thy thoughts? then, hast thou
room for all?

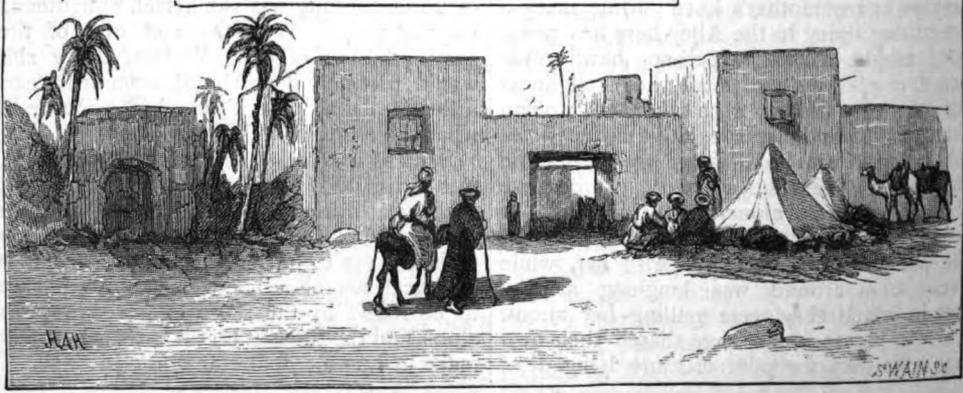
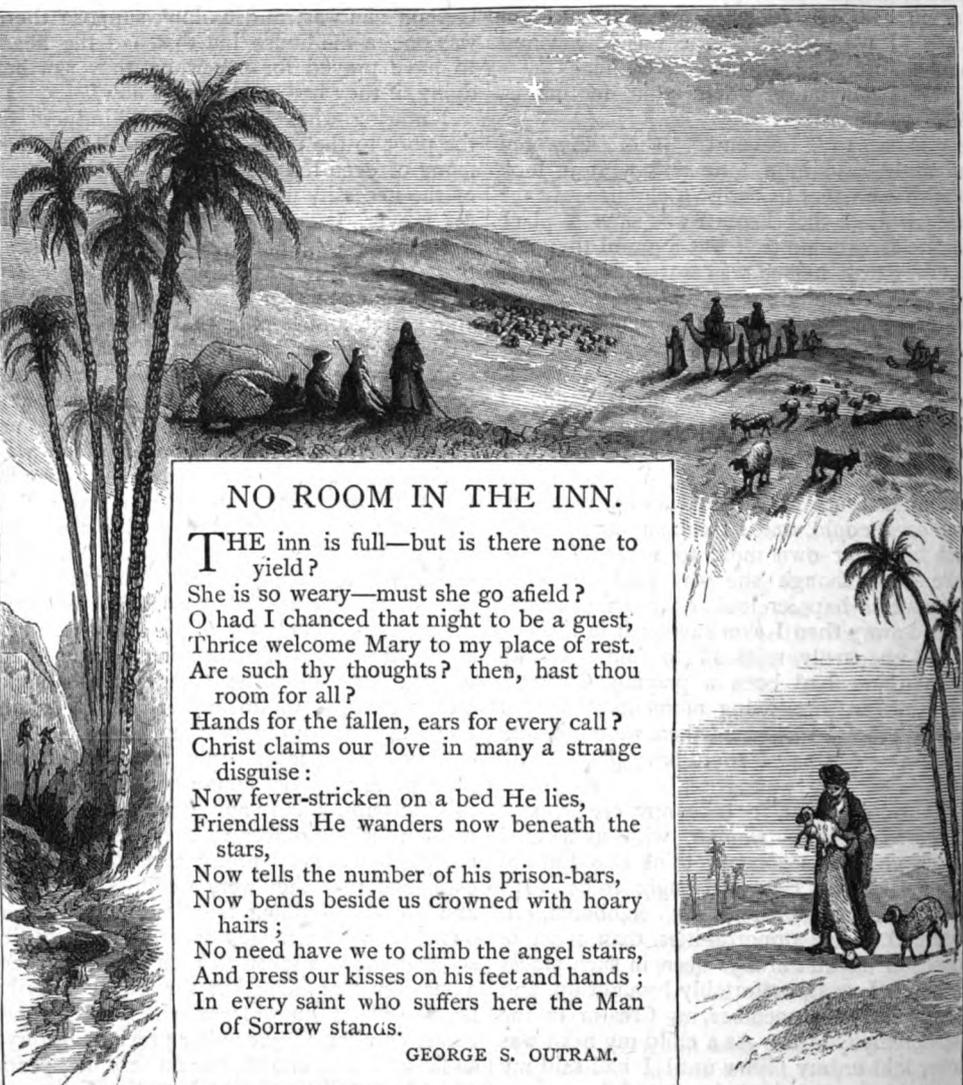
Hands for the fallen, ears for every call?
Christ claims our love in many a strange
disguise:

Now fever-stricken on a bed He lies,
Friendless He wanders now beneath the
stars,

Now tells the number of his prison-bars,
Now bends beside us crowned with hoary
hairs;

No need have we to climb the angel stairs,
And press our kisses on his feet and hands;
In every saint who suffers here the Man
of Sorrow stands.

GEORGE S. OUTRAM.



ON MONEY.

BY THE REV. A. W. THOROLD, M.A.

II.—USING AND SAVING.

IF the first thing about money is to get it, and the second to keep it, the third is to use it. And this, perhaps, needs the greatest wisdom of all. Remember what it implies, and what it includes. It implies foresight, so as to be ready for losses; self-control, to be able to go without things that we should dearly like, but cannot afford; patience, to know how to wait for what we wish for; discretion, clearly to perceive what will suit us best; self-denial, that we may help others; conscientiousness, that in all we spend we may please God; good sense, to draw the right line between extremes on either side; a joyous liberty of heart, to trust the kindness of God, that He means us to be happy. If not to offend in word is one sign of perfection, to make a right use of money is another. It is significant that Dives went to torment, not for viciousness, but for self-indulgence. It was the snare of his great possessions that stole from Christ the soul of the rich young man, whom to see was to love.

See, too, what it includes. Certainly three things; some would say four. There is maintenance, and usefulness, and enjoyment, and—may we not add—saving. Each of these has its own natural order; each its own relation and proportion to all the rest. Clearly we must live: in other words, we must eat and drink, and wear clothes, and live under shelter—the needs, it may be said, even of savages. But our artificial and civilised life makes other demands on us still. There are children to educate; servants to feed and pay; now and then doctors' bills; occasionally lawyers'; and for the absolutely needful claims of a middle-class English household, with its varied and complicated and incessant expenditure, the one word maintenance means a heavy drain of money. By usefulness, I mean that proportion of money which, before any other expenditure is incurred, next after our maintenance, should deliberately, methodically, and cheerfully, be put by for God. Enjoyment will include all that personal expense which, within just limits, and according to the discretion of the individual conscience, is a legitimate source of human joy. Saving or putting by, either in the shape of a life insurance, or in the private laying up of a certain amount of income for sickness or old age, will be, in the

judgment of many, a prudent, if rather an Irish way of using by keeping.

Few things require more pains, show more character, or earn more results than the expenditure of money for household necessities. Several points strike one here as indisputable, but singular. How much more some people spend on mere eating and drinking than others. How this is true, not only of navvies, and pitmen, and artisans, but of persons of all ranks and circumstances. How such persons always complain of their poverty, and that they never have money for anything else. How easily such luxuries come to be looked upon as the indispensable necessities of life. How the simpler and more frugal people, who would equally like them, but go without them, because other things seem to come first, never get credit for their abstinence, but are assumed not to mind about them. How little any one gets for his money spent this way, except dyspepsia and a habit of self-indulgence. How quite the worst and silliest way of spending money is to eat and drink it!

But our household expenditure means other possibilities of extravagance than those of food. Costly changes in furniture, not for being worn out, but for being old-fashioned: what is called "stylish-living," so often the pretentious vulgarity of pseudo gentle-people, and so miserably and deservedly failing in procuring the consideration it spends so much to buy; an expensive way of entertaining, which gratifies nobody but the tradesmen who supply the goods; servants simply to minister to laziness; and incessant goings to and fro to this place or that, merely because home is dull: these are items of expense which swell the house bills of many a quiet family, with little in return but constant mortification, and the pressure of debt.

The plain truth is, and there is much consolation in it, that the actual necessities of life form a much less item in household expenditure than many of us are willing to suppose: that it is the extras, and the luxuries, and the superfluities that run away with the money; that the sooner a somewhat stern and decided check is put on modern habits of spending, the better it will be for all of us; and that if the present rise in prices helps to effect a little household economy, and compels some of us to ask ourselves if we could not be quite

as well and as happy with cheaper and simpler ways, the country would be wealthier through its increased savings, and in many homes the purse at the end of the year would be much fuller than now.

In quite their proper place clothes have a claim for consideration among the other items of domestic spending ; and though the present age hardly needs encouragement in this direction, it is a real mistake to treat them as a matter of indifference. Whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing well ; and it is by no means an open question whether clothes are to be worn. The right thing to do is, to spend just that amount of attention and money on them, that in the end will prove the true economy. To care nothing for dress is, indeed, not quite such a snare as to care too much for it. It is no exaggeration to say that costliness of wardrobe is one of the glaring inconsistencies of fashionable Christianity ; and makes shrewd men and women of the world coldly and scornfully ask, where is the cross that such Christians carry. Yet when God gives any one personal attractions, He entrusts them with a means of influence which He expects to be made use of ; and there are two kinds of vanity, that which affects to despise natural gifts, and that which assumes a personal pre-eminence from them. But be there beauty or no, it is still reasonable and natural to wish to make the best of ourselves. For we should dress, not only for our own fancy, but to please those we live with. A true wife likes to please her husband's eye ; and a father is gratified by seeing his daughters dress as suits him. But clothes cost money ; and while extremes on both sides should be carefully avoided, quite the most wasteful plan is to give it no thought at all. "Can a maid forget her ornaments?" is an inspired question, which has its root in the intrinsic reasonableness of some kind of care being given to them ; and the elevated temperament that treats clothes and their cognate subjects with a lofty negligence is certain to be extravagant, and likely to be shabby.

The right spending of money also includes usefulness. And I choose this word in preference to charity, because it contains and expresses more. A Christian's hourly conviction about all his spending should be that he is a steward for God, both as regards himself and his neighbour. Among the rough tests of the genuineness of our religion, none is so sure as our habit of giving away.

But this is one of those matters in which the truest wisdom is to be at once methodical

and free. A conscientious man should, as a matter of course, set aside a certain part of his income as belonging to God, and sacredly to be dedicated to Him. The principle, however, once recognised, the special application of it must vary according to the individual case. Are there many children or few? is the annual income professional and fluctuating, or permanent and certain? Here are, at least, two among other conditions, which will materially affect the power and so the duty of giving. Such proportion inflexibly set aside for the Master's use need not necessarily be all that is given. Sometimes it may be more ; though it never should be less. If it fall short in one year it should be made up in another. Any sudden accession of fortune, or great hit in worldly success, should be recognised by a special thank-offering ; gratefully, for it is He who gives us power to get wealth—promptly, for the sooner it is done the more likely it is to be well done ; a gift deferred often means a gift diminished. That it is set apart for Divine uses does not necessarily imply that it should all be devoted to strictly religious purposes. There are many doors into the Temple of Charity, and various are the altars on which our offering may be laid. Occasionally it is found a good rule to apportion the charity purse under the four divisions of religious, benevolent, domestic, and casual—part going regularly in annual subscriptions, part to collections in church, part to special objects, such as occur annually with almost inconvenient regularity, part not assigned at all, but left free for the discretion of the hour. Only let us take care that our charity be not so mechanical as to lose all its true vitality, so much a matter of habit, that we forget, when we give, humbly to offer it to our God. It is the motive that makes the gift precious—in the grateful love that lays it at the Lord's feet once pierced to save us ; in the noble joy that thrills through the heart, that God should accept anything from our hands. Then, when God is remembered, and his poor cared for, and his kingdom promoted, and our own flesh and blood not coldly pushed aside, are we free, as conscience shall permit us, and our means justify it, occasionally to think of our own wishes and gratify our own tastes. "Rather give alms of such things as ye have, and behold all things are clean unto you." When people ask if it can be consistent with simplicity and self-denial to buy a picture, or to own a carriage, or to take a tour, when all these things spend money that might be directly used for the

glory of our Master, let us not fear to say, *it is*, if nothing else comes so near us as to make the indulgence unlawful. For two reasons. First, because one end of money is enjoyment; and God gives it us, among other purposes, to minister to this enjoyment, and He rejoices over our joy in his gifts, as a tender human parent is glad in his child's gladness at some present of his own. Oh, we do our heavenly Father wrong, if we suppose that No is the word He likes best to say to us. His is no austere nature that can neither smile nor bless; and if out of our superfluity we would sometimes buy something that to possess would please us, let us ask His leave and be free.

Another reason is, that society in all the immense varieties of its complex life exists and grows by the mutual interdependence of its members; that He who has implanted in us the love of art, or of music, or of books, or of nature, or of travel, must intend and sanction the moderate indulgence of them; that the Christian so far from needing to feel himself debarred these innocent recreations, may rather feel himself freer than other men for them; for is it not his Father's world in which he finds himself, and are not these mercifully given him to cheat the weariness of the way on his journey home. He who has wreathed the face with smiles, and endowed us with the blessed sense of humour, and given flowers their odours, and made the outer world so exceeding glorious, has taught us, as in a parable, that our joy is His joy, only let it always be in Him.

There are, however, two things more to say. It may be that at the moment when we are meditating such indulgence, some pressing necessity, or outside sorrow comes in, and a voice says to us, "Canst thou cheerfully deny thyself, and spare that money for me?" At such a moment—and it will not always, perhaps not often, come, God is too kind, too just to overtask us—let us lift up our heart for strength, and then, looking once more at our coveted treasure, for our Saviour's sake, bravely let it go. The quiet happiness that distils into the heart, when He smiles on us his thanks, must be felt to be known.

Or, there may be those in whose heart through the special and exceeding grace of the Holy Spirit there is now an utter deadness and indifference to such things, not because there never was any natural inclination for them, but because the power of the new life has crushed it out. The extent of their indifference is the measure of their

victory. Well, blessed are they in their utter contentment with their Lord, and in their calm indifference to earth. They are on a height, which no one can reach without much steep climbing.

Lord Bacon, in his Essay on Expense, clearly points out that "he that is plentiful in expense of all kinds, will hardly be preserved from decay." While one hobby, judiciously and moderately indulged, can hardly hurt a poor man, half a dozen may make a bankrupt of a rich one. That idiosyncrasies of expense have, on the whole, been beneficial to society needs no arguing; since but for the costly enthusiasm of private, and sometimes eccentric collectors, there would be none of those accumulations of art and books and sculpture that give all classes a share in the enjoyment of their wealthier neighbours, and sow broadcast the fruitful seed of many a lofty thought and noble production. This, too, is certain, that pictures, plate, marquetrie, china, or vertu of any kind, when really good of its sort, is a valuable investment if you can wait for your interest; to buy well, even if you pay highly, is a safe protection against ultimate loss. No doubt the difficulty, however, that most men find in this direction is knowing where to stop, for every one can appreciate Dr. Johnson's experience, that abstinence is easier than temperance. Conscience has a voice that claims to be heard about every penny spent on self-indulgence; and when sternly silenced, it waits for a bitter revenge.

There are, however, two useful checks on our habits of expenditure, which, if hardly to be called moral, yet tend that way, since they act as helps to the conscience, though not to be recognised as quite on a level with it. One of them is the habit of saving; the other the practice of keeping accounts. It is hardly too much to say about saving that it is a primary instinct of human nature, and that in proportion to the savings of a nation will be the increase of its wealth, and independence, and power. Englishmen are, with one exception, probably quite the least thrifty of civilised nations; and if some of us need convincing that it is important to save, still more refuse to admit that it is possible. Many persons, indeed, appear to regard thriftiness as identical with a certain meanness of disposition, and think that no one can save but at the cost of his own dignity, and his neighbours' interests; and the easy indulgence so generally granted to the selfish thoughtlessness of young spend-thrifts indicates a fallacy latent in the popular

mind, that any kind of waste is, on the whole, for the public good. Now, is it quite too bold to hazard two statements on this subject: one, that most people ought to save; another, that every one can? That most people ought to save is capable of proof, from the stand-point both of self-interest and religion. That every one can save—obvious exceptions allowed for—is plain from the fact that all of us waste a certain amount every year on some sort of superfluity, which, though spent gradually and almost unconsciously, and mostly in small sums, makes a considerable total at the end of the year, and which, if not spent, would have been still at our disposal.

The prudence of saving may almost be called self-evident. Illness, misfortune, the opportunity of an eligible purchase, putting out children into the world, the inevitable growth of expenditure as we advance in life, the immense comfort of a secret provision for emergencies, are quite sufficient in themselves to justify and reward the thrift that springs from self-denial, apart from the distinct motive of laying by for accumulation, which it may or may not be right to do. Though it may not tell directly upon our habits of benevolence, and in many cases it will not; in quite as many more it will tell indirectly, through promoting self-restraint, and placing additional means at our disposal. For if we are poor, through what we miss as well as through what we lose, we are rich through what we save as much as through what we gain. By all means let us admit that the habit of saving has a dangerous side to it; that to save merely to keep is quite a different thing from saving that we may give away; and that where pride, or stinginess, or covetousness, are at the bottom of it, it is but selfishness in a specious form. Nevertheless, much inconvenience would be saved, and even great distress avoided, if it was felt to be a rule of common prudence to lay by something yearly, whether much or little, against an evil day. No one is rich who lives beyond his income, but every one may be said to be so who lives within it.

The habit of keeping accounts to some people seems the only possible way of saving themselves from waste and debt, while others pooh pooh it as a piece of useless pedantry. And it is quite true that if the money is spent, writing down in a book how it is spent, will not get it back again. It is also true that for private individuals, at the end of every year, at the risk of their own temper and the comfort of their family, and the loss of much precious time, to insist on balancing

their accounts to a halfpenny, is a kind of financial prudery which (all respect to Charles Simeon notwithstanding) good sense will usually repudiate as utterly needless. But admitting all this, there is still, however, a real advantage in the regular keeping of accounts which is quite worth a certain amount of small trouble, and, if not pushed to an extreme, is a valuable help to conscientious persons. Writing down the cost of something which perhaps you did not really want, or ought not to have paid such a high price for, may give you a useful qualm of conscience on being brought face to face with it, and may prevent your repeating the error. Those who are methodical enough to apportion definite amounts to the various items of their expenditure, and who would be honestly distressed if the allotment, say to personal expenditure, were seriously augmented to the injury of other claims, have an easy way of ascertaining from their private record how far they are fulfilling their own intentions. Any one who honestly feels that giving away a certain proportion of his income is a distinct and pressing duty will from time to time be careful to ascertain how far he is really giving in charity a due proportion, as God prospers him. But there is no readier way than that of glancing over his account book, and finding there, in the black and white of his own handwriting, how much he has received, and how much he has given.

It belongs to this part of our subject to observe how directly, and universally, and continually, and on the whole reasonably, social opinion claims to pronounce its verdict on the right use a man makes of his money. The question, "what is he worth?" may often be asked with a purely worldly meaning, and the answer given will usually be, nor that he is just, or pure, or true, or kindly, but that his income is so much a year. There is also seen in some people an impertinent curiosity about their neighbours' private affairs that cannot too instantly or too sharply be snubbed. Worldly wise men will always show a cautious reticence on this subject, and some one in "Coningsby" is made to say that the pleasant thing is to have ten thousand a year, and to be supposed to have only five. While, however, no wise man will ever wish to be thought richer than he is, an honest man will hardly try to make it out that he is poorer. Admitting what has been already observed about unjustifiable intrusion into other men's affairs, there is still a kind of rough, though sometimes inconvenient reasonableness, in the anxiety of a man's

neighbours to discover what share he may fairly be invited to take in the duties and burdens of his neighbourhood; and while there is only too much disposition among Englishmen to act the flunkey to rich men, and to give a disproportionate influence to the possessor of money, it is on all accounts desirable to rouse in every one a real conviction of the responsibility of possessing it. Never should it be forgotten that the daily tribunal of public opinion, before which every one of us, consciously or unconsciously, willingly or unwillingly, is compelled to stand, is but the faint type and precursor of that final judgment-seat before which the rich and poor will some day meet together, and on which One who has himself been poor will judge his brethren without respect of persons.

It is probably the presentiment of this tribunal that induces many worldly men at the last moment to attempt to atone at their death for the shortcomings of their life, by giving their money away when they can no longer keep it for their own purposes, and, perhaps, to the injury of their own flesh and blood, to leave the world with a flourish of trumpets in the shape of ostentatious legacies to charitable institutions, for which, when living, they neither thought or cared. Such gifts can neither bribe God nor cheat men. When, however, they fitly conclude a life of consistent benevolence, they are the becoming farewell of a Christian's heart to the world he is leaving, whose woes he can no longer heal. And this brings us to a part of our subject which it is impossible to pass over without some consideration—the right disposition of money after we are dead by what is called a will. Superstition with some persons, indolence with others, indecision or changeableness with others, will often cause men to postpone to an inconvenient or hurried moment what, for the sake of others as well as them-

selves, should be done when the health is strong, the judgment clear, the leisure sufficient, and the will unbiassed. It is quite true that in some cases the law makes a man's will for him, even better than he could make it for himself; and that, unless he is able to keep his own counsel about it, the risk of disappointing those whose expectations he has excited may seriously affect his freedom of action if he wishes to change his mind. It is equally true that the absence of a will is often productive not only of great inconvenience, but also of wretched discord; and at a moment when a profound sorrow might be expected to bind together brothers and sisters by the sad tie of a common sympathy, they leave their father's grave to plunge into a miserable strife for the wealth he has left behind. It is a serious question how far in making their wills people are sufficiently aware of the life-long resentments that so often follow them; or, on the other hand, of the grateful kindness which the tender mention of a name, or the bequeathing of some trifling legacy, can stir in the heart that rejoices to feel itself loved. Injustice in a will rankles and cankers in the wounded memory for a whole lifetime. To be cut off with a shilling is a kind of malignant insult, now happily falling into general disuse; and, as a rule, the shorter wills are, the fewer complications they involve afterwards; but to be totally passed over in the will of one quite near to you, without your name being mentioned, is sometimes quite as vexatious to a sensitive nature. Our last thoughts of those we love should be tender thoughts; and it helps us to remember them, to know that they remembered us. Better than any costly legacy or accumulation is the memory of an upright and disinterested example, which it is in every man's power to leave his children if he can leave them nothing else.

SLEEP.

BY THE LATE ISLAY BURNS, D.D.

"I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the Lord sustained me."—PSALM iii. 5.

MUCH of the force and beauty of these words is often lost from inattention to the circumstances in which they were recorded. In the title to the psalm we are told that it was composed by David on the occasion of his flight from Absalom his son. It is the record, therefore, of his feelings and exercises of soul during what was undoubt-

edly one of the darkest and most trying moments of his earthly struggle—that moment when he was not only assailed by enemies, but wounded and cut to the heart in the house of his friends. Yet even in that bitter hour, God that comforteth them that are cast down, supported the soul of his servant, and visited him with consolations and alleviations

as precious as they were unexpected. Of these, not the least remarkable was that noted in the text, "I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the Lord sustained me." That sweet restorer of the wearied body and the troubled mind visited him at a moment when it might well have been driven far away. Pursued by open enemies; surrounded, it might be, with secret treachery; distracted by a thousand anxieties and conflicting rumours of doubt and fear; his heart wrung with an anguish which none but a father's heart could know,—discrowned, forsaken, reviled, chased by enemies, betrayed by friends, his life every moment hanging by a thread, yet he lay down and slept soft and sound as an infant on its mother's breast. "I laid me down and slept." It is in circumstances like these that we learn to estimate in some measure adequately our common and every-day mercies—circumstances in which they are at once so inestimably precious, and yet so hard to attain. These blessings, which at other times are to us but matters of course, seem then the most blessed and wonderful gifts of God. Those old familiar friends become to us as special messengers of mercy, angels of light from heaven. An hour of deep and refreshing sleep amid the fury of a storm, or in the dread pause of a battle-field, or amid the exhausting toils and ceaseless perils of a siege, or in the weary sick-room after nights and days of watching, or in the lone prison on the eve of trial, or in the last extremity of sorrow, when the very vehemence of the lamentation defeats itself, and the poor sufferer at last weeps himself to rest in the arms of that kind friend which steeps the senses in forgetfulness;—how precious is the boon—how much of divine compassion and care is concentrated in that one gift! But surely, it is not alone on such rare occasions as these that we ought to mark and acknowledge the loving-kindness of the Lord. Such reasons only furnish signal instances of what is with most of us almost a constant mercy. Surely they should not be the less valued or thankfully acknowledged because they are so common. If the momentary interruption of such a blessing makes us more than ever realise its preciousness, should we not be proportionately grateful that it is so seldom interrupted? Because *one* hour of balmy slumber in the time of our great need is felt to be a blessing that cannot be told, shall we bless God less for thousands and thousands of such hours, when to the sweetness of rest there is added the additional mercy of out-

ward quietness and peace? Hence the importance, both for the glory of God and our progress in true sanctification, to discipline and educate ourselves in the art of observing and duly estimating the common mercies of God.

The mercy here spoken of was twofold:—

1. "I laid me down and slept."

2. "I awaked, for the Lord sustained me."

Let us glance successively at each of these. Though poets and moralists have struggled for expression, and have vied with each other in their enthusiastic eulogies of sleep, yet no one who knows anything of what life is, will accuse their language of exaggeration. Though soaring to the highest heaven of inspired eloquence, they have in very deed spoken of it only the sober truth. It is, indeed, the "serene oblivion of the jaded senses and troubled soul;" it is "nature's sweet restorer," and its "soft nurse;" it is the kind hand that "knits up the ravelled sleeve of care," the "balm of hurt minds," "sore labour's bath;" it is the lowly friend of the poor and the toil-worn, "oft lying with the vile on smoky cribs, and leaving the royal couch;" it is, in fine, to use the powerful and pregnant words of the Christian poet Young—

"Man's rich restorative; his balmy bath,
That supples, lubricates, and keeps in play
The various movements of this nice machine,
Which asks such frequent periods of repair;
When tired with vain rotations of the day,
Sleep winds us up for the succeeding dawn,
Fresh we spin on, till sickness clogs our wheels,
Or death quite breaks the spring, and motion ends."

Sleep is the Sabbath of the day. It is the periodical wind-up of the weary mechanism of flesh, which else would run down and stop. It is a new baptism of the fainting powers, as in waters of renovating energy. It is the grave in which tired nature sleeps, to spring to life by a fresh resurrection on the morrow. Of its inestimable value we may form some faint idea when we consider what *inroads* on the health and spirits its absence, even for one or two successive nights, will make on the strongest frame; and that to be a stranger to its gentle visitations for months together is recognised as amongst the most terrible of all conceivable afflictions, issuing in an entire disorganization of the whole physical and mental frame, and not seldom in madness. Ah! we little know what a priceless boon we have to thank God for, every day we can say, "I laid me down and slept."

Then consider not only what this blessing is in itself, but what the presence of it implies. As the dews of summer night fall freely only in a calm sky, so the dews of kindly sleep visit us more willingly when the

mind is at ease and the body free from serious malady. Racking pain, corroding care, agonizing suspense, wakeful fears for the safety of friends, or the course of events on which our earthly all may hang—any of these will scare away that timid guest, and doom us to a restless bed. When we lie down there and sleep, it is probable that we are largely exempt from these—we have, in great measure at least, a quiet mind in a sound body. We lie down and sleep; therefore, probably, our home is safe; our children and friends are safe; our goods are safe; our affairs and interests in the world are safe. By God's mercy, too—by his simple restraining grace, it may be—we are probably free from that which is far more terrible than any mere calamity—from the memory of such deeds as might strew our couch with serpents, and people our world of dreams with shapes of horror. So that this is no mere single and isolated blessing, but one which by its very presence implies the existence of many others. It is one only of a whole troop of blessings, which, like itself, are for the most part so familiar to us, as to be wholly unnoticed, and which we learn to recognise in their full preciousness only by their loss.

Then, once more, think how hard this blessing often is to obtain. It is one which no wealth will buy, no power can command, no prayers allure. The monarch might barter his crown and half his kingdom, and yet not purchase an hour of such balmy slumber as is the unsought meed of the beggar and the clown. That repose which flees the palace, nestles beside the houseless wanderer behind the wayside hedge. Oft it is farthest away, when it is most longed for, and creeps in unsought where it is least desired. The watchman slumbers at his post, even at the peril of stripes and disgrace, while his lordly master, on a couch of state, closes his eyes in vain. The obtaining of an hour's refreshing sleep would often be the saving of a dying patient; and yet all the care of attendants, and all the skill of physicians, cannot procure it. Every other medicine, and every other cordial, can be bought but this.

Oh, think of the thousands and thousands who last night tossed in strong pain, or feverish unrest upon their beds until the dawning of the day, and would willingly have bought at a dear price even a scanty share of that blessed repose which came to you unbidden, and thus learn what a mercy it is to be able to say, "I laid me down and slept."

Yet how often have you had to say this!

How many thousand thousand times has this song of praise been put into our lips! In the case of most of us, how few have been the exceptions to our continuous enjoyment of this blessing! Probably there are hundreds of us who do not remember for weeks or months or years to have been one night without this boon, and yet how easily might the occasions of its enjoyment have been as rare as the occasions of its absence! How many many are there everywhere with whom it is so! Oh, then shall we not praise the Lord for his goodness and for his wondrous works to us the children of men? Shall not our hearts burn with gratitude, as well as leap with gladness, when we say, "I laid me down and slept?"

But we must now hasten to speak of the second part of the blessing.

2. "I awaked; for the Lord sustained me." If it be a great mercy to lie down and sleep, it is a still greater to awake. If the suspension of our consciousness, and of our wearied powers, be a blessing, how much more the restoring of them! If sleep is the grave of ease and toil, waking is the birth of hope and of strength. It is a fresh resurrection, in which he who lately lay in helpless nothingness in the land of darkness and silence, springs to new life again, and goeth forth from his chamber as a strong man to run his race. Sleep, like death, is but a means to an end, that through that shady gateway we should be ushered into a new sphere and a new life of happy, joyous action. What a mercy, then, when we are spared thus to awake! It might not have been so. In thousands of instances it is not so. Multitudes have closed their eyes in sleep, never to awake or to see this world's sun again. They laid themselves down and slept, but never waked, because God did not sustain them. It might have been so with you. It might have been so on any night you have ever slept since you came into the world; it might have been so on the very night that has just gone. What if it had been so? How would it have been with your soul this day had it so been? If you had not awakened here, where would you have awakened? You slept soundly last night, and for this you have reason to bless God, the Giver of every good and perfect gift; but what if you had slept *too soundly*? slept that deep sleep which the last trump alone shall break? I beseech you, my beloved brethren, seriously to consider this question. To the Christless soul this precious boon, after all, is but an uncertain blessing. As a wise man says, "Sleep is

death's younger brother, and so like him that I never dare trust him without my prayers." And yet do *you* trust him so? And then think how often you have experienced this deliverance from possible ruin—how many thousand thousand times, all godless and graceless as you were, you have slept and awaked on this side eternity, on this side hell? How has this been? Because God has sustained you. Had he slipped his hold, relaxed his sustaining grasp even for an instant, you had been gone, and undone for ever. And shall all this mercy, and all this long-suffering, be in vain? Shall you have been rescued so many thousand times as from the jaws of hell, only to drop down under a deeper weight of damnation at the last? Shall not the goodness of God now at length lead you unto repentance?

Again, let us look at the matter in another point of view. You have so many thousand times had to say, "I laid me down and slept; I awaked," &c. ; well, what use have you made of those awakenings, and of the new fields of opportunities of good on which they ushered you? Has the result been the glorifying of God, the good of your own souls, and the blessing of those around you? Has each fresh start in life been a new stage in the race to heaven, a new step on the ladder of glory, honour, and immortality?

Sinners, amid all those awakenings to the light of day, have you ever yet awoke to true repentance, seeking after God? As day after day, through successive years, you passed through the golden gates of the morning, into another stage of your earthly life, have you never bethought you of those far brighter portals by which you might have passed out of darkness into Christ's marvellous light? Oh, how many golden opportunities have you had of being saved, and have you missed them all? How often and often has the heavenly manna fallen on the dewy ground, and are you yet starving for lack of the bread of life? Has it been for the better or for the worse that you have been spared so long? Shall you have to lament with unavailing anguish through all eternity, that so many thousand times you laid yourselves down in

peace, and awaked,—awaked only to increase the accumulated sum of your transgressions, and sink yourselves deeper in damnation?

And, believers, to what purposes have your awakenings been? As, day by day, you entered afresh on your Master's vineyard, have you entered ever with simpler faith, with deeper humility, with more entire consecration, with loftier aim and truer heart than before? Has it been with you as with the sun in spring, which seems to arise each day brighter and clearer than the last, till the freshness of the vernal morn passes into the genial glare and full splendour of summer? Oh, as we rise day by day from the tomb of unconscious sleep, should we not leave something of the slough of our old carnal self, something of the dross of our old sins behind, and rise to a purer, holier, diviner life than before? Should we not with a firmer, enterer heart, put off the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light? Surely, with so many separate starts in the heavenly race we should make some progress; with so many stations and stages by the way, we should go from strength to strength, until we appear before God in Zion.

Finally, remember we shall soon lie down in a quieter bed, and sleep a sounder sleep than we have ever yet done, and then there shall be an awakening such as you never knew or dreamt of before! You shall sleep in death, you shall awake to heaven or to hell. Take, then, in conclusion, these two rules with you:—

1. Lie down on your bed each night as if it were your last, with fresh repentance and fresh application to the blood of the Lamb, and fresh commendation of your soul and body to the covenant mercy and fatherly care of God in Christ.

2. Begin each day as if it were your first, with all the ardour of a fresh surrender, and of a warm first love; and remember that the holier the beginning, and the steadier the course of each day on earth, the brighter will be the dawning of that eternal morn when the Sun of righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.



AGAINST THE STREAM:

The Story of an Heroic Age in England.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE SCHONBERG-COTTA FAMILY."

CHAPTER VI.



AN excess of theology was not the excess prevalent in Abbot's Weir in my childhood. "High" and "low" in those days had reference rather to social than to ecclesiastical

elevations; and "broad" was applied to acres or to cloth, not to opinions.

Whatever purposes the laity went to church for, severe critical analysis of my uncle Fyford's or his curate's sermons was not one of them.

I remember not unfrequently hearing strong comments on the extravagance of some people's garments and the imperfections of others', but never any derogatory remarks on the extravagances or defects, or "unsoundness" of any kind, of the various doctrines delivered to us.

Occasionally I recollect my father's gently protesting that the Doctor—my uncle was a D.D.—had "given us that again a little too soon;" but a suspicion that sermons were intended to be transferred beyond the church doors for discussion (or, I am afraid also, for practice), never crossed my mind.

Indeed, all the sects represented in our little town had subsided into a state of mutual tolerance which might have seemed exemplary, had not this tolerance extended to some things which all Christian sects are supposed not to tolerate.

Protests were not the style of the day. "Against the stream" scarcely any one seemed

pulling. The effect was a drowsy tranquillity. The various pulpits would as little have ventured to fulminate against the enormities of the slave-trade, the intoxication common at all convivial gatherings, the rioting at the races on our Down, the cruelties of our bull-baitings in the market-place, as against each other.

"Were the feelings of the congregation to be wantonly disregarded?" my uncle Fyford would have pleaded. "Had not one of Madame Glanvil's sons been a slave-holder? and had not the enormities of the slave-trade been greatly exaggerated? Were there any of the most respectable of the congregation who did not occasionally take a glass too much?" (drunkenness was not then a mere low habit of the "lower classes;") "and were the little 'harmless frailties' of the 'most respectable' of the parishioners to be wantonly dragged into the light? And even the 'lower orders,' no doubt, must also have their amusements; poor creatures, their lot of toil was hard enough already without being further embittered by Puritanical austerities. What was the occasional discomfort of a bull, a creature without a soul (and without a literature to celebrate its wrongs); compared with the importance of keeping up a manly, ancient English pastime, a healthy outlet, no doubt, for a certain—brutality,—we will not call it, but—a certain recklessness of blood inherent in the very vigour of the Saxon nature? Was there not even a text for it? Had not St. Paul said (possibly not in precisely the same connection), 'Did God take care for oxen?' And should we be more merciful than St. Paul? No; let such pretences be left to the over-refined sensibilities of a Jean Jacques Rousseau, to a nation which could guillotine its sovereign and weep over a sentimental love-story (especially if the love were misplaced), or to the gloomy asceticism of an austere Puritanism now happily for England extinct."

I used sometimes to suspect from the vehemence with which my uncle defended this custom, he being at once a tranquil and a merciful man, that his conscience was a little uneasy at the sufferings to which, as a devoted entomologist, he exposed the various beetles which were impaled in the glass cases in the vicarage. He could always be roused

on the subject of the nervous sensibilities of animals, and I remember a hot debate between him; and my father on Shakspeare's lines—

"The beetle that we tread upon
In corporal sufferance feels a pang as keen
As when a giant dies,—"

which my uncle characterized as sentimental and pernicious trash.

I believe he would very gladly have stretched the same conviction to the nervous sensibilities of negroes; but his candour was too much for him; and with regard to the abolition of the slave-trade he had to take up other grounds, such as the general tendency of Africans to make each other miserable in Africa, if let alone, and the antecedent improbability that "Providence" would have created a substance so attractive to white people as sugar, and so impossible for white people to cultivate, and would have prospered our sugar plantations and sugar planters as it had, unless it had meant that sugar should be cultivated by blacks, and consequently that blacks should be brought from Africa.

Thus it happened, in consequence of all these various arguments, or rather in consequence of the prepossessions by which so many of our arguments are predetermined, that Abbot's Weir protested against very little, at that time, either in church or chapel. My uncle did indeed periodically protest against various evils mostly remote or obsolete, such as Popery on the anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot, the heresies of the fourth century on Trinity Sunday, or the schisms of the seventeenth century on the festival of King Charles the Martyr.

But he rejoiced to think that we had fallen on different times, when Englishmen had learned to live in harmony.

Did not he himself indeed exemplify this harmony by a cordial if somewhat condescending intercourse with the Rev. Josiah Rabbidge, the mild successor of the fiery Cromwellian minister who, at the Restoration, had been driven from the pulpit of the parish church?

Mild indeed had that Presbyterian congregation become, in doctrine, in discipline, and in zeal; and difficult would it have been for any one short of a Spanish Inquisitor of the keenest scent to fasten a quarrel on theological grounds on the Rev. Josiah Rabbidge, a gentle and shy little man whose personality was all but overwhelmed under the combined weight of a tall and aggressive wife, the fourteen children with which she had enriched

him, the instruction of the boys of the town when they emerged from the mixed Dame's School of Miss Felicity Benbow, and a congregation which it was not easy to keep awake, especially on Sunday afternoons.

Of this last fact I had personal experience, one of our maids being sometimes in the habit of taking us to the chapel on Sunday afternoons, when Uncle Fyford was preaching in his second church in the country; attracted, I believe, not by the theology, but by the greater brevity of the service, and the greater comfort of the cushions.

I do not remember being struck with any great difference, except that Mr. Rabbidge's prayers were shorter, and not in the Prayer-Book, and that he generally used the term "the Deity" where my uncle said "Providence."

I suppose the terms were characteristic in both cases. Mr. Rabbidge's element, when he could escape to it, was literature; my uncle's, nature. To both human life was a subordinate thing. To my uncle, indeed, it was brought near by the household presence of his orphan nephew, Dick Fyford, and three thousand parishioners, who had at intervals to be married, christened, and buried; and to Mr. Rabbidge by the constant inevitable pressure of a wife to be propitiated, fourteen children to be fed, a large portion of the boy-humanity of Abbot's Weir to be taught, and that somnolent congregation to be kept awake. Still to both all this tide of human life was a disturbing accident, from which they escaped when practicable—Mr. Rabbidge to his dearly-prized ancient folios, and my uncle to his beetles. And as must happen, I think, to all from whom the human life around recedes, the Divine seemed to recede also; and on the very pursuits they cared for more than for humanity fell a lifelessness and a barrenness. Nature herself refuses to be more than a scientific catalogue to those who subordinate humanity to her. The thoughts and lives of the men of the past become mere fossils to those who neglect for them the living men and women of the present. If the present does not live for us, how can the past? If our "neighbour" has no personality we reverence and supremely care for, how can nature be to us more than a collection of things? If humanity does not come home to our hearts, how can God? Thus, in a measure, moderated indeed by the merciful duties they were inclined to look on as hindrances, the law of love avenged itself. Nature became to my uncle not so much a living wonder and glory, as a storehouse to

furnish glass-cases for insects ; and history to Mr. Rabbidge rather a museum of antiquities than a record of continuous life ; and God not so much the Father and the Saviour as the " Providence " which arranges with marvellous ingenuity the mechanism of the universe, or the " Deity " which dwells afar off in thick darkness at the sources of History.

Of the Incarnation, or of the Cross, they had little need, in such a view of nature and of human life.

It was probably, therefore, rather by an accident of position, that my uncle retained the dogma in his creed, whilst Mr. Rabbidge had glided, unperceived by his congregation, and possibly by himself, into a mild and most unaggressive Arianism.

And yet in all this I speak rather of their theories, and of what these would have made them, than of themselves ; or rather of what they would have made themselves than of what God made them.

My uncle could not, with the best intentions live for beetles, nor Mr. Rabbidge for books.

That rollicking cousin of ours, Dick Fyford, was perpetually plucking him back to the roughest realities of human life in its crudest form of Boy ; to the crudest form of British Boy, a boy with an invincible inclination for the sea.

And to poor Mr. Rabbidge's discipline, no doubt, all Abbot's Weir contributed, from Mrs. Rabbidge to Piers and Dick Fyford, as Mrs. Danescombe did to mine. What fossils, what monsters, or what intolerable bores we should become if we could get rid of the things and persons in our lives we are apt to call hindrances !

The intercourse between my uncle and Mr. Rabbidge was, no doubt, made more amicable by the manifest differences in their persons and positions. There could, my uncle felt, be no danger of a man forgetting the social distinctions caused by the union of Church and State, who had, to begin with, to raise his eyes eighteen inches before they encountered his own, whose rapid, hesitating utterance contrasted characteristically with my uncle's slow, round, sonorous enunciation ; who had to compress sixteen people into the Old Abbey Gate-house, an appendage of the rectory for which my uncle declined to receive any but a peppercorn rent ; to whom the glebe cows and vegetables were as serviceable as to the rector himself.

Not that Mr. Rabbidge's independence of thought was in any way affected by these favours, or by the necessity of accepting

them. No sense of favours past or to come would have made him indifferent to the value of a Greek particle, not, I mean, only in the Athanasian Creed, but anywhere : and he had heresies from the Oxford pronunciation of Greek and Latin, in defence of which he would have suffered any persecution, civil or domestic. In this the spirit of his Puritan ancestors survived in him, and not even the eloquent and forcible Mrs. Rabbidge herself could have constrained him to any compliance beyond silence.

But my uncle's sense of ecclesiastical dignity was satisfied by conferring these benefits. It was not necessary by any extra chill and polish of manner further to accentuate a difference already sufficiently marked. And therefore the intercourse was of the friendliest kind, Mr. Rabbidge's fourteen were welcome at all times to enter the rectory garden through the arched door, which connected it with the little garden of the Gate-house, Dick Fyford being after all a far more dangerous inmate than the whole fourteen together.

Meanwhile Mr. Rabbidge found recondite allusions to beetles in the classics, Greek and Latin, and my uncle returned the compliment by referring in his articles in the *Sentimental Magazine* to quotations suggested by his " learned friend Mr. Rabbidge." One point my uncle never yielded to " separatists." As an orthodox Churchman, and as the minister of a State religion, he could not be expected to concede to the alumnus of a Dissenting academy the title of Reverend. It would, he considered, be to eliminate all significance from the word. " Titles," said my uncle, " are titles ; to accord the right to confer them on any self-elected community was to undermine the citadel of all authority. Persons who began with calling a Presbyterian teacher Reverend, might naturally end with calling their sovereign ' citizen.' Mr. Rabbidge would, he knew, comprehend his motives." And Mr. Rabbidge did, and never protested.

For they had the link said to be stronger than a common love—a common hate ; if so fiery a word may be applied to any sentiment possible in zones so temperate.

They both hated " Jacobinism "—my uncle as a man of property, which any convulsions might endanger, and Mr. Rabbidge as a peaceable and not very valiant citizen, who in any contest was not likely to get the upper hand.

And they both disapproved of Methodism, the only aggressive form of religion they were

acquainted with—my uncle condemning it chiefly as having a “Jacobinical” tendency to set up the “lower orders” and to “turn the world upside down,” and Mr. Rabbidge as an enthusiasm likely to set people’s hearts above their heads, and so turn their brains upside down.

And yet, such are the inconsistencies of the best balanced minds, Reuben Pengelly continued every Sunday morning to play the principal bass-viol in the choir gallery, every Sunday evening to take a principal part in the prayers and exhortations in the little Methodist meeting, and every day and night, everywhere when he was wanted, to pray beside the dying beds or broken hearts among my uncle’s parishioners.

And there were instances in which Mr. Rabbidge had even been known to call poor Reuben in, when he had found his somnolent and respectable congregation roused by some dim memory of the old Puritan teaching, for which their forefathers had fought, or by some of the terrible realities of life or death to an unquenchable thirst for something which he did not comprehend, which neither the mild Arianism of the chapel, nor the mild orthodoxy of the church afforded, but which Reuben seemed able to give; some dim orphaned feeling after One who is more than “Providence” and “the Deity,” whom Reuben trusted and called on, in no very classical English, as “the Lord, the living Lord, the Lord who died for us and liveth evermore, the loving, pitying, and providing God and Father of us all.”

My uncle and Mr. Rabbidge both thought it very strange; but human nature, especially in the “lower orders” and in women, is a strange compound; what classical author has not in one phrase or another said so?

Principle, sober principle, the incontrovertible precepts of morality, ought to be enough for rational humanity; but in all the relations of life, and even it seemed in religion, men and women, especially women, could not be satisfied without something more than sober principle to guide their judgment; they must have their hearts stirred, they must laugh for joy, and tremble, and weep—they must have emotion; and as this was so, perhaps it was well that a man, on the whole, so respectful to authority, and so trustworthy as Reuben Pengelly was to be found to supply the material.

Or as Reuben put it:—

“The devil took care there should always be sinners, and the Lord took care there should always be saints beyond the reach of anything but his blessed Gospel and his good Spirit.”

CHAPTER VII.

OPPOSITE our windows, across the Corn Market, was a long, low, rambling old house, once a dower-house of the Glanvil family, but long before my recollection the abode of Miss Felicity Benbow, the guide and the terror of successive generations of juvenile Abbot’s Weir.

Piers and I, sitting on the window-seat of the Stone Parlour, frequently observed the children going in and out of that wide arched door. The house and Miss Felicity herself had a kind of horrible fascination for us. Sooner or later, we knew those solemn portals would open on us, and engulf us also in that unknown world within, where dwelt the dark shadowy powers of discipline and knowledge, represented in the person of Miss Felicity.

Thither every morning and afternoon we saw the children, a little older than ourselves—some, it was rumoured, *not* older—tend in twos or threes, or one by one, with lingering and sober steps, the small satchel on the shoulder, and occasionally the book too late consulted being anxiously conned over; and thence, in a body at the appointed hour, we saw them issue with softened voices and quiet sobered paces for a few steps beyond the door, as far, at least, as the range of Miss Felicity’s windows, subdued by the restraints of those unknown powers within; and then through the narrow streets, in different directions, we heard the joyous voices sound louder and freer as they distanced the solemn precincts, scattering frolic and music through the town as they separated to their different homes.

There, also, on wet days the various maids of the richer families gathered with hoods and cloaks for their young masters and mistresses. And there every morning and evening the aristocrat of the school, Madam Glanvil’s little orphan granddaughter, was brought and fetched, by the old black butler in livery, on her white pony, a grave, retiring child with dark, pallid complexion and overhanging brows, and with large, wistful brown eyes, which often seemed to meet mine, and always seemed to speak to me from some mysterious new world. The rest of the children thought her proud and supercilious, but those strange, deep eyes with their wonderful occasional lights, not the dewy sparkle of English eyes, but a flash as from tropical skies, always had an irresistible attraction for me. They had a wistful longing in them like Pluto’s eyes, and yet a depth I could not fathom, which

always drew me back questioning and guessing. Something between the mysteries of the dumb animal world and the mysteries of the invisible spirit-world was in them. I could not tell why ; but they made me think at once of the dog Pluto, and of my mother.

I could watch no one whilst she was there, and I grew to feel at last that the attraction must be mutual, for she always guided the white pony near our windows, and in a furtive way used, I felt, to watch Piers and me, although she always looked away if our eyes met. Occasionally, moreover, on stormy days, an old black nurse used to appear with two black footmen and a sedan-chair instead of the one negro with the white pony. The black nurse used to apparel the young lady in a mass of orange and scarlet splendours, and enter the chair with her, and then in stately procession Miss Amice Glanvil would be borne away to the fine old manor-house among the woods on the hill, called Court.

Altogether, therefore, Miss Amice was to me like a tropical dream of glow and gloom, such as our temperate zone could not produce ; a creature from a region of splendours and shadows, altogether deeper and richer than ours ; a region where the birds and flowers are scarlet and gold ; a land of earthquakes and hurricanes, and wildernesses of beauty, of magnificence, and tragedy.

For I knew that those black people were slaves, and the gleam of their white teeth, and the flash of their brilliant eyes when they pulled their woolly locks, as they used good-humouredly to do to us children watching at the window, used not to terrify me as it did many of the children in the town, nor to amuse me, but to make me feel inclined to cry. They always made me think of Pluto when he was chained up in the kennel and fawned and whined on us. Only Pluto was at home, and they were not ; and Pluto was a dog, and they were not ; which made all the difference, I thought, for him and for them. They were called also by the classical names which in France and in Italy have retained their dignity, but in England were only given in a sort of kindly contempt or facetious pity to dogs and to negroes. I had heard the black woman call them Cato and Cæsar ; and they called her Chloe.

Moreover we had, through Reuben Pengelly, an acquaintance with Chloe's history, which gave us a glimpse into the tragedy which underlay the splendours of Amice Glanvil's life.

Chloe had a whole woman's world of her own, in her own country in Africa, not dead,

living and needing her, but buried to her irrevocably and for ever.

She used to come now and then, when she was allowed, to Reuben's prayer-meetings, and sometimes rather to confuse him by the fervency of her Amens, and of her shrill quavering singing, in the refrains of the hymns. One evening she still further bewildered the kindly man by breaking out suddenly in a passion of sobs.

Reuben told us the story on the next Sunday, in the silent Foundry Yard.

"I couldn't for the life of me tell why," he said, he having no oratorical vanity to explain such emotion. "I was only talking to the folks quite plain and quiet how the blessed Lord sate weary by the well, and asked the poor woman for a drink from her pitcher, and how she was slow to give it Him. Chloe stayed after the rest had gone, still rocking herself to and fro, as if she were rocking a baby, hiding her face, and sobbing fit to break her heart. So I went up to her soft and quiet, not to fluster her, and I said, 'The Lord has touched thee, poor dear soul. Cheer up. He wounds and He can bind up.' 'Never, Massa Reuben, never,' said she (poor soul, she always calls me Massa, she knows no better). 'Never bind up. *He knows better than to try.* Let the wounds bleed. No other way.' And then, in their sudden way, like children, she looked up and showed all her white teeth, and smiled, and downright laughed. It was more than a man could make out. 'It was all along of that pitcher and that well,' said she. And then she told how she had gone to the well one evening, years ago, by her hut, away in Africa, with her pitcher, to fetch water for her children, with her baby in her arms. The children lay sick with fever. But at the well the slave-hunters found her, gagged her, bound her, forced her away to the coast, and squeezed her down with hundreds of others into the slave-ship. She heard the sick children, day and night, moaning—moaning for her. Many of the poor creatures with her refused to eat, and many died ; but she had the baby, and tried to live. And as she went on telling she cried again, and then she smiled again. 'Never mind me, Massa Reuben,' said she ; 'it was only that pitcher. Seemed to me all the place, and all the years melted away. I was at home again at that well again with the pitcher, and instead of the slave-hunters, the good Lord Himself stood there, and said, 'Give me to drink.' And she seemed to answer Him her pitcher was gone, all was gone, she had nothing to draw with, and

there was nothing to draw. And He said, all smiling, it was not the water He wanted, but just herself. 'Just me,' said she, 'sitting there weary, just as He did once, poor old Chloe, that He died for; me and my bit of love.' And she saw the hands and the feet all torn and bleeding, worse than dust on them that a woman's tears might wash away, blood on them to wash away her sins, and she seemed just to take her heart, as it was all dry and empty, and give it Him. 'And He looked as glad,' said she, 'as a thirsty man for a drink of water. All for me, Massa Reuben, all because He cared to be loved by me!' And then Reuben said, 'I cried too, just as she did, poor soul! The baby died just as the voyage was over, and then when they came on shore Squire Glanvil bought her for a nurse to Miss Amice. His wife had just died at her birth, and the poor fool loves Miss Amice like her own. It's wonderful," concluded Reuben, "what them poor creatures will cling to and catch at, just for anything to love, though for the matter of that, Priscy's no better. The women are like enough all the world over, poor souls. God bless them!"

Miss Felicity used sometimes to descend to the door with the little lady, and watch her across the market-place, which gave us ample opportunity of studying that physiognomy so important to our future fate.

She was a tall and rather a majestic woman, with a stiff erect carriage (a perpetual monition to all lounging little boys and girls), keen black eyes, high Roman features, and a severe mouth resolutely closed, as if her life had been a battle with difficulties harder to conquer than the little mischievous elves who could never evade her penetrating eyes, or the terrible instrument of justice they guided.

Yet it was not a face which repelled me, or made me feel afraid. I felt rather drawn towards her, as a kind of tutelary Athena; not very close, not exactly as a child to her heart, but as a subject to her feet, with a kind of confidence of justice in those steady eyes, and those stern grave lips. There was no fretfulness in the lines of the furrowed brow, or in the curve of the mouth; no uncertainty of temper in the large keen eyes. If she had carried the *Ægis*, I do not think I should have had any fear of her petrifying the wrong people by turning it on them.

There were two other inhabitants of that old mansion besides Miss Felicity.

Every fine morning in summer, before people were up, and every fine evening in

winter as it began to grow dusk, from that arched door, where poured in and out every day the joyous tide of young life, came forth two very different figures, one the stately form of Miss Felicity, and the other a man tall as herself, but bowed and stooping, moving with uncertain and uneven gait, and leaning on Miss Felicity's arm. They crept away into the country by the least steep of the three roads which led out of the town, and in about an hour re-entered the old house and disappeared, and the stooping tall man's figure was seen no more till the next day. It was believed they went always as far as a certain ancient well by the roadside, called the Benit or Blessed Well; for they were often seen resting on the stone bench beside it, and had never been found farther on.

It was curious how people respected the mystery Miss Felicity chose to consider thrown around that ruined life. Keen as her perceptions were, sharp and definite her words on every other subject, around him she gathered a veil of fond excuses and illusions, so thin that all the town saw through it, and yet all the town recognised it for her sake.

To us children indeed something of the mystery really existed, taking the form of a half-concealing, half-glorifying mist which surrounded Miss Felicity with a halo, and through which the tall, bent form loomed, at once a tower and a beacon, like a ruined church set on one of the heights along our coasts, once meant to be a sacred shrine, but now, the sacredness shattered out of it, surviving only as a warning against wreck.

Lieutenant Benbow had been in the army, we knew, and had been a fine handsome man, and had grown suddenly old in middle life, not altogether by misfortune, but by something sadder, which hung like a sword of Damocles over the festival of life for any of us to whom life was only feasting.

To me especially those two had a terrible yet tender interest.

Lieutenant Benbow had been to Miss Felicity what Piers was to me. She had loved him, delighted in him, lived for him after the death of her father. (Happily for herself the mother had died early.) She had loved him with the kind of blind love which some think the truest and most womanly. To me the blindness always seems to come not from the love, but from the little alloy of pride and selfishness in the love which so far makes it false. It is possible so to love another as ourselves, that the very love comes to partake of the nature of self-love, exaggerating,

concealing, untrue, unjust, falsely excusing, falsely gilding. And yet, not quite. The little grain of true love at the bottom of the most selfish affection, makes it by that grain at least better than mere selfishness. The miser who half starves his children in hoarding for them has surely in his hoard something a degree more sacred than there can be in that of the miser who hoards for himself alone. And with Miss Felicity that grain of true love was large, and for herself at least, fruitful; fruitful at least in sacrifice.

Lieutenant Benbow had followed his father's profession. Their means were not large; but her delight had been to have his appointments as choice and abundant as those of the richest. And the idol had accepted the homage, repaid it even by such small and symbolical acknowledgments as can be expected from duly incensed idols.

She knew he had at least one fatal habit. In a day when all gentlemen drank more than was good for them, he drank more than most, and unfortunately could stand less.

Once only Miss Felicity's eyes were all but opened. He persuaded a lovely young Quaker girl to elope with him and to marry him.

Miss Felicity did not wonder at the Quaker maiden's infatuation; but she did wonder at her brother's. The Quaker maiden's father was a tanner, and, true daughter of a general and of the Church, granddaughter of a bishop, Miss Felicity did not enjoy having to double her libations and incense in honour, not of her Adonis of a brother, but of his separatist wife, a person of "low trading origin who had enticed away his affections." To double her offerings and lose even the little return they had previously won was almost too much to bear.

The thirteen years of the lieutenant's married life were those, therefore, in which Miss Felicity's adoration was feeblest.

In thirteen years the lieutenant succeeded in breaking his wife's heart, and ruining his own health. He returned to his sister a widower with one little girl, his constitution and his fortunes alike wrecked, having some time before been obliged to leave the army, partially paralyzed, with a child's helplessness, and a spoilt child's imperiousness and irritability, to be a burden for the rest of his life on the woman he had scarcely noticed while he had another to worship him. But he returned; and that to Miss Felicity was everything. She blotted the tanner's daughter out of her memory, took the tanner's granddaughter to her heart, accepted her

idol again, set it on its old pedestal, with all the strength of her strong will and strong affections, and with a kind of melancholy pleasure in the certainty that if her "Bel bowed down and her Nebo stooped, and were a burden to the weary beast," no one would dispute that burden with her any more.

So she toiled on, and bore her burden, and adored it, her old beautiful god-image, which "cruel circumstances," she said to herself, "and the excess of his own fascinations" had shattered, and crowned the old idol with a crown woven out of all the loss and all the possibilities, of all it had been, and of all it might have been.

Year by year she bought the finest cloth for his coats, and day by day she bought the best dainties for his palate, and seated him in the one easy-chair in the sunniest nook of the window in summer, and the warmest corner of the fireside in winter; and when he condescended to that milder degree of grumbling which was his form of thanksgiving, she rejoiced in the character which would have been so lovely but for "the selfish world and the ruthless circumstances which had made him what he was."

It was a provoking ritual to observe from outside, especially to me, not being a worshipper of the lieutenant, and having a reverence little short of worship for the daughter, little Miss Loveday, who was compelled to share in the sacrificial rites.

Of course Miss Felicity had a right to sacrifice herself; but who could have had a right to take all individual hope and pleasure out of that gentle, lovely patient woman's life with all her intellectual and spiritual power, and subordinate her entirely to propping up the ruins of what had never been better than a well-grown animal?

For Miss Loveday was the nearest approach to a saint I knew; and I thank God I had the grace to know it whilst she was amongst us. It is among the saddest of our irrevocable losses when we find out for the first time that some of the holy ones of God have been beside us, for us to consult, learn of, speak to, listen to, only when they have gone from us to be with the goodly company, who are indeed not far from us, but are just beyond speaking distance, out of reach for the time of voice and sight.

My father helped me to the recognition. Miss Loveday had been a friend of my own mother's, and he had the greatest reverence and love for her.

He used to say the poet Cowper must

have seen her in spirit when he wrote the lines—

"Artist, attend, your brushes and your paint—
Produce them; take a chair, now draw a saint.
Oh, sorrowful and sad! The streaming tears
Channel her cheeks—a Niobe appears.
Is this a saint?—throw tints and all away,
True piety is cheerful as the day.—
Will weep, indeed, and heave a pitying groan
For others' woes, but smiles upon her own."

Certainly Loveday Benbow "smiled upon her own" woes with a smile so real and bright, that the woes and the saintliness, the burden and the strength which bore it, might easily have been hidden from a careless eye. As to the pitying groan for others' woes, not only could that be relied on for any woes, from the breaking of a child's doll to the breaking of a maiden's heart, but, what is rarer for one whose life is passed in the shadows, she had a smile true and heart-warming as a sunbeam for others' joys, from a child's holiday to a maiden's happiness in being loved, or a mother's joy in loving.

She was a little deaf, and had that sweet inquiring wistfulness in her grey eyes which belongs often to deaf or dumb creatures, human or canine; but so sweet and ready was her sympathy, and so wise her counsel, that she was the natural depository of half the love-confidences in the place; the difficulty and danger of shouting such delicate experiences being nothing to the recompense in the quickness of her comprehension and the fulness of her response.

Clever, or intellectual, were words you would no more have thought of applying to her than to an archangel; and with her heart and brain were so blended, that I have sometimes wondered whether it was that her wit was originally keener than other people's, or that it was sharpened by singleness of purpose; whether it was original force of thought and imagination that made her comprehend every character quickly, or love that quickened thought and imagination into something as unerring as instinct.

My stepmother's insight into character was that of a satirist or of a detective keen to scent out a defect. Miss Felicity's was that of an inspector of the human species, impartial, penetrating, severe but just. Miss Loveday's insight was that of a physician, as keen and as just as either, but deeper, reaching beyond symptoms to causes, to the springs where the disease can be touched and healed.

Sometimes, indeed, she would reproach herself with this quick penetration through disguises and excuses, as if it were not as

necessary to the helpers of humanity as to its critics to see truly.

But it is true that the heightening of any one power of nature requires the heightening of every other power to avoid deformity; the growth of every spiritual, as well as every intellectual gift, demands the growth of every other to preserve harmony.

The very truth of Miss Loveday's character which made her perceptions so true would have made her a keener detective than my stepmother, and a severer judge than Miss Felicity, if love had not overwhelmed the bitter in the sweet, and made the justice glow into pity through a deeper faith and a larger hope in God and man.

She always had something of the dove in my eyes, as Miss Felicity had much of the eagle, and in my darker moments my stepmother not a little of the raven. Doves need sight as keen to defend their brood as eagles to descry their prey. And Miss Loveday's brood was all the human creatures that had need of her. Partly, no doubt, this dove-like grace that encircled her was assisted by her voice, which, as with many deaf people, had a peculiar under-toned softness, like cooings under thick summer leaves; and partly by her dress, which was chiefly replenished from her mother's Quaker wardrobe, in which the prosaic drab was ignored, and the poetical dove-colour and white predominated.

Miss Loveday's dress was what has always seemed to me the loveliest and most becoming of any to middle-aged and elderly women. It retained the Quaker quietness and the delicious Quaker freshness, without the Quaker peculiarities; and her manner was just like her dress. She is fondly enveloped to my memory in a soft grey and white cloud of clothing, which, when I try to analyze it, resolves itself into the whitest of caps, framing her pale sweet face, the neatest of white muslin neckerchiefs folded over her bosom, and the softest of unrustling grey woollen drapery falling in sweeping easy folds around her. Not one sudden, startling, dazzling thing about her in dress, or manner, or voice, not the rustle of silk, or the glitter of a jewel; except the irrepressible occasional twinkle of her kind eyes, and the occasional merry ring which was like an audible twinkle in her soft voice and her laugh.

She was just the opposite (I do not mean the contrary) of Amice Glanvil, who was all mystery and surprise.

The sorrows on which Miss Loveday smiled so radiantly were not sentimental. From

her childhood she had been under the yoke unimaginable, unavoidable, of pain; the yoke which in some respects presses closer on the immortal spirit, and cuts deeper into it than any other, and therefore can in some respects mould it to a more delicate perfection, and furrow it for larger harvests.

No one in Abbot's Weir had been able to fathom the cause.

We had two doctors in Abbot's Weir. One, Dr. Kenton, was of a sanguine temperament, attributed all ailments to debility, and relied for cure chiefly on "nature" and port wine.

The other, Dr. Looseleigh, was of a melancholic disposition, had a strong faith in the depravity of the human constitution, attributed ailments to excess, and hoped for relief, as far as he hoped at all, from bleeding, blistering, and the lowering system in general.

Both medical gentlemen had patients who recovered, and patients who died. But in Abbot's Weir, although theological controversy was mild, the same could not be said of medical. Each generation, whatever its theological proclivities, desires to live as long as it can; debates on what man or system can enable it to live longest, are naturally therefore not liable to "periods of lukewarmness or declension."

The partisans of Mr. Kenton said that those patients of Mr. Looseleigh who died were killed, actually slain, by his remedies; and those who recovered, recovered by the force of nature.

The partisans of Mr. Looseleigh said that the patients of Dr. Kenton who recovered struggled through by miracle or the vigour of an exceptional constitution, and that those who died, perished the victims of neglect, sheer neglect, and faithless contempt of means.

Both systems had been tried on Miss Loveday, but neither successfully. She had been blistered and bled in childhood by Mr. Looseleigh into all but atrophy. She had been "built up" by Dr. Kenton and Miss Felicity into a fever. The only part of either system which she declined was the port wine or brandy. This she resolutely refused. She had promised her mother never to touch either. Dr. Kenton therefore had the advantage in the controversy, in which Miss Loveday's case was a standing weapon. If she could have been induced to break that absurd promise, port wine and nature might have overcome Dr. Looseleigh and disease, and the controversy might have been settled for ever, at least so far as facts can settle

controversies. As to those deeper roots in the depth of our own consciousness, whence my father and other sceptical neutrals asserted both systems to arise, those, of course, nothing so superficial as facts and phenomena could have reached.

However, from whatever cause, thus it came to pass that Miss Loveday's yoke was not broken, and she had to suffer and conquer to the end.

Miss Felicity nevertheless, with whom permanent neutrality was an impossible state of existence, who found it necessary, and therefore practicable, to make up her mind quite decidedly about everything, remained faithful to Dr. Kenton and the port-wine "system," influenced partly, it was believed, by the necessity of seeing some root of good in the evil tendency which had sapped her brother's existence.

It was also believed that the weekly visits which Dr. Kenton continued to pay had, on his part at least, a tenderer significance than Miss Felicity chose to acknowledge. There had been days when the genial doctor had paid Miss Felicity the most marked attentions; and during the years when her brother's marriage had separated her from the one ceaseless object of her devotion, Abbot's Weir had believed that it detected a gradual softening of the tutelary Athena manner towards him. It was considered that the prospect of a pleasant home, a life without care, and an affection which manifested itself in the flattering form of respecting her judgment enough to carry on continual controversies with her, were beginning to melt the impenetrable heart of Miss Felicity, and that she would soon consent to be an illustrious case in proof of the success of the building-up system.

But her sister-in-law died, the lieutenant became a helpless invalid, and returned to receive once more his sister's homage; and from that moment Dr. Kenton's hopes were blighted.

Miss Felicity returned to her old life-long rôle of priestess and amazon, adoration at her old shrine, and unflinching conflict with infidels and with circumstances for its sake. And Dr. Kenton, after some vain remonstrances, and some years of comparative estrangement, came back, partly by means of his medical care of Miss Loveday, to his old position of admiration and contention; he ceased to sigh, but never ceased to think it worth while to endeavour to put Miss Felicity right on the various points on which they differed; and to the end the stately, brave old gentlewoman had some one who con-

tinued to see her with the light of youth on her, and to maintain that she was the finest woman in Abbot's Weir, and had more brains and more spirit than all the men of the town put together.

CHAPTER VIII.

It was about two years after my father's second marriage that Piers and I were called on to rejoice in the arrival of a step-brother.

Then Mrs. Danescombe's heart awoke. It was as if her whole nature, pent up for forty years, burst forth in that late passion of maternal love.

I believe she tried hard to be just to us all. I believe she tried hard to see what spots there might be in her boy's character. But it was impossible. The rest of the world she continued to see through the same cold, clear, cloudy, frosty winter daylight in which she had hitherto lived. Around this child glowed and palpitated ceaselessly a flood of tropical sunlight. Faults, of course, her Francis had, her judgment admitted he was human, and her views of humanity in general were unchanged, but with him the deepest shadows glowed with reflected light, like the golden shadows of some rich Venetian picture.

The very nature of the faults he had, moreover, helped to dim her perceptions. He had, from childhood, no vehement, impetuous outbursts of indignation like those which I was liable to; no earnest, entire absorption of his whole being with the subject that interested him, to the forgetfulness of all besides, such as characterized Piers. His character had an external smoothness about it which made the world go smoothly with him. His characteristic motion was gliding: so easy and noiseless was this movement that it was only now and then it struck you that he always contrived to glide into the best place, and into the possession of the pleasantest things to be attained. We children, of course, who thus lost the pleasantest things and places, early perceived it; but to our elders it was scarcely ever apparent. It was always we who created the final disturbance; and what can any government do when there is a riot but punish the rioters, deferring the investigation as to who is in the wrong to a time when the riot and its causes have ceased to be of moment?

Francis was found in tranquil possession of the coveted delights, toy or picture-book, or place in the game; possession is nine points of the law; tranquillity the desideratum of all governments in the world; why could we not have left our little brother alone?

Thus we were, who were continually being thus tranquilly robbed and wronged, the perpetual plaintiffs, and the world has no mercy on perpetual plaintiffs. Francis, "poor little darling," as his mother truly said, "was never heard to raise his sweet little voice," whilst I at least was in one continual wail and clamour.

Even our father often gave the verdict against us. "The world was large," he would say, "and Francis was little; why did we just want the one thing the poor little fellow had set his heart on, and was so peaceably enjoying?"

In vain we pleaded rights which we knew to be unquestionable; what can be more tiresome, or seem more selfish, than to be always pleading one's rights, especially against what is apparently the weaker party?

"Why were we always shrieking about our rights? Brothers and sisters should not think about rights. They should be always ready to 'give up' to each other, and to do as they would be done by."

So, between my stepmother's fondness, my father's generosity, and interpretations of the Sermon on the Mount which drove me wild with the impossibility of combating them, and the certainty of their being wrong, the tyranny of our little brother was established.

This was a state of things, however, that could not long continue unbroken.

At length my stepmother once more proposed that Piers and I should be sent to Miss Felicity's school.

My father had long opposed this, having certain theories of education, I think partly derived from Rousseau, not at all in harmony with Miss Felicity's.

He wished that education should be restored to what he considered its true meaning, of leading out the faculties, should be not so much a putting in as calling out, should be a development of growth from within, not the fitting on of an iron frame to contract and cramp growth from without. Theories which are now worn threadbare and colourless with discussion or not, were then fresh and full of bloom. And all such ideas Miss Felicity considered altogether chimerical and Utopian.

"Calling out faculties?" said she. "The only faculty she knew that could always be sure of coming at the call, was the faculty of mischief. No putting in? What then was the good of learning to read at all? She supposed Piers and I would not develop out of ourselves even the multiplication table, unless it was put into us, still less the history of the Greeks and Romans, or the gods and

heroes. Not that she saw much use in history," she would somewhat cynically admit. "What was there in it but wise men's words and foolish men's deeds? things which, if they had happened in a neighbour's house instead of in palaces, you would have taken care the children did not hear. But the Greeks and Romans, and the gods and heroes, and the multiplication table, as the world was, had to be learned, and Mr. Danescombe might wait some time for a new world or for a generation of children who came into it with their little minds filled already."

My poor father had certainly seen considerable faculty for not getting on developed in Piers and me since our little brother's arrival, and accordingly at last he waived his theory, and abandoned us to Miss Felicity and the rote system. To us the school meant simply Miss Felicity, and a very awful personality we considered her. My father was in the second stage of human progress, the age of philosophical system and theory; whilst Miss Felicity had advanced to the third, contemptuously ignoring systems and philosophies, and recognising nothing but facts and phenomena; and Piers and I remained in the earliest, seeing nothing but persons and personifications.

From the beginning, I think, although most kindly disposed towards us, Miss Felicity nevertheless regarded us as rather dangerous little persons, brought up in no one knows what heretical persuasions concerning the rights and the wrongs of man.

The years of our school-life were among the most reactionary years England ever saw.

Not an abuse but was rooted in its place, and not a harvest of reform but was stunted and nipped by the French Reign of Terror.

Old Tories like Miss Felicity glorified their narrowest political prejudices into articles of the Creed, when the Revolution and his own personal patience had consecrated the French king into a martyr. Benevolent and tranquil men of progress like my father had to defend themselves as if they had been Jacobins. Mild Whigs like Dr. Kenton, who looked for the general improvement of the world on the same sanguine and genial principles on which he looked for the general recovery of his patients, simply turned a little round the other way, and became for the moment mild Tories.

"What do you say now, Dr. Kenton?" Miss Felicity would triumphantly demand, "to your Reformers and Jacobins?"

"I say, Miss Felicity," he would reply, "what I always said. Above all things no convulsions, no violence to the constitution.

If nature cannot throw off the ailment for herself, we must assist her a little, Miss Felicity, gently assist her. That is what I mean by reform. If our assistance fails, we must let her alone and wait, Miss Felicity, tranquilly wait."

Mild Tories, on the other hand, like my uncle Fyford and Mr. Rabbidge, those who were Conservative from fear, became rabid Tories, also from fear. They would have established a Reign of Terror of their own on behalf of our glorious constitution, would "keep the mob down, sir," said my uncle to my father, "by fire and sword, if necessary by the gibbet, or the—"

"*The stake*," suggested my father drily.

My uncle scarcely heeded the interruption. "Are we to have our houses burnt about our ears," he said, "by a set of fanatics calling themselves philanthropists and reformers?"

And it was through this tempest of prejudice and reaction that the noble band of religious men who had set their hearts on abolishing the great wrong of the African slave-trade, steadfastly went on with the conflict, and ten times brought in the measure ten times defeated in a House of Commons, excited to a fury of reaction, elected by a nation goaded to a contempt of all progress by the fury and madness of the three years' terrible reaction against centuries of oppression in France.

It was, no doubt, this state of things, of course at the time unknown to us, which brought me into the two difficulties which now recur to my mind.

One sunny Sunday afternoon Piers and I were sitting on the step of our arbour on the highest terrace of the garden. He was playing with Pluto and I was reading intently with my elbows on my knees, so intently, that I did not see my father and my stepmother with little Francis, my uncle Fyford, and Dick approaching up the steep slope until they were close at hand.

I was especially absorbed with the book because I ignorantly thought it was about to throw some light on the "Duty to our Neighbour," and the Sermon on the Mount, especially as connected with my stepmother and Francis, which might bring the Christian code within reach of my practice. There were passages in it about "natural rights," about the "great sin being making each other unhappy," which I thought excellent; also a passage asserting that "the Duty of Man is not a wilderness of turnpike-gates between us and our Maker,

through which we pass by ticket from one to the other, but plain and simple, consisting in our duty to God as His by *birth* and *family*, and in doing what we would be done by," which I thought clearer than the Catechism, at least with my stepmother's commentary.

My uncle startled me by an approving pat on the head.

"Well done, little maid! Quite a little Lady Jane Grey! Is it Plato, or 'The Whole Duty of Man?'"

"It is not so much about our *duties* as about our *rights*," I said. "I found it in the Summer Parlour." And I gave the volume confidently into his hands.

He started as if he had been stung, dashed it from him to the ground, and ground his heel into it as if it had been a viper.

"Piers Danescombe, I could not have expected this even of toleration like yours: Tom Paine's 'Rights of Man'—such poison in the hands of this poor innocent babe!"

"Indeed, Uncle Fyford," I said, thinking that I had in some way compromised my father, "it is a Sunday book. It is not a story book. The gentleman who wrote it seems to dislike the Bastille and slavery as much as father, and war as much as Miss Loveday. And he speaks about our Father in heaven, Uncle Fyford. Indeed it is a Sunday book."

"Listen to the poor innocent!" said Uncle Fyford. "It is enough to pierce one's heart."

"Bride, my darling," said my father, in his dry quiet way, "Tom Paine's 'Rights of Man' is not exactly the book for you. If I had had any idea that your tastes lay in that direction, I would have labelled it, 'Not good for little girls.' But, Richard," he continued, turning to my uncle, "if wise men would take the good in that book and use it, they would do more to neutralise the harm in it than by railing at it in a mass for ever."

"Good in Tom Paine!" said my uncle, roused beyond his usual decorum. "I am sick of your '*good in everything*.' I believe you would find good in the devil."

"*There might have been!* you know," said my father, very gravely. His simple quiet words startled me like a flash of lightning. They made me feel that he felt the existence of the devil to be a very real and sorrowful fact, instead of the half ridiculous, half terrible, mythical legend handed down to us in the nursery.

Mrs. Danescombe intervened.

"That is precisely what I am always saying to Mr. Danescombe, Dr. Fyford," she said.

"Good in everything there may be, though I confess I have not found it, and I believe it is not the Bible, but only Shakspeare that asserts it. But evil in everything most certainly there is, at least in every person. And I can never see we remove it by blinding our eyes to it."

"Well, Euphrasia," said my father, "you look for the evil and I for the good; so between us, I hope we shall strike the balance. Only, if we both reach the better world, you will be so unfortunate as to have lost your occupation, while mine can continue for ever."

"Wait till you are there, Piers," rejoined my uncle. "At all events, you won't find Tom Paine's 'Rights of Man' there."

"No," replied my father, "the book will have done its work, good and evil, here below."

"Evil enough," said my uncle; "good, only as Satan did good to Job by landing him, with his potsherd, among the ashes."

My investigations into the "natural rights" of man were, however, checked: a check the less painful to me because even Mr. Paine did not give me any light on the natural "rights of women" or of little girls. I was sent back to the Ten Commandments and to the Duty to my Neighbours.

The only result that remained from my inopportune pursuit of knowledge was the rare felicity of a little direct religious lesson from my father.

That evening he took me on his knee in the Oak Parlour. Piers had gone to bed, and my stepmother was putting Francis to sleep, so that we were alone. And above us was that picture of my mother, present to the consciousness of us both.

"Bride, my darling," he said, "Duties are better things for us to think about than Rights."

"If other people would only think about rights a little, father," I ventured to murmur, "then it would be very nice to have nothing to think about but our duties. But they don't. They only think about their own rights, and our duties."

"Very true, Bride," he said. "They don't, and they won't. And that is the way there is so much troublesome history for you and me to learn. But you know some one must begin. Suppose you and I begin at the other end. *Our own duties, and other people's rights.* You will find much more good come of it in the end."

Then, the only time I can remember, he

led me to my mother's picture, and stood before it, with his hand on my shoulder.

"That was what she did, my child. God gave her one of his lambs to keep, and she kept it well as long as she was here. God help me to keep it for Him and for her better than I have."

"Oh, father, you can't keep us better," I said.

That lesson was brief, but it accomplished its end. It brought me back to my duties, instead of to his and to my stepmother's.

It was not very long after this that Piers and I fell into another difficulty, at Miss Felicity's school.

I remember this with especial distinctness, because it was the beginning of Piers and my entering into closer relations with Amice Glanvil and sweet bright Claire Angélique des Ormes.

A week before, the three spare rooms in Miss Felicity's house had been engaged and occupied by three foreigners, refugees from France, Madame la Marquise des Ormes, her little daughter Claire Angélique, and Léontine, a vivacious maid, who governed and protected them both, and would fain have governed Miss Felicity, and all Abbot's Weir, had this been possible to any Frenchwoman.

Madame had only been seen, a slight fragile lady, leaning rather feebly on the arm of Léontine, and greeting Miss Felicity as she entered the arched door with such a courtly reverence as Abbot's Weir had not previously dreamed of.

Léontine had been seen and heard abundantly, making her presence felt like a wind through house and town. Little Claire had only been heard prattling in a sweet voice to her mother in the parlour inside the schoolroom until that momentous afternoon when she appeared under Miss Felicity's wing, but not under her rod, as a kind of amateur scholar.

It was an August afternoon, very sultry. The room was long and low: Miss Felicity was fettered by no government regulations as to cubic feet of air and space. Of space there was enough; of air certainly not enough to keep forty children awake. Miss Felicity would on no account have exposed her lessons to the intrusion of the street by opening the window.

Want of ozone, therefore, was telling powerfully on the intellects of the pupils, and on the temper of the mistress. The flies were drowsily buzzing now and then against the panes, the black cat sleepily purring on the window-seat, too lazy even to wink at

my stepmother's cat on the opposite window. Many of the children out of reach of the rod had yielded to sleep, and the rest were hopelessly struggling against it, when the question came in a sharp voice from Miss Felicity—

"Bridget Danescombe, who were the heroes?"

I must have been half asleep myself, for I remember instantly sitting up trying to look especially wide awake, as is the wont with persons so surprised, and responding desperately to the last word which I had caught.

"Father says there are some in France, Miss Felicity. He said so last night. They pulled down a wicked place called the Bastille."

Miss Felicity's colour rose. I think she did not know whether I said it in simplicity or in malice.

"Bridget Danescombe," she repeated, slightly rapping my fingers to recall my attention, "think what you are saying. Who were the *heroes*?"

"And some, father said, there are in England," I continued, divided between anxiety to sustain myself by that infallible judgment and dread of the well-known little ebony ruler. "They want to pull down the slave-trade and the impressment—he said impressment. These are our Bastilles. I know he said they were heroes. And the only name I remember is Granville Sharpe."

"Silly child, dreaming as usual," said Miss Felicity, diplomatically passing by the perilous answer, and admonishing me by a severe rap on my knuckles. "I pass to your brother—two years your younger and ten years your better. Piers Danescombe, who were the heroes?"

Whatever could have been thought of the spirit of my answer, there could have been no doubt as to that which rang through the tones of Piers. His was a response, not to Miss Felicity's question, but to her rap on my fingers.

"Sister Bride is right, Miss Felicity," he said. "Father did say so, only last night."

By this time the little community was thoroughly aroused, with true British instinct scenting the battle from afar.

"Yes, indeed, Miss Felicity," I ventured, "father said impressing seamen and trading in slaves was as bad as shutting people up in the Bastille, and Mr. Granville Sharpe was a hero for trying to stop it. I remember quite well that was the hero's name, and also that he wants to stop people having slaves, because that is wicked."

I had rushed on impetuously, forgetful of all but the purpose in hand, when, looking up, I saw Amice Glanvil's great mysterious eyes fixed fully on me, not in anger, but with a look of grave wonder and questioning.

She looked a shade more pallid than usual, but I flushed crimson. I remembered the black nurse and the negro footmen, and I felt so sorry I should have said anything to grieve my princess.

But I had not much time for reflection. For then out and spoke Dick Fyford.

"Miss Felicity, if Bride Danescombe were not a girl, so that no one can do anything to her, she would not dare. My own uncle is a sea captain, and I am going to sea, and he says people who cry out against impressment are traitors and fools. I heard him. The king's navy could not be kept up without, and then the French would come and kill the king and burn up London, and Abbot's Weir, and all of us."

The conflict was becoming perilous. Was Miss Felicity's class of mythology—extra—to prepare the more aristocratic classes for Mr. Rabbidge, and to distinguish them from the common herd, to end in this?

Had not Mrs. Rabbidge, always a little too eagerly alive to the growth of Miss Felicity's pupils into her husband's, denounced the mythology as a poaching on his demesnes? And had not Mr. Rabbidge himself mildly admitted that Miss Felicity was meddling with matters too high for her?

And was it to be said that such frightful Jacobinism had been uttered in her presence unavenged?

The case was perplexing. On the score of politics it could not be taken up. Piers and I had appealed to Cæsar in the person of our father, and to Miss Felicity paternal authority was a foundation of all other authority, by no means to be lightly interfered with.

She therefore recurred to history, and wisely chose to treat me as a dunce rather than as a heretic.

"Bridget Danescombe knows better," she asserted. "The heroes lived in Greece. They come after the heathen gods. There were Hercules and Perseus,—and others," said Miss Felicity, not having a book, and judiciously becoming vague. "They fought with dragons. And the heroes and the dragons have all been dead and gone thousands of years. Bridget Danescombe, I am sorry; but I must put the foolscap on you, and you must sit on that stool in the middle of the school. Take this book and learn the names of the

heroes. When you have learned them you may come down."

And so saying she took off my little mob-cap, put on the terrible cone of brown paper, and made me climb on the tall stool. Thus were the germs of Jacobinism crushed; and thus was I set up as a beacon to juvenile Abbot's Weir. Piers came and stood beside me, his eyes flashing and his face crimson, in defiance of authority. Wisely Miss Felicity took no notice. Her government was too strong for her to delight in petty irritating revenges.

I was too proud to cry, and too bewildered by anger and shame to learn. And yet by some strange instinct of justice, I made a distinction between my stepmother and Miss Felicity.

My stepmother had never rapped my knuckles or set me on a stool, or punished me in any way. And yet her cold "Bridget!" hurt me more than Miss Felicity's ruler, or even her fool's-cap, terrible as that was.

I felt that Miss Felicity in some unaccountable way had misunderstood my words. I did not feel that she misunderstood and misjudged *me*. And after a little while, getting used to my position, I found myself endeavouring to account, not for *my* conduct, (in this instance I had the great and unusual happiness of a clear conscience), but for Miss Felicity's, and to justify her.

This, of course, did not help me to learn my "heroes," but it quieted my mind, and the book served as a veil as I held it before my face.

And so the minutes passed on, until the bell rang for the school to close.

We always finished in the morning with the grace before meals, and in the evening with a verse of evening prayer.

For this purpose Miss Felicity told me to come down from my elevation.

To this instant my heart beats faster as I think how that sweet little French girl Claire, not of course being in the awe of our punishments and rules of ordinary scholars, glided forward to me before any one could stop her, with her easy French grace, and helped me down, and kissed my cheek, her first kiss, with the fool's-cap still on, and led me to Miss Felicity, and asked her in sweet broken English to take the cap off, which Miss Felicity very kindly and rather nervously did. And then Claire herself, with her lissom fingers, arranged my hair under my little cap, and kissed my quivering lips, for I was bursting into tears. Then, apparently summoned from the room within, she waved her hand to all of us and curtsayed.





"AGAINST THE STREAM."

like a fairy queen, and disappeared within the door of her mother's apartment.

Piers and I, of course, were kept-in that day, until I had learned the mythology. And meantime Miss Felicity went out and left us alone, with Amice Glanvil, who was kneeling on the window-seat, waiting for the negro nurse.

When Miss Felicity was gone, Amice came down noiselessly from the window-seat, and suddenly stood before me.

I looked up from the book, and met those dark wistful eyes for the first time, not turned away from me, but gazing steadily into mine, through my eyes, I felt, into me.

"Who said it was *wicked to have slaves?*" she asked.

My eyes sank before her gaze.

"It was my father," I said in a low voice. I wished to say something in excuse, but I could find nothing.

"But people need *not* be wicked who have slaves," she said. "My father was good, and he had slaves. And he is dead. He was not wicked. And I was born with slaves. How can we help what we are born with?"

She spoke very low, with a deep voice and a clear lingering utterance, which to me sounded foreign. The question was beyond me.

"You can be kind to them," I said feebly. That was all I could think of.

"Some old Greek people set them free," said Piers thoughtfully, more childlike than I; "that is what my father said Mr. Granville Sharpe wanted. You can set them free," he said, with a boy's directness, "that is the only way, I think, of being kind to slaves."

Amice Glanvil turned her penetrating glance on him, as if to look him through; but his frank, blue eyes met hers, with a steady gaze, and bore the scrutiny.

"Set them free! Piers Danescombe," she said. "You do not know in the least what you are talking about. But you have given me the answer at the very bottom of your thoughts, and I thank you." For she was not in the least like a child, our princess.

The negro nurse came to fetch her, and interrupted our conversation.

But when she was wrapped up in her gold and crimson splendours she turned back to us and took one of our hands in each of hers.

"Bride Danescombe," she said, "I like you, I have known and liked you a long time, and I like you better to-day. Piers Danescombe, you are a little boy, and do not know in the least what you said. But you speak the truth, and hardly any one does. And I like you

too. I will ask Granny. And you will come and see me. Good-bye."

I felt honoured as by a royal invitation; but Piers was cooler, and said, "We will see."

I got up on the window-seat and looked after Miss Amice in a flutter of delight. I forgot all about the heroes. I felt sure I had found my heroine. The spell of silent years was broken; our princess had spoken to us, and the enchanted palace would be sure to open.

Then a soft voice called me from the corner where little Miss Loveday had been lying on her couch, correcting exercises unobserved by any of us.

"Dear child," she said, "dear little Bride, let me help thee. Aunt Felicity will come back, and thou wilt have learned nothing."

In a few minutes she had taught me the lesson.

And when Miss Felicity returned I said it to her perfectly.

I think she was anxious to make some amends to me. I had suffered as a victim to great public considerations, as I did not know, but she did. But I felt there was no personal wrong intended, and I felt no resentment against her. And when she took my hand kindly, and said I had a good father and mother, and she hoped I would be a good little girl, I took courage, and looking up in her face said, "Miss Felicity, father said you were one of the heroes, too."

"Nonsense! nonsense, child!" she said, colouring. But I saw that the keen eyes moistened, and she took me to Miss Loveday and said, in a tremulous voice—

"Loveday, the child grows more like her poor dear mother every day—I saw it on that stool to-day—and she has just that sweet forgiving temper. And, please God, the poor little maid shall never stand there again. It was a mistake of mine, and it cut me to the heart. There," she added, laughing, "there's a foolish thing for a mistress to say to a child. Foolish old woman and foolish little Bride. How shall I keep you in order now? You will never be afraid of the ruler and the fool's-cap more."

But I began to love Miss Felicity. And oh the good it did me to hear a grown-up woman actually confess she had made a mistake and done wrong!

It restored to me my ideal of justice. It made me feel there was *one* right way for little children and grown people.

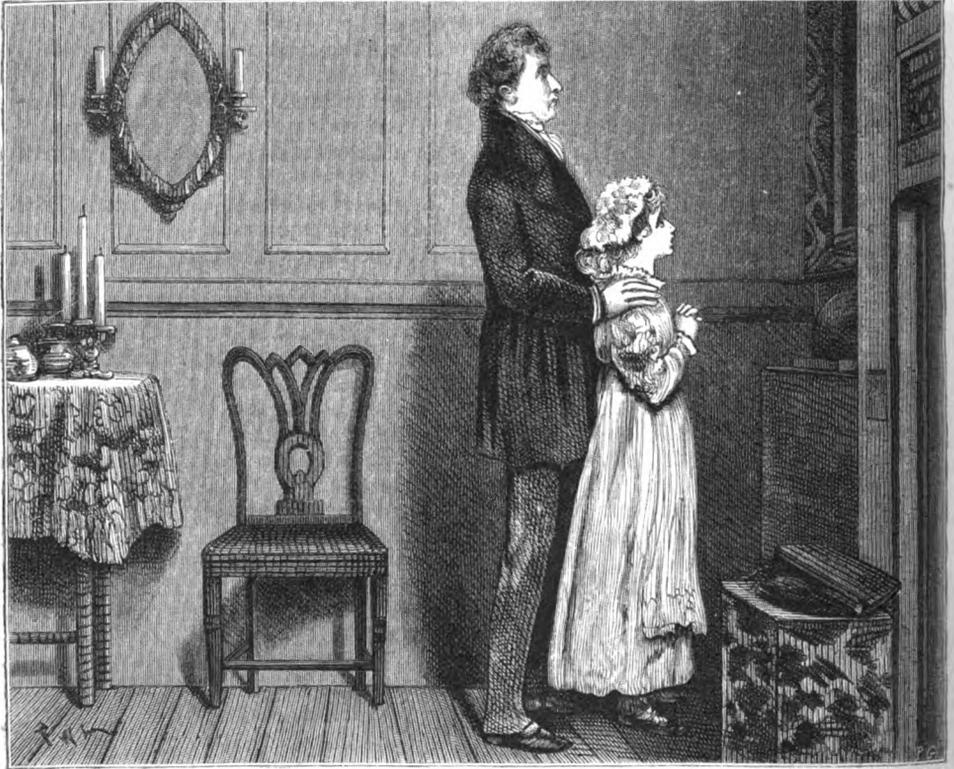
From that day I would not have offended or grieved Miss Felicity for the world.

But when she left the room Miss Loveday put her arm around me and said—

“Little Bride, it is quite right to learn about the old heroes. All little boys and girls must. But never thou give up believing in the heroes and saints *now*. That is the great matter for us. Never give up looking for them, little Bride, and always expecting to see them. It is a pity not to know the heroes of long ago. But the most terrible mistake we can make, any of us, is not to learn to know the heroes and saints God

is making to-day, who are with us now, because that is like misunderstanding God himself, and our dear Lord and Saviour, and the blessed, loving Spirit, and putting Him far back into history, among the Greeks and Romans.

“Never think the saints and heroes are all dead and gone, Piers and Bride. It is like thinking our Lord is dead, and his living Spirit with us no more. That is the mistake people who went wrong made in every age. Look for them, expect to find them in the world—



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in your little world—now, and look to God, who is always making them, and you will find them. And then stick close to them, my dears, and follow them, whatever they are called and whatever they look like; and, in that way, you may grow like them too. Oh, thank God, Bride,” she added in a low voice, “I did ask God long ago for this; and He heard me, and showed me your mother. He showed her to me before she went away. And that has helped me all my life. Never, never think the saints and heroes are living no longer upon earth. The heroes are not

dead, nor the dragons; nor are the saints gone to heaven, or their crosses. Look up and keep your heart open, and you will find them, my poor little ones, never fear.”

I tried to say something to her, but I could not. My voice would not come.

For when father had said Miss Felicity was a hero, he had said also that Miss Loveday was a saint.

But I smiled all through my heart as I went across to the market-place, to think how much sooner than Miss Loveday had expected her words had begun to come true.

THE FUTURE OF THE WORKING CLASSES.

III.—“THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE.”

IT is surely more than an accidental coincidence, that at one and the same time three things should have taken place: first, that the British workman should have come to know something of leisure; second, that a national system of education should have been established; and third, that while so many articles in ordinary use have become much dearer, a very singular exception should have taken place in one article, viz., books; the price of which is now so wonderfully reduced, that a New Testament may be had for a penny, a “Pilgrim’s Progress” for a penny, the whole works of Sir Walter Scott at less than the original price of any one of them; and in exchange for the labour of a couple of hours the workman may possess an entire Bible, an entire Shakspeare, or an entire Newton. Any one who should be asked to put these three facts together, and to say what was the natural outcome of them, could but at little loss how to answer the question: He would say that they conspired to give a noble opportunity to the working man of the present day, to improve and enlarge his mind, and that, though the present generation might not reap all the benefit, there could be no doubt for his children if they were not far behind the point of intellectual attainments, that any that had ever preceded them.

It is wished to show what education can do for the working man, Scotland affords a happy, but not altogether an adequate answer. For generations past, her schools have given to the children of workmen an opportunity of acquiring a certain amount of knowledge and mental training. But let it be remarked that the problem has never had fair play in Scotland. For in the first place, till quite recently the Scottish workman, after becoming a workman, has never had the benefit of leisure; he has had to work his ten or twelve or even fifteen hours, at the plough, or the bench, or the loom; for mental improvement he has seldom had more than an hour or two at night when the body is exhausted, and when most men are more disposed to chat or to sleep than to study. Secondly, until the present generation, the Scottish workman has not enjoyed the benefit of cheap literature; in the days of our fathers and grandfathers books were extremely dear. Scotland therefore, during her past history, has enjoyed the benefit of but one of the three factors that are now conspiring for the

II. N.S.

intellectual benefit of workmen, and that, often, in an inferior degree, for the education of the schools has often been extremely defective.

And then as to results. It is very true that on the whole the Scottish people have been marked by superior intelligence; but what chiefly attracts notice, in connection with their education is, that by means of it they have often been enabled to rise to a higher sphere of life than that in which they were born. We think of James Ferguson, the shepherd boy, becoming the distinguished astronomer and savant; of Alexander Murray, the labourer’s son, becoming the eminent orientalist; of Hugh Miller, the stone mason, making for himself a name in science and literature, that will adorn the Scottish firmament for generations; of raw lads going forth to foreign countries and distant colonies, and becoming grand viziers or generals of armies; or of gardener’s apprentices getting charge of ducal domains, and acquiring a power hardly inferior to that of the proprietors themselves. But what is now chiefly to be desired is, not that a few educated workmen should rise to the middle class, but that the whole body of workmen should be raised by education and mental training to a higher intellectual level. It is indeed a great advantage to the individual workman that he has the chance of raising himself and his family to a place in the middle class of society. This affords him in many instances a great stimulus to self-denying exertion. But the working class, as a whole, are not benefited, but rather impoverished by his elevation. They lose one of their ablest and most creditable members. Unless the whole platform of labour is raised, so to speak, the general good that results is but small. Now, what we deem so important in the present conjunction of events is, that it affords the opportunity for this general elevation. It is not merely that it may help Dick Whittingtons to become Lord Mayors of London, but that it opens to the whole army of labour the door to a mode of life more worthy of men who are really the brothers of Bacon and Newton, and whose minds were made in the image of God.

Let us, for the sake of illustration, take the case of the army. It is so far a great benefit to the common soldier when the door is open to him to advance to the position of a com-

missioned officer. To many a deserving man this would prove a stimulus of no ordinary power. But it would be a poor reform of the army that did not aim likewise at elevating the condition of the common soldier *as such*. If the rank and file were left to sink or swim as they pleased, and every well-conducted man were drafted into the ranks of the officers, the mass of the common soldiers would be rather impoverished than enriched by the change. A right system must contemplate the elevation of the common soldier as such; surrounding him with happy domestic influences; making marriage, for example, the rule rather than the exception; affording full scope and encouragement to intellectual capacity and moral worth; in short, making the common soldier's life such that respectable men might look on it as not less desirable and honourable than that of the ordinary craftsman. We use this illustration merely to show that what is to be desired for the working classes generally is not merely a chance of rising to the class above them, but a general elevation of the whole order.

It will be observed, however, that we are very far from despising the chance of rising to the class above them. Under any system that may be devised for general elevation, there will always be such transferences; and it is well that there should be. There will always be commoners rising to the House of Lords, workmen becoming employers of labour, small tradesmen rising to be merchant-princes, Dick Whittingtons becoming Lord Mayors. The working class will always be losing its foremost members. But what of that, if influences are at work elevating the whole mass—if a new crop is being raised as fast as the old one disappears—if those who rise retain respect and affection for the class they have left, and, knowing the difficulties and trials that beset them, lend them a helping hand and give them a word of encouragement? Is this last supposition particularly Utopian? Why should it be so? Why ought not those who have risen from the ranks to retain a warm regard for their struggling brothers? If, as a rule, the case has been different, it is not creditable to the "men who have risen."

But now to come back to the subject in hand—the opportunity of a general intellectual elevation afforded to the working classes by the present conjunction of events. Undoubtedly they have the opportunity; everything depends on their making strenuous efforts to turn the opportunity into a reality. Whether or not they will make these efforts

depends on the view which they take of the worth and desirableness of the object to be sought. What is the likelihood, then, of their coming to have such an appreciation of education, and of mental riches generally, as to set themselves very earnestly to the pursuit of these things?

One aspect of the case will make an impression on one class of persons, other aspects on other classes. Thus, (1), some may be attracted by the sense of *personal gratification* which mental riches bring. The best books in such a language as ours have in them the materials of a perpetual festival. In the middle classes of society there are not a few who feel this and act upon it. Books are their personal friends, furnishing to them without stint "the feast of reason and the flow of soul." There is no reason why there should not be found a like proportion of persons in the working classes with a similar feeling. Here is one great inheritance from which no law of entail can shut them out. Here are gardens ever blooming, with no fee for admission, and no long road to traverse in reaching them, as open to the blacksmith, the weaver, or the miner, as to kings or princes. Would it be wise, would it not be absurd for the working man, now that he has got some leisure, to let such treasures pass by, as if there were nothing in them for him to care for?

(2.) Others may be impressed with the fact that mental cultivation is a manly thing, an attribute of true manhood. It is a degradation to be mere animals. Prize horses and prize oxen may be very well, but a prize ploughman, unless he be something more, is less than either. It is not mere bone and sinew that makes the man. It is not in mere animal force that compensation is found for the want of rank and fortune, so that "a man's a man for a' that." "There is nothing great in the world but man," said the old philosopher, "and nothing great in man but mind." Will the working classes not awake to a sense of the greatness of mind? And if mind be great, must it not be cultivated and all its powers improved by the process? Who would ever make a comparison between the millions of working people swayed by their animal passions like herds of cattle, and the same millions alive and astir intellectually—intelligent, thoughtful, reasonable, reflecting the image of God?

(3.) Another class will feel that "knowledge is power." To know the principle on which things are done is a great help to the doing of them. To have the powers of the

mind quickened by education so as to apprehend the proper relation of things, is found to be of immense service in almost all the processes of the arts and manufactures. Doubtless it is out of this that the proverb has sprung,—“Nothing like education.” Such proverbs sum up the result of much observation and conviction; and wherever they are prevalent they indicate a wholesome feeling. People may have a very misty idea of what it is about education that makes it valuable; but if the impression prevail that somehow it is of great value, a most important end is gained.

(4.) There is room for impressing still another class with the benefit of intellectual culture, as being the source of no small *social* gratification. For example, it makes a happy bond of intercourse between young men. It lay at the foundation of some of the most interesting of Hugh Miller's friendships. What more pleasant than to talk and to correspond about books which you and your friend have been reading together, and to multiply your own enjoyment by hearing of his? Nay, even a friendly disputation over some of the topics discussed in the books may be alike profitable and pleasant. And when one has more serious matters to discuss and arrange with one's friends, the benefit is still more important. When you are forming opinions on the most vital concerns of your life; when you are laying plans for the good of your fellows; when you are making up your minds on points whose bearings reach further than life itself, and, as Milton says, “travel to eternity,” the ability to avail yourselves of the thoughts and convictions of an intelligent and enlightened comrade is a benefit of inestimable worth.

(5.) Still another force that may urge the masses in the direction of intellectual culture is—the political. Their interest in questions that are undergoing public discussion will prompt them to take pains to read on these subjects, and stimulate their minds to form a judgment regarding them. However unwholesome and undesirable the atmosphere of mere secular politics may be, there can be no doubt of their educating power. Politics stir the torpid mind, they waken up the slumbering faculties; they lead to observation, reasoning, and reflection. The politician may often be a disagreeable animal, but he is more than a mere animal. There is something in him that, if it be allied to higher influences and brought under the control of a nobler spirit, will give him a real elevation, and secure for him a sincere respect.

(6.) But stronger far than any of the forces that we have as yet adverted to, is the impulse towards intellectual culture that comes from vital Christianity. In adverting to this force as one of several, we must not be supposed to regard it as differing from the rest only in degree. It differs in more vital ways. If the other forces are separated from its influence, their effect is uncertain, and there is no security that they will not be turned to evil instead of good. Christianity has a double mode of operation on the intellectual faculties—the one direct, the other indirect. Directly, it gives a most impressive lesson as to the value of man, and the obligation and responsibility of redeemed man. It gives extraordinary value to every part of man's nature, for it makes him a member of that body of which the Son of God is the Head. It lays him under obligations of incalculable force—binds him to live not to himself but to Him who loved him and gave himself for him. In his service there is to be no waste and no idleness. No talent is to be buried in the ground; it is to be lent at interest and doubled ere the Lord's return. No fragment is to be wasted even after a miraculous meal; it is to be gathered into baskets that nothing be lost. Everything urges the disciple of Christ to the improvement of every faculty, that he may be to the praise of his glory, and that he may be the more powerful instrument in helping on his cause. That he may do the more good he must have the more mental power; ignorance and awkwardness must give place to knowledge and skill. To help to enlighten the minds of others, it is of prime necessity that he have ample light in his own.

Indirectly, too, vital religion tends to mental culture and enlargement, by the very grandeur of the subjects which it presents for the consideration of man. What vaster theme for human thought can be found than the being of God, the infinite, eternal, and unchangeable One? How great concentration of the mind is needed even for an approach to a right conception of the Infinite, and of our relation thereto? The thoughtful reading of the Bible, too, has a wonderfully enlarging and elevating effect upon the mind. Its jurisprudence, its theology, its philosophy, its poetry—have all a remarkable power. And in point of fact, wherever a people have been devoted to the Bible and impregnated with its spirit, they have been marked by an intelligence beyond the common. And this consideration must not be lost sight of in accounting for whatever intelligence beyond

the common may have been characteristic of the Scottish people.

(7.) To the forces now enumerated, which are somewhat general in their influence, we have now to add one of a special kind—the fact that education has been elevated to a place of commanding national interest, and that attention to it, on the part of parents, is to be rendered compulsory. Whatever other results may spring out of our long educational debates and our modern educational enactments, they will at least have the effect of giving to education a place in the eye of the nation such as it has never had before. The very budget of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with a long row of figures opposite the education estimate, will have the same effect. But most of all will this be the effect of the measures now to be taken for compelling careless parents to provide for their children's education. The question cannot fail to be raised—what is all this meant for? And if the answer to the question be what it ought to be, it cannot fail to give a stimulus to the intellectual progress of the nation.

These, as it seems to us, are the chief considerations which will contribute to commend education, and the culture of the mental faculties generally, to the working classes of the future. And now the question arises, how far will they have this effect? How far will they stimulate the masses to overcome the *vis inertiae* of laziness, the tyranny of animal passions, the force of ancient customs, and it may be the fascination of foolish superstitions, and to apply themselves energetically to turn to account their present remarkable opportunity of intellectual elevation?

For our own part, we do not expect that the change will either be very general, or very rapid. There will be two currents, we apprehend, a forward and a backward; and the backward may for a time present us with a more humiliating phenomenon than has ever yet been witnessed among us. Drunkenness, gluttony, and other polluting vices may in some instances swell to dimensions beyond any that they have hitherto attained. Where the carcase is, there will the vultures be gathered together. Where the means of riotous living are multiplied, riotous living will become more common. It is most painful to think of this, most painful to write it. One would fain go to a distance, like Hagar in the wilderness, and not look on a sight which is more distressing by far than the death of a child. One would rather see a troop of wild

Esquimaux glutting themselves with the putrid blubber of a stranded whale, than a body of well-paid British workmen debasing themselves with the brutalities of the ginshop, till God's image is obliterated from soul and body together. On the other hand, we fondly believe that the more intelligent and Christian members of the working classes will take heart of grace at the present remarkable crisis, and seek, with God's help, to create a deep and active public sentiment in their ranks, in favour of a new era of enlightenment and mental culture. They must not be discouraged by little apparent progress. Deep waters move slowly; discouragements may be very numerous; but amid all, Abraham Lincoln's advice to his generals will be serviceable—"Keep pegging away."

The end to be gained is worth a deal of pains. The great body of labouring men and women over the country furnished with new organs of enjoyment, and new sources of refreshment—getting mental eyes opened that reveal a new world of beauty and interest; finding palm-trees and fountains of water in nooks of the wilderness where the burning sun used to beat on them; hearing in all the voices of nature—

"Songs that have power to quiet
The restless pulse of care,
And come like the benediction
That follows after prayer."

Oh working men and women, aspire to this elevation! It is not the highest by any means that we would set before you, but it is surely something to see our friend Hodge transformed into an intelligent and thinking being, who can see something heavenly in earth, sea, and air; enter into the thoughts of some at least, of our great poets, orators, and divines, and feel, both with his comrades and his family, that there are other things to be talked of and thought of, than bread and butter, beer and bacon.

We have very little sympathy with the fears of those who are afraid that our people may be overtaught. Unwisely taught they may be, and we fear they sometimes are; overtaught we do not think that they can be. No doubt the idea lurks in some, and is openly expressed by other persons, that many classes of persons are better fitted for their work, and will perform it more efficiently when they know little than when they know much. As the phrase runs, too much education makes them too fine for their work. With this, we say, we have very little sympathy. It is based on the prejudice that mental culture is the exclusive right of the

upper classes, so that if any one has come to possess it, it is degrading to him or to her to continue to labour with the hands. The removal of the prejudice will go far to counteract the practical result of it. Indeed, it seems to us to involve a slur on the wisdom of the Creator, that He should be supposed to give to his creatures the rudiments of faculties which it would be wrong for them to cultivate and develop. It cannot be supposed that the Creator requires his creatures to perform work of such a kind that they must renounce that knowledge which was one of the original features of the divine image. Ignorance may make a man a more abject and submissive slave, but it cannot make him a more efficient helper in the true work of the world, which is the work of God. At the same time, there may be an injudicious kind of teaching, and an injudicious selection of branches, fitted to make young persons pedantic and conceited, instead of helpful and humble. Ordinary boys and girls cannot be Admirable Crichtons—cannot all know everything; especially boys and girls of the working class. Having but little time to devote to education, it is of great importance for them that what they do learn is judiciously selected. Branches of instruction that are far removed from the region of practical utility, are hardly suited for this class. Fancy needlework for girls in place of plain sewing and knitting is surely not the right thing in the right place. It happened to the present writer a short time ago to pay a couple of visits one forenoon in a mining district. One of the visits was at the bottom of a coal-pit, the other was at the village school. The visit to the coal-pit was a very instructive one, though, for physical sensations, the hour we passed in it was one of the most uncomfortable we ever spent. It gave us, however, an intelligent sympathy for the miner, and a strong desire to see him well educated and well provided with all the compensations that would make up for such a repulsive employment. Passing from the pit to the school, we found the teacher hammering the rules of syntax into the somewhat thick heads of the children, and very hard hammering it was. Well, we do not say that it was an improper subject to teach, far from it; of course the teacher must think of the "standards" and examinations for results; but we did long for something more practical and more suited for the special circumstances of miners. School-books have undergone a great improvement of late years, but it seems to us that they may yet undergo a greater.

We need more about common things—about health and its inviolable rules, political economy and its stern lessons, domestic life and the common occupations and temptations of the working people. Why ought not the minds of children at school to be impregnated with these useful lessons? It is one of the results which we anticipate from the more direct influence of the working classes on our common schools, that without neglecting the culture of the higher powers of the mind, more attention will be paid to training the children for the common pursuits of life.

There is no better way of showing what we have in view for the working classes in connection with the progress of mental cultivation than by good examples. And the best example that we know of is that of Hugh Miller. It was his lot to be brought up in the Scottish Highlands, among a people who were by no means strangers to religious knowledge and impression, but who knew comparatively little of intellectual culture. To supply this void to working people was what he deemed his mission. Careful as he was to recognise the one foundation for all true improvement as it is recognised in the Word of God, he laboured to rear on it the structure of intellectual attainment. One of his earliest discoveries about himself was that he had a *mind*. He came to understand what that meant. He saw that it meant a capacity of attainment and enjoyment such as few men in his sphere reach. People might say to him, and did say to him, "You are a working man, and you can never be a scholar. What nonsense it is for you to be shutting yourself up in the evening and poring over books, when you might be free and jovial and happy, like the mass of your fellow-workers!" If people said so—and they did—it made no impression. He felt that his being a working man did not necessarily exclude him or any man from the pleasures of a cultivated mind. And what he felt for himself he wished that other working men should feel. He never desired to leave the ranks of working men; and even after he did leave them, his heart remained among them; and his great desire was, as one of themselves, to guide and spur them on to a higher, more noble, more blessed kind of life than many of them were leading. He wished to dissipate the notion that a working man was not, and could not be expected to be, anything better than an inferior animal, with the intelligence of a drudge and the passions of a brute. He wished to show that there was no incompatibility between a life of hard toil

and the pleasures and refinement of mental cultivation; that in dooming the great mass of men to eat bread in the sweat of their brow, God did not mean to exclude them from the thousand elevated enjoyments that spring from knowledge and culture. He wrote his "Schools and Schoolmasters" to show that one really seeking it might attain this enjoyment mainly through his own self-

reliance and self-control, with the blessing of God; and if this could be said in his day and under his disadvantages, much more may it be said now! Would only that the whole mass of working people might be fired with his enthusiasm; scorn, as he did, the mere pleasures of sense, and reap as rich a harvest both in the domain of intellect and in the garden of the soul!

W. G. BLAIKIE.

THE SWORD OF GOLIATH.

"THERE IS NONE LIKE THAT."

BUT a little while before we find David enjoying all the glory of his victory over Goliath. The shoutings of the multitude are in his ears. He is made a companion of princes, and has the king's daughter given him to wife. But the sky soon overcasts. Saul's envy is stirred, and he seeks to slay him. David is warned of his danger by Jonathan, in a noble, loving, unselfish way, which has embalmed his name to all time.

David flees away from Saul, glad to escape with his life. Hungry and sad, he comes to Nob, a city of the priests, where the tabernacle was then stationed. He finds Ahimelech, the priest, who wonders at his plight. He asks for bread. There is none but the hallowed bread. But he must have it. Strengthened, he asks, "Is there not here under thine hand spear or sword? for I have neither brought my sword nor my weapons with me." Yes, "The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom thou slewest in the valley of Elah, behold, it is here wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod: if thou wilt take that, take it; for there is no other save that here." David greedily catches at it. "There is none like that; give it me." He is deeply moved. What is there in *this* sword which so inly stirs his soul, and makes him feel that there is none like that?

THIS SWORD REMINDED DAVID OF THE TIME WHEN HE SLEW THE GIANT.

It often does a man a world of good when past scenes are brought vividly before his mind. The fears of to-day are banished, not merely by the hope of coming help, but by the thought of past deliverances. That man who has no notable past history is a man easily cast down by trial. A nation which

has passed through a furnace of trials victoriously, does well to treasure up the memory of these events in enduring monuments. The thought of the past may cheer when dark days come, and the conflict wages.

A time of trial was at hand for David. He was the subject of a heartless persecution—an ungrateful returning of evil for good. He must have been deeply pained at heart. He may have been somewhat fearful of the issue. What can he do against the king? Ah! doubtless he was disconsolate.

But this sword of Goliath stirs his heart, as if its blade cast light across his gloomy path. "There is none like that; give it me!" It moves him as with a strange electric power. There is none like that. How it floods his mind with the recollection of the most memorable event in his life! In a moment it calls up all. He thinks of his father Jesse sending him to the camp of Israel, to his three brethren, with the parched corn and the ten loaves. He remembers how his anger was stirred, when he heard the armies of the living God defied by the blustering Philistine. All unarmed as he is, just come from feeding his few sheep in the wilderness, he is willing to go forth to fight this uncircumcised blasphemer. With his staff, his sling, and five smooth stones out of the brook, he goeth forth, strong in the Lord. On the great boaster came, cursing David by his gods. He will give his flesh to the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field. Ah! will he? The words were scarcely out of his mouth, when a stone, slung by David, smote him in the forehead, and he fell mortally wounded. Then he stood over the giant, and drew his sword, and cut off his head.

And here is the *very* sword of Goliath again, it may be with its brightness yet dulled by the stains of his blood. There is none

like that! Let him have it—it revives his courage. Having passed through that great conflict, what has he to fear now? He finds strength in the thought. Like the honey, of which Jonathan tasted, when weary with pursuing the Philistines, it enlightened his eyes. The darkness is gone. David feels that he can face anything now. This sword has a talismanic power: there is none like that.

THIS SWORD REVIVED HIS FAITH IN THE LORD.

A man is strong just as he believes in God. Nothing so unnerves a man, and unfits him to face trial as a *doubting* spirit. Like all men of a sanguine temperament, David was the subject of great mental disquietments and melancholy fits. No man had brighter thoughts at one time, or darker at another. Sad at heart before, this sword revives all his old faith and ardour. His first love, and trust in God, burst forth again. In those days gone by he walked in the strength of the Lord. He felt Him near—his joy and strength. He was but a ruddy lad come from tending his sheep, and re-buffed by his brothers. Yet while big Eliab, and all the soldiers of Israel, are craven-hearted, he is ready to fight the giant. The candle of the Lord shone upon his head, and through His name he can face any enemy.

This sword calls up his old faith. It rebukes his unbelieving thoughts, and bids his fears be gone. There is none like that. Thus the *twelve stones* set up at Gilgal must have exercised a mighty power in the minds of the old Israelites. As they looked upon those stones, which once lay in the bed of the Jordan, now standing there, how they must have thought of the Lord dividing the waters, that his ransomed people might go over to possess the land promised to their fathers, each stone saying, "Have faith in God!"

All this is true to nature. Thus the heart is moved still. It may be a small thing indeed, but it fills the soul with the tenderest feelings, and draws powerfully to God. Have we not oft felt our hearts thus affected? A church where first the word of life found its way to our hearts, and drew us to Jesus for mercy; some old book we once, in a sad time, read with joy; a mother's Bible, her choice texts marked there with her own hand;

or her dear treasured letters, full of love and tender counsel—these, and a hundred other things, are like this sword of Goliath to David. They are full of blessed associations. They lift up the heart when it is sad and weary, and lead it anew to trust in the Lord.

THIS SWORD ASSURED HIM THAT HE WOULD CERTAINLY TRIUMPH IN THE END.

How oft David's mind must have gone back to that scene at Bethlehem, when Samuel came and anointed him with oil, when he was so strangely filled with another spirit! Doubtless he pondered its significance much, and premonitions of coming greatness would fill his mind. He knew that Saul feared him; jealous of his being king. He is low enough now, a mere fugitive, with manifold straits and dangers in store. Ah! but this sword reminds him how the Lord delivered him from the lion and the bear, and stood by him when he encountered the giant, and delivered him into his hands. It flashes out clear in his mind's eye that he will yet triumph over Saul, and find rest upon the throne of Israel. He is assured the Lord will carry him through. There was the bondage in Egypt, and all the trials in the wilderness, where their fathers found rest in the promised land. There may be many conflicts and privations before him, but He who enabled him to win this sword, will be his shield and buckler still. There is none like that: let David have the sword of Goliath.

Let us treasure up the thought of all the Lord's gracious leadings, his help in the day of trouble, times and scenes when He granted wondrous enlargement, and opened wells of water for our refreshment. Let us set up our Ebenezers each day, so that looking back, there will start up in our ready memory many a "stone of help," shouting "Ebenezer!" Dark days will come, when "our sore will run in the night," and our "spirits be overwhelmed." Then let us remember our "songs in the night," and we shall find, however sad our circumstances may be, that assured hope in the Lord is begotten, telling us, even when cast down, that there is a glorious "lifting up" in store that, when all clouds and darkness have gone, there will be "clear shining after the rain."

JAMES B. JOHNSTONE.



EVERLASTING LOVE.

“COME and sit by my bed awhile, Jeanie ; there's just a little space
 Betwixt light and dark, and the fire is low, and I cannot see your face ;
 But I like to feel I've hold of your hand, and to know I've got you near,
 For kind and good you've been, Jeanie, the time that I've been here.

“Kind and good you've been, Jeanie, when all was so dull and strange ;
 I was left to myself, and was not myself, and I seem'd too old to change,
 And I couldn't get framed to the House's ways ; it was neither work nor play ;
 It wasn't at all like being at home, and it wasn't like being away.

“And the days slipt on, and the years slipt on, and I felt in a kind of dream,
 As I used to do in the noisy school sewing a long white seam ;
 Sewing, sewing a long white seam the whole of the summer day,
 When I'd like to have been in the open fields either at work or at play.

“But now I feel as I used to feel in the summer evenings cool,
 When we bairns would meet at the end of the street, or the edge of the village pool ;
 Or like when I've stood at the gate to wait for father home from the town,
 And held him tight by the hand, or held my mother tight by the gown.

“And I feel to-night as I used to feel when I was a little lass,
 When something seem'd alive in the leaves and something astir in the grass ;
 And all in the room seems warm and light, and I'm pleased to go or to stay ;
 But I've got a word in my heart, Jeanie, that's calling me away.”

“Oh, what have you seen, Nannie, have you seen a blessed sight
 Of angels coming to meet you ; have you heard them at dead of night ?”
 Oh nothing, nothing like that, Jeanie, but what saith the Blessed Word ?
 ‘God speaketh once, yea, twice, unto man when never a voice is heard.’

“And He's given a word unto me, Jeanie—a word and a holy thought,
 Of something I've never found upon earth, and something I've always sought ;
 Of something I never thought that I'd find till I found it in Heaven above ;
 It's Love He has given to me, Jeanie, His everlasting love !

“I'm old, Jeanie, poor and old, and I've had to work hard for my bread ;
 It's long since father and mother died, and ye know I was never wed ;
 And the most of my life's been spent in Place, and in places where I have been,
 If I've heard a little talk about love, it's been work I've mostly seen.

“And in summer the days were long and light, and in winter short and cold,
 Till at last I was good for work no more, for you see I'm getting old ;
 And I knew there was nothing left for me but to come to the House, and I cried,
 But if I was not good for work, what was I good for beside ?

“ And still when I went to chapel and church, I heard of love and of love ;
It was something I hadn't met with on earth, and that hadn't come down from above ;
It was something I'd heard of, but never seen, that I'd wish'd for and hadn't found,
But I liked to hear of love and of love, it had such a beautiful sound.

“ And I used to think, perhaps it was meant for richer people and higher,
Like the little maid that sits at church beside her father the Squire,
For the angels that always live above, or for good folks after they die ;
But now it has come to me I know, it is nigh and is very nigh.”



“ Oh tell me, what have you seen, Nannie ; have you seen a shining light ?
Have you heard the angels that harp and sing to their golden harps at night ?”

“ Oh Jeanie, woman, I couldn't have thought of such things as these if I'd tried ;
It was God Himself that spoke to me ; it was Him and none beside.

“ It wasn't a voice that spoke in my ear, but a word that came to my soul,
And it isn't a little love I've got in my heart when I've got the whole ;
It is peace, it is joy, that has fill'd it up as a cup is filled to its brim ;
Just to know that Jesus died for me, and that I am one with Him.*

* “ I knew that Jesus was my Saviour, and that I was one with Him :” words used by an aged, humble believer, in describing a manifestation which had conveyed unspeakable peace to her soul, at a time of great bodily weakness, and in the near prospect of death.

"It's love, Jeanie, that's come to me as nigh as you're now, and nigher ;
It's love that'll never change, Jeanie, it's love that'll never tire.
Though I'm old and I'm poor, and deaf, and dark, and the most of folks that I see,
Be they ever so kind, I'd weary of them, or they'd soon grow weary of me.

"And this isn't the House any more—it's Home ; and I'm pleased to go or to stay ;
I'm not a woman weary with work, or a little lass at play ;
I'm a child with its hand in its father's hand, its head on its mother's breast ;
It's Christ, Jeanie, that's bid me come to Him, and that's given me rest.

"And it isn't little God's given to me, though He's kept it to the end,—
It's wealth that the richest cannot buy, that the poorest can never spend ;
And I needn't wait till I go to Heaven, for it's Heaven come down from above ;
It's love, Jeanie, God's given to me, His everlasting love!"

DORA GREENWELL.

FROM ROME.

BY JOHN KER, D.D.

CIRCUMSTANCES having occurred in the course of providence to hinder me, meanwhile, continuing my series of papers either under their old name of the "Charities of London," or their new one, of "Among the Stricken"—a class to which, in a sense, I myself at present belong: it is a great satisfaction for me to be able in these circumstances to lay before the readers of the SUNDAY MAGAZINE such an interesting letter as the following; it supplies, and more than supplies, my lack of service.

To explain certain of its allusions, I may state that it had been arranged that I should pass this winter in Rome, ministering to the congregation of my late much-esteemed friend the Rev. Dr. Lewis. It forms one of the six or seven congregations that constitute the Presbytery of Italy, which, though far removed from our island home, is represented in the Church Courts, and forms an integral part of the Free Church of Scotland. This, of course, was a temporary arrangement, the Church at home supplying the congregation at Rome with ordinances until a fixed pastor had been appointed to succeed Dr. Lewis. No longer able to take two services each Sunday, I opened up, in conjunction with the Continental Committee of the Free Church, negotiations with Dr. Ker, of Glasgow, one of the most distinguished ministers of the United Presbyterian Church in Scotland, and author of a volume of sermons which, for soundness in the faith, genius, and piety, are surpassed

by none, if equalled by any, that have issued from the press for many a year and day. He undertook to be our co-pastor at Rome for part of the time we had engaged to serve there; and negotiations having also been entered into with the Continental Committee of the Established Church of Scotland, it was further arranged that Dr. McGregor, one of its ministers in Edinburgh, distinguished alike for his powers and popularity, should take Dr. Ker's place, and become my colleague when the time came for Dr. Ker leaving Rome.

By this arrangement the Established and Free Churches of Scotland would no longer, as for some years past, stand there as rivals, weakening each other's hands, burdening the Churches at home with the maintenance of two charges, where one was sufficient, and—worse evil still—giving occasion to the Romanists to say, See how these Protestants are divided!

Man, as the proverb runs, proposeth, but God disposeth. A serious illness has shunted me aside, depriving me of the pleasure of taking my part and place in this happy union. Not that the scheme itself has miscarried, for while the United Presbyterian Church has in Dr. Ker, and the Established Church will have in Dr. McGregor, representatives who will do them honour and true religion, with God's blessing, important service, the Free Church will have in Mr. Miller, who leaves Genoa this winter to take my place in

Rome, one every way worthy of those with whom he is associated.

Whether Episcopalian, Presbyterian, or Independent, our readers will rejoice with us that this charge at Rome is not only to present such an aspect of harmony, but to be supplied with preachers of such an order. Constantly exposed to influences not at all favourable to religious life, none need the services of such men more than our countrymen and countrywomen who are sojourning on the Continent. Amid the hurry and bustle, the irregular hours and various distractions of travelling, it is always difficult and oftentimes impossible to secure those daily and regular periods for devotional exercises, without which personal piety, like a plant but irregularly watered, is apt to fade and wither; and even when travellers can prolong their sojourn in any continental town, their minds are so much dissipated by the pursuit of pleasure, the sights constantly before their eyes, and all their surroundings, are so much calculated to blunt the fine edge of conscience and lower the tone of morality, and familiarise them with what is evil, that many, alas, too many, have returned to their country and old homes melancholy examples of the saying, "Evil communications corrupt good manners." In these circumstances we are convinced that the Churches at home have no higher duty than supplying the continental charges with their foremost preachers—men fit to hold the high places of the field, and stand in the breach when the enemy cometh in like a flood.—THOMAS GUTHRIE.]

ROME, 32, VICOLO DE' GRECI,
Nov. 12, 1872.

MY DEAR DR. GUTHRIE,

I could not be here without thinking of you very much, and I have been hearing of you also a little . . . I took about a week to come here by Paris, Turin, and Florence, staying a Sabbath at the first town, and hearing G. Monod, a venerable man of God, with a warm Christian heart. After arriving here I spent two days in a hotel while looking out for a lodging. It was a wearisome and difficult search, for Rome has received an addition of forty thousand inhabitants since the Italian occupation, and building is only commenced. House room is therefore scarce, and, as a consequence, dear, which pleases proprietors and makes all others grumble. At first Mr. Miller and I thought of *pension* at a hotel, but this also is expensive, and would have deprived us of liberty. So we

resolved to join forces, and have thereby got rooms better than we otherwise could have done at the same money. We have two very good bedrooms, a small sitting-room, and a good-sized drawing-room (*salone*), which we shall use for our prayer-meetings and such other gatherings as we find likely to serve the cause. Such a place is necessary, as our church is outside the city, and we need a centre that is accessible. We are in a small but respectable street not far from the Piazza di Spagna, and though our view to the front is limited enough, we have behind a good-sized garden belonging to the Monastery of Gesu e Maria, with vines, and fig-trees, and orange-trees, the last laden with the golden apples of the south, gleaming through the dark green leaves. All day long we have brown, mantled, barefooted friars creeping under our eye, engaged in the Italian occupation of "dolce far niente." At least they do not look like students, and I never see them with a spade. Lest we should grow moody, we have a glimpse from this same side, down between narrow roofs, into the gay Corso, along which sweeps the Roman Vanity Fair, and up to our right is discerned a corner of the Pincian, with white villas shining out from dusky pines, where one might well fancy the ghost of Nero to be wandering, as popular superstition affirms. We are three good flats up, but the stairs are the best I have seen in Rome—broad, shallow, and of pure white marble. For all this we pay 425 francs a month, equal to nearly £17 sterling—very dear, but the cheapest we could get. We take our breakfast and tea in the house, getting in our own supplies, and paying for coal to cook them and wood to heat our stove or burn on our stone hearth, according to the room; the wood costing, one *staccato* (or cart-load), 20 francs. For our dinner we go to a *trattoria*, where we get two or three simple dishes for about 1½ franc. So you will understand our establishment; and I have to say that in commencing it we were largely indebted to the kind offices of Dr. Philip, missionary here to the Jews, and in maintaining it I rely on Mr. Miller, who is a most excellent house, as well as church, yoke-fellow.

We have now had two Sabbaths in our church. It is outside the gate, as you know, on the left hand, a little back from the street, with open gardens round it, and the yellow Tiber within a stone-throw. It is a neat edifice, holds from two hundred to two hundred and fifty, and is altogether very comfortable. Our audiences, as yet, have not been very large

—about sixty or seventy in the forenoon and twenty or thirty in the afternoon—for in Rome, as elsewhere, half-day hearing prevails. The winter residents begin to come about the end of this month, and after that we hope gradually to fill up. We have had very pleasant, and I hope profitable, meetings, though small, and every one expresses great satisfaction at the union of the three Scottish Presbyterian Churches in the service. It has taken away one stumbling-block, and I trust may serve as an example. I have heard American friends express themselves as gratified with this feature. We commence our prayer-meeting this evening in our saloon, and I hope it may prove useful in promoting a friendly social, as well as spiritual, tone in visitors. We purpose also having a meeting for choir practice. It is out of our power to get a precentor; no single friend has courage to lift up his or her voice alone, and so we shall try union for praise as well as in preaching. The service of praise ought to have an important place with us here, to let strangers see we look to beauty as well as strength in our Presbyterian sanctuary. Our church library, too, is getting into order, and will be opened at the close of our next Sabbath service with some new books. This is really a religious agency, and if you ran your eye down the catalogue of an English (Roman) circulating library, with its fritter of frivolity and sensation, you would be convinced that we must do something for the intellect of residents as well as for their moral and religious principle. By-and-by we hope to make all these means more efficient, and perhaps to introduce others as experience may suggest.

I must give you some idea of the different agencies at work here, that you may understand our position. And first of the English speaking. There are two Episcopal High Church clergymen; the one from England, the other from America. They have their churches outside the Porta del Popolo, near the rest of us, but we see as little of them in any of our meetings as we do of the Vatican Pope. Then there is the Low Church Episcopalian cause, which meets in Dr. Lewis's old place, and which has for its minister the Rev. Mr. Hamilton. He is a warm-hearted Christian man, and we have found much pleasure in intercourse with him, and readiness to co-operate in common evangelical work. There is besides this a new church, either already commenced or about to be commenced (I have not learned which) to be called "The American Union," and to be served by American ministers of different de-

nominations who may visit Rome. Several Americans have expressed to me their regret at this step as really unnecessary, since all non-Episcopalians who hold evangelical truth can unite here on common ground. Our duty, however, is quietly to keep on our own way, without complaint or recrimination, leaving the conduct of others to their own conscientious judgment, and prepared to give the right hand of fellowship to all who hold the Head.

I am increasingly convinced that there are few more useful agencies anywhere than evangelical churches in our own language scattered over the chief towns of the Continent. They help to prevent our tourists and temporary residents from being overcome by the enticements of Rome, or from being utterly secularised by a kind of life so different from what we have at home. Now that there is a growing stream of visitors every year, we must try to guard their spiritual interests, and to prevent them coming back chilled and frost-bitten like travellers to the arctic circle. The importation of foreign ideas of religion and of the Sabbath in this way will become a serious evil if we do not guard against it, and all the home churches should combine for harmonious and efficient action. Then such stations are able to keep British Christians advised of the religious state of the Continent itself, and to guide them in aiding native evangelistic work. They are watch-towers along one of the most important lines of battle in the modern Christian Church, whether we look upon it as having to deal with Romanism or Materialism.

So far as I have been able to observe, the Home Church has been singularly favoured hitherto in the character of the men in charge of these stations. They are, many of them, men of great ability and energy, acquainted with the language and condition of the country they live in, refraining from mixing themselves up with its politics, but taking a deep and active interest in the moral and spiritual condition of the people. I attribute the increased interest in continental work very much to their influence; and to help the Continent of Europe to the Gospel is, I believe, the main and most pressing duty of the Protestant Churches of Britain and America, if we are to assist in saving even its civilisation. Indeed, to gain Europe for Christianity is to gain the world. If pleasure-seeking tourists, calling themselves Christians, besides the quest of recreation and the pursuit of art and antiquity, could be induced to take some interest in this, it

would bring them back a better class of men, a greater strength to us in every way, than they sometimes return. The continental stations do contribute to this, and home ministers might aid it by turning the attention of their members, who propose visiting the Continent, to these objects, and by bringing them into connection with ministers here. So I do not regret the multiplication of new evangelical causes, which may react on home Christians in all parts of Great Britain and America. Only it were well that we should economize our means so as to cover the largest possible area, and, above all, preserve the unity of the Spirit.

It is scarcely so easy to give you an idea of the Italian agencies in Rome, but I shall try. The opening of the Porto Pia gate to the army of Victor Emmanuel brought in evangelists of almost all the Protestant denominations, and they have not yet settled into fixed place and shape. This exuberance of life is something to be glad of, but it brings its difficulties. First of all, there is the ancient Waldensian Church, who long did battle in the mountains, and who are now come down to show that their God is also the God of the plains. Their only minister at present is M. Ribetti, as M. Pons has been removed to Venice to take the place of M. Comba, called to a professorship at Florence. A successor is expected immediately in the person of young M. Meille, son of the pastor in Turin. The Waldenses have two places of meeting, both merely on lease, and neither of them suitable in accommodation—the one off the Corso, the other near the Piazza Navona. Next there is the Chiesa Libera, known to friends in Scotland through the name of Gavazzi. He is not at present in Rome, and M. Conti is the evangelist at work, between the Piazza Navona and the Tiber. Distinct from both is M. Ravi, who has his centre of labour in the Arco del Parma. The Baptists have two workers in the field, Mr. Walls and Mr. Coat, and the Methodists have M. Sciarelli. These last have the advantage of having secured a good site and premises of their own not far from the Palazzo Borghese. They have paid for them £10,000, and it will require a considerable sum additional to adapt them to their purpose, but this is the first step to any permanent or decided work of evangelisation. Unfortunately, the very event which opened Rome to Christian effort, has made it necessary that it should be carried on at enhanced cost, so greatly have the prices of ground and of the necessaries of life risen since the Government transferred its

seat here. But there is no help for it. The influence of the priesthood, and the bigotry and fears of the people, are still sufficient to prevent the lease of places where meetings can be held; those which can be got are often of the most unsuitable kind, and it would be a waste of money to try to adapt them on a short lease. If Protestant Christians wish to act on Rome with reasonable hope of success, they must make up their mind to expend considerable sums at first in breaking ground, and must emulate the effort which Rome is making to gain our own country.

I am not going to say anything about the success which attends these different agencies—this would be rash, and might be invidious. I have looked in upon and listened to some of them, as well as my acquaintance with Italian will permit, but I desire to see and hear much more before making up a judgment even in my own mind. I shall only say that I have heard the Gospel faithfully preached and seen it attentively listened to in Rome, within less than chassépot range of the Vatican—strange that one should have to adopt such a measure of distance from the place! Is it not much to be able to say this? Who could have dreamed of it even three years ago? And when the walls of Jericho are down, is it not a summons to go up and take possession? It is also evident to a casual observer that while plenty of superstition remains, and while the Pope frightens some by his unqualified prophecies of recovering lost ground, he and his system are an object of indifference or of derision to a large mass of the people. The other day, looking at a procession of priests and monks with lighted candles crossing the Ponte Sisto, I heard a man at my side say, "Che mascherata!" What a masquerade! The tone of the daily papers which are most generally read, and the way in which people gather round the caricatures of the priests in the shop windows, are indications of the public feeling. Religion itself suffers much in this state of feeling, and no right-minded man can sympathize with the spirit in which some of the attacks on the Romish clergy are carried on; but this is greater reason why we should be more anxious to present that view of Christianity which will prevent liberty from degenerating into license.

Besides these agencies there are others which I can do little more than name. There are schools for Italian children, prominent among the founders of which is the Rev. Mr. Van Meter, who has lately

come from America, and who is distinguished for his success in his own country in this department of work. He has formed already a considerable number, and is seeking to conjoin with them Italian preaching, while at the same time he has opened a large room for reunions of British and American Christians, that visitors to Rome may become acquainted with one another in a way that will do them and the city good. Then there is the British and Foreign Bible Society, with its depot in the Corso and its colporteurs; there is the Italian Bible Society lately formed, but comprising, it must be understood, as yet very few native Italians either in its committee or subscription list; and there is the Tract Society, with its depot near the Pantheon. This seems a long catalogue of agencies, and may lead friends at home to expect speedy and great results. But when you scatter them through a population of about 250,000 they are not so great. Then let it be remembered that the places for Italian preaching are generally small, uninviting, and in out of the way localities, and you will see that this must tell much against them. No such assemblies are possible as seem to have been convened in Madrid, and it is a prime necessity, as already observed, to secure, as early as may be, opportunity for this. The crowds which assembled at the discussion on the Episcopate of Peter and at the formation of the Italian Bible Society, show that the Roman mind is quite open to consider the claims of Protestantism, and, in some degree, also to the message of the Gospel. There are those who have received it and have given evidence of its power. No doubt there is a superabundance of materialism and indifference, and plenty of hatred of Rome, without the least desire for Christ, but there are signs of thoughtful men who are aware of the deeper wants of our nature and of the true strength of a nation. The other day, for example, I read a lecture by Professor Ercole Vidari, delivered at the University of Pavia, as one of a popular course, in which he speaks of the necessity for a positive religion of the heart and home in a way that would give one great hope of Italy, if there were many like minded. Before leaving the matter of churches and agencies, I may say that one thing is very necessary, viz., some agreement among them to secure co-operation, or at least to prevent collision. Some unseemly things have been done already which are a scandal in the face of the common adversary, and which lower the tone in which the servants of God should labour in so great

a work. A proposal has been already made to secure this, not for Rome only, but Italy, and it is earnestly to be desired that it may prove successful. True heartfelt prayer for an outpouring of God's Spirit, so indispensable, can only come when men lift up holy hands without wrath and doubting. There are one or two other things to which I would have alluded as hindering rather than helping the work, viz., indiscriminate feeding of the children at some of the schools, and the gratuitous distribution of the Bible to all and sundry. Those who know Italy best and longest agree that these measures are prejudicial in the end. They may allow of so many scholars being counted for a little while, and so many Bibles disposed of, but the Bibles too often go into the stove or the hands of the priest, and they obstruct the work of the colporteur, whose sales secure so far that the Book will be preserved and read.

But I have already been too long. I believe that with all the difficulties and drawbacks there is a genuine work being done in Italy. Seed is being sown which, with God's blessing, will spring, or, to change the figure, wedges are being driven in which will shake and splinter the Papal rock, boast as it may of its strength. "Is not my word a fire and a hammer?" saith the Lord." It is very likely that beginning at first with small stones, which indicate the slope, it will end at last by a landslide. The first workers require great faith and patience and wisdom; let us ask it for them. The other day there was found in the excavations of the Palatine an old altar, with the inscription, "To the unknown God" (or Goddess)—the seeming counterpart of that which Paul saw at Athens, and which furnished him with his text. It is a curious coincidence that when the Gospel enters Rome again, it finds the old legend turning up, and in the devotions round it, it has still reason to say, "Whom ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you"—that Saviour who is the perpetual need, the only satisfying inmate of the human soul.

I have not time left to give you general news. You can get them, I daresay, as well in the home papers, as we here—only that here they bulk as more important. The Italian Parliament meets this month in Rome, and has several matters of consequence to consider. There is the progress which must be made in the secularisation of monastic property. Several monasteries in Rome have already been occupied by the Government, but public opinion demands more radical measures. The present ministry seem to

hesitate very much. They are afraid to raise too loud an outcry from the Papal party, and are, I daresay, fettered also by foreign relations. But it will come soon or late. Then there is the question of reclamation of waste land, and specially of the Campagna, so necessary for the health of the capital. This is connected with the previous matter, for a good deal of the property is in the hands of religious fraternities, and they will neither sell nor improve it. A bill is to be brought in regarding the Pontine marshes, compelling the owners either to drain their land or dispose of it. And there is lastly the subject of the finances, which bears on the ecclesiastical question as well, for, in the straits of the Italian exchequer, the church property is a tempting reserve fund. For years the national revenue has not been meeting the expenditure, and yet the taxes have been increasing till they are the subject of universal murmuring. The income tax amounts to thirteen per cent., and comes down much lower than with us, pressing upon the weekly wages of workmen. There is a perpetual battle between the officials and the rate-payers, as to who shall outwit the other, with great complaints of injustice and deception, and it is calculated that with all possible stringency which bears heaviest on honest men, the income tax does not realise more than seven per cent. Worse than the income tax, but less consciously felt, are the imposts on all the main necessities of life, which make them dear and bad. You ask what becomes of all the money, and there are several answers. Italy will have a large army and a powerful navy, and these cost many *lire*. Officialism prevails to an extraordinary degree, aggravated by the fact that so many states have been thrown together into one kingdom, and that sinecures and salaries cannot be at once reduced. And in addition, there are plentiful charges, whether just or not I cannot say, of corruption and speculation. In the midst of all, the Pope gets his yearly offer of three millions and a half of *lire*, which is the sum allotted him by the Italian Government in lieu of all claims. It was made to him again yesterday, and Cardinal Antonelli again refused to touch it, saying that the Pope could not and would not acknowledge the usurpation of Victor Emmanuel, and that the free-will offerings of his children were still a sufficient support for him. It is matter of congratulation that the

temporal and spiritual powers here have been so long unable to come to terms, as it leaves religious liberty time to establish itself. It is surely also a thing of Divine Providence that the civil law of Piedmont is the one which has become the prevailing law of Italy, for it alone contained the principles of toleration. In no other State was there occasion for that question to arise, but Piedmont had to deal with it because she had the Waldensers as subjects. It was with special reference to them that the clause was inserted which has secured religious freedom for Italy. That small garrison in a cleft of the Alps has already, in God's hands, been made to gain this great result. May we not hope that greater things—Gospel truth and life, as the result of freedom—are in store through them and their fellow-labourers? . . . I am ever affectionately yours,

JOHN KER.

P.S.—Since I began writing this letter we have had a meeting of the Italian Bible Society's committee to frame a constitution. There was a strong disapproval expressed of indiscriminate Bible distribution, and I hope it will be checked. It is for the most part a great waste of time and money, brings the word of God often into disrepute, and makes the honest colporteur be looked on as a deceiver, who wishes to make gain of godliness.

We have had in our rooms a meeting of five colporteurs of the British and Foreign Bible Society to meet Mr. Burn, the travelling secretary. They recounted their experience in a simple, touching way, and seem to be men of sincere faith and good sense. The chief obstacle is not so much bigotry as indifference, but they are well received by the mass of the people, and gave some instances of decided good having been done. I was pleased with the thorough manner in which accounts of their work were required and given. At the close they were very suitably addressed in Italian by Mr. Miller, and one of themselves concluded with a fervent prayer. This same man gave some interesting accounts of encounters with priests. In one of them a Jewish Rabbi came to his aid, and challenged the priest to point out any unfaithfulness in the translation of the Bible. The people took the side of the colporteur and the Rabbi.

J. K.

ACCEPTABLE SERVICE.



I LONGED to bring an offering to my King,
I longed for song that I His name might sing,
I longed for wealth to buy Him incense sweet,
I longed for rank to throw it at His feet.

But I was poor and crippled and alone,
I'd nothing but my trials to call my own ;
And whiles I let my heart grow hard and sore,
That some could give so much who loved no more.

The bitterness crept even to my prayer,
Crying, "O Lord, doth not Thy pity care?
Thou givest all, but givest nought to me,
Who crave it but to give it back to Thee !"

One day I slept and dreamed. Methought there came
An angel with the loved Apostle's name,

And he looked sadly on me as he said,
"Thine offering before the King is laid.

"Thy poor spoiled offering ! Was it meet that such
Be paid to Him whose love gave thee so much,
Gave thee His rarest gold—need's heavy chain ;
Gave thee His highest rank—the crown of pain ?

"For richest gifts should come from hands like thine,
Since Patience, Faith, and Peace build God's best shrine.
But thou hast wasted all. Thy discontent
To feed itself hath all His bounty spent.

"Put on thy crown of pain : it pricks thee less
The more thou wear it with contentedness ;
Lift from the dust and mire thy spirit's chain,
Turn thou thy life—such remnants as remain."

And I awoke with glory in the room,
For day had dawned and chased away the gloom ;
And Pain and Need and Loneliness stood round,
Their robes were ragged, but their brows were crowned !

They used to look so hard and cold and wild,
But now they stretched kind hands and sweetly smiled.
Lord, Lord, Thy pity cares so much for me,
Thou makest cheap the gift I offer Thee !

I. FVIE MAYO.

THE EDITORS' ROOM.

I.—NOTES AND COMMENTS.

AT PRAYER.

FOR six-and-twenty years, a large number of Christians in all parts of the world have been in the habit of spending a part of the first complete week of the new year in prayer for a larger measure of divine blessing to the world. Year by year, the number of persons uniting in this exercise has been enlarging, and now it is rapidly becoming a great catholic institution. It is a beautiful thought. Christmas and the new year are seasons of overflowing good will, of family unions, giving of presents, and hearty endeavours to make all around us happy. It is quite in keeping with the spirit of the season that all who are the children of God through faith in his Son should gather to the dwelling-place of the great Father, thank Him for his past mercies, and earnestly represent to Him the necessities of a world where so much darkness and so much misery still prevail. At such a time we may well feel with more than ordinary force that beautiful argument of our Lord—"If ye that are evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give his Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" If Christmas and the new year enlarge our hearts, may they not help us to believe more in the largeness of the divine heart? If we experience then the pleasure of giving gifts and conferring happiness, how readily may we believe that God has pleasure in doing the same? We therefore recal with peculiar delight this opening exercise of the new year. It is most interesting to think that almost without interruption the stream of intercession rose on high—that when it was night to one part of the family it was day to another, and that day and night the cry came to the divine ear, "Father, we thank thee for thy mercies to us—O pour thy blessing on the wide world around us!" Year by year may the cry swell, and may the number of hearts joining in it multiply; and never may the day come when the idea that prayer is lost labour shall check the flow of petition, or send back any member of the family as he hastens to join his intercession with that of the great multitude which no man can number.

One very attractive feature of these catholic movements is, that they bring out in an unalloyed form the pure, beneficent character of the Christian spirit. Viewed in our sections and denominations, we are apt to present to the world a mixed aspect—our sectional interests and aims rise into prominence; we appear eager to secure for our own cause or corporation more consideration, more money, or more fame. At least the world seizes on this, represents it as the great aim of all our sectional movements and even prayers, and sets us down as in the main just as selfish as itself, only less honest in our selfishness, professing to care so much for others, and really caring so much for the cause or corporation to which we belong. In this, while there is, no doubt, a measure of truth,

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the world certainly does no little injustice to the churches. But in a great catholic convocation to prayer, in which, sinking what is peculiar to our denominations, we simply set ourselves to ask for the world all that is best and highest in the blessing of our Father, the bright, beneficent aspect of the Gospel has a better chance of recognition. Surely it is a great thing to ask God to pour his best blessings on all mankind. To fill the whole earth with Himself and with his love; to reveal to every heart the glory of the Only Begotten, the Word made flesh, full of grace and truth; to bring souls without number into that fellowship from which all sin and sorrow, all tears and temptations, all disease and death are ultimately to disappear; to link men on to the Eternal, secure for them all divine light, grace, and purity, so that they shall at last be presented to the Father in all the perfection of their being, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing—surely the aim is alike grand and blessed.

EMBARRAS DE RICHESSES.

Fresh proofs of the unexampled material prosperity of the country are constantly occurring. The public revenue grows apace, and the golden image of a large surplus already dazzles the financial eye. The value of our exports has increased beyond all precedent. Industry is beginning to reap the benefit of the improvements which modern science has brought to bear upon it. Commerce is obviously profiting vastly from the facilities for communication which the railway, the steamboat, and the electric telegraph have multiplied so wonderfully. Evidently we are on the verge of a great and unexampled expansion of commercial transactions between the different parts of the world which are now coming together in so marvellous a manner. If no violent check be experienced, the enlargement of wealth is likely to go on in a more rapid ratio than ever. There are, however, many things involved in the "if;" and even those financiers whose eye seldom travels beyond the limits of the financial sphere, having a terrible dread of panics, feel that in this prosperity reasonable men can only rejoice with trembling.

One feature of the times is, that out of this wealth, large fortunes are made by some. The list lately published of men who had died during the last ten years leaving personal property exceeding in value a quarter of a million sterling, filled more than a newspaper column. Of this number there were doubtless some who made a noble use of their wealth; but such men are few, lamentably few. The greater part can think of nothing better as the result of all their pains, anxiety, and struggle, than to secure for those whom they love best a life of luxurious and listless idleness, and the right to choose for the family motto, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

In many minds a bitter feeling is roused, that it is unfair that so great wealth should go to the few, and

so poor a pittance to those through whose assistance they have been enabled to realise it. Hence strikes and struggles between labour and capital, with all their ugly offspring, in every branch of industry.

Much attention has been bestowed on the fact that it is the excise branch of the national revenue that shows the greatest increase. As the excise income is derived chiefly from intoxicating drinks, the inference is obvious that a large increase in the consumption of these has taken place even within the last twelve months. From this it is inferred that the working classes have spent in drink a large share of the increased earnings they have recently received. The inference is a sweeping one, and if it be made harshly and without discrimination it is liable to be resented. There can be no doubt, however, that, in certain industries, there has of late been a vast increase of drinking and of drunkenness. And, generally, there seems too much reason to fear that the drinking habits, which certainly sustained a check in the last generation, have received an impulse during the last two or three years. This is, perhaps, the most staggering consideration that has yet presented itself to the view of those who have been cherishing the thought of a more prosperous and blessed future for the people of this country. It shows with what redoubled earnestness and prayerfulness the class who labour for the good of their fellows have need to rouse the community to the habit of self-control, and to conscientiousness in the spending of their money.

It gives us pleasure in this connection to advert to the progress of the institutions termed "British Workman Public Houses." Their purpose is to provide the social comfort and refreshment of the public-house without its drinks that stupefy and intoxicate. And in lieu of those theatrical and musical attractions by which the ordinary class of public-houses often try, and with much success, to increase the number of their *habitues*, to substitute instructive and amusing readings, with songs and other musical recreations, free from all the objectionable features of the dancing and music halls of the other. We are glad to know that in Leeds this movement enjoys success, as well as in other towns of Yorkshire, and that public-houses of the same class have been introduced in London and in Edinburgh. We earnestly hope that they will become popular, and will aid in diffusing among the people a purer taste in the matter of social enjoyment.

● PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE OF RAGGED SCHOOLS.

The Committee of the London Ragged School Union, of which Lord Shaftesbury is chairman, have been considering very deliberately what course ought to be taken in the present crisis, in order to carry out the great ends for which the Ragged School movement was begun. They have come to a decided conclusion that there is still an imperative obligation on them to prosecute their movement with unabated diligence and liberality.

When the schools were started they were called

"Ragged Schools," to make it obvious that it was the very lowest class of children that were sought to be benefited, and they were made free because in many cases the parents of the children could not, and in other cases they would not, pay even the smallest sum to secure for them the benefits of education, or any other benefits whatever. It was even found necessary, in many instances, to provide food and other things to induce them to attend. The great object of these schools was not merely to give the children the elements of a secular education, but to bring them under the saving influence of the Gospel, and secure their welfare for time and for eternity.

The establishment of School Boards, with power to compel the attendance of children, and to purchase sites and erect schools wherever required, has in some degree altered the aspect of the case as it regards Ragged Schools. There has arisen in some minds a feeling that they will be less needed, in consequence of the operations of the Boards; and likewise a feeling that contributions will be less willingly supplied, partly as not being so necessary, and partly because the rates will be an additional charge on contributors for educational purposes.

On reviewing the whole circumstances of the case, the committee have come to think that ultimately there will be less need for the *day* schools of the Society, but that as the absorption of the lowest class of children into day schools by the Boards will be attended with considerable difficulty and delay, they ought to be supported in the meantime wherever required. And instead of diminishing other operations, such as Ragged Sunday Schools, Penny Banks, Bands of Hope, Clothing Clubs, Mothers' Meetings, and Evening Classes, these ought to be more energetically supported than ever, and additional efforts should be made in other ways, including Infant Nurseries, Labourers' Clubs, Ragged Churches and Children's Services, Medical and Gospel Missions, Parents' Lectures, and Prizes for good conduct to boys and girls remaining for twelve months in their situations, and giving satisfaction to their employers.

And inasmuch as in the schools maintained by the Boards the religious education must be very defective, the committee will do their best to supplement it by other means. If necessary, they will employ paid agents for this purpose; but, meanwhile, they will see what can be done by the three thousand volunteer teachers who have so long engaged in the work.

Such are the arrangements which Lord Shaftesbury and his friends are preparing to carry out in connection with the Ragged School Union for London. Whatever may be found best in other places, there can be little doubt that for the enormous mass of London, the resolution come to is a wise one. It is eminently satisfactory to find that the Gospel element is not to be excluded from the machinery brought to bear for the recovery of the unfortunate children so sadly neglected. Little can, indeed, be looked for them from the alphabet and the multiplication table without something higher and more efficient. The very confinement and restraint of a school life will of

itself rather irritate than allay their wild and restless spirit; it must be accompanied with something that shall have more power to excite sorrow for the past, joy in the present, and hope for the future. We trust that entering on this phase the ragged school movement will acquire a fresh impulse; and if there is to be less need for the efforts of its agents in the direction of mere secular instruction, we hope that with renewed energy and faith they will devote themselves to the moral and spiritual region which, to so large an extent, will yet remain for them to occupy.

LORD LAWRENCE'S VINDICATION OF MISSIONS.

The *Times* having published an article in connection with the day of special prayer for missions, charging the Church of England with failure in all her mission enterprises, many remonstrances were addressed to the Editor. Conspicuous among these was a remarkably calm and well-written letter of Lord Lawrence, the late Governor-General of India. Confining himself to the country which he knows best, he says the results of missions are far from insignificant. It is to be remembered that for the eight hundred years during which India was under Mahometan sway, the Hindoos clung to their own faith, and the Mahometans were baffled in their proselyting efforts—a thing that never happened anywhere else. The number of native Christians in India was some 300,000, by no means a contemptible number, considering that missions began only in 1813, and that missionaries are only to be found in a few large towns, and in many cases only one missionary to a town. Besides, it was becoming plain that the fabric of Hinduism was tottering. Many missionaries were men of the highest character, and there were native Christians at the time of the mutiny who submitted to death rather than renounce their faith in Christ. There were other grounds on which he considered the presence of missionaries and their families in India to be of the highest consequence for the stability of our Indian empire. It was unfortunately true that many of our countrymen gave to the people of India a most unfavourable idea of the English spirit and character. In fact their behaviour constituted one of the greatest difficulties that missionaries had to contend with. "But the more baneful the effects of such examples, the more necessary is it that we should apply the Gospel as an antidote. Apart from the higher interests of religion it is most important in the interests of the empire, that there should be a better class of men of holy lives and disinterested labours living among the people, and seeking at all times their best good." Lord Lawrence adverted too to the divisions of Christians as a hindrance to missions, although happily in India these were kept in the background.

The best thanks of the friends of missions are due to Lord Lawrence for this letter. Is it because missions and missionaries are deemed liable to create risk to commerce that the *Times* goes against them? Such a policy we regard as equally mistaken in its object, and miserable in the spirit inspiring it.

MR. DICKENS'S CARICATURES OF RELIGIOUS MEN.

Many are the friends of the late Mr. Dickens who have lamented most deeply the unfair representations of the religious world which are met with in his writings. Whenever any one is introduced professing to belong to a "serious" circle, we commonly find a noisy, fussy, coarse, repulsive being, selfish and false to the last degree, cunning and crafty in the accomplishment of his aims, wanting in every gentle and estimable feature—a being to be hated and abhorred. On the other hand, those that win our regard and affection, as model men or model women, have no special religious views, merely a touch of natural religion. The thing has become so common in other writers of fiction as to amount to a nuisance, even in a literary point of view. Thackeray has his Mrs. Hobson or Newcome in "The Newcomes," and in "The Virginians" Mr. Whitefield himself is exposed to his detracting sarcasm. Mr. Kingsley has his New Zealand missionary in "Alton Locke;" Mrs. Oliphant has a weakness for the dissenting minister; Miss Braddon can at least give to the religious character a passing fling. When names of such authority set the example, it is no wonder if the smaller fry of authorship most readily follows in their wake. No one denies that such characters are to be found; to the upright portion of the religious community they are a source of daily and bitter lamentation. But they are not the rank and file of the religious world, the fair average specimens of its membership. It is in representing them in this light that the great injustice of our fictitious writers lies. They are to the rest of the community as spurious half-crowns are to the true coin, or as pretended unfortunates, begging at our door, are to the really needy. And unfortunately it is not difficult to find a motive for the effort of novelists to give them the position of representative men, and virtually say to their readers, *Ex uno disce omnes*.

If it were not for the importance of the subject, and the great injustice which is done by these representations, we certainly should not advert to an incident having an important bearing on the practice which has recently come to light, and which is not creditable to the late Mr. Dickens. In the second volume of his *Life*, by Mr. Forster, there is published a letter written thirty years ago by Mr. Dickens to a friend in America, descriptive of a scene which he says he witnessed at the funeral of Mr. William Hone, the bookseller. Mr. Dickens says in that letter that when he went into the parlour where the family and the company were, there was present an Independent clergyman, with his bands on, and his Bible under his arm, who in a loud, emphatic voice thus addressed one of the company, Mr. C. (Cruikshank):—"Mr. C., have you seen a paragraph respecting our departed friend which has gone the round of the morning papers?" Mr. C. replied that he had. "Then you will agree with me," said the clergyman, "that it is not only an insult to me *who*

am the servant of the Almighty, but an insult to the Almighty whose servant I am." "How is that, sir?" asked Mr. C. "It is stated, Mr. C., in that paragraph," says the minister, "that when Mr. Hone failed in business as a bookseller, he was persuaded by me to try the pulpit! which is false, incorrect, unchristian, in a manner blasphemous, and in all respects contemptible. LET US PRAY!" "with which," adds Mr. Dickens, *in the same breath*, "I GIVE YOU MY WORD, he knelt down, as we all did, and began a very miserable jumble of an extempore prayer. I was really penetrated with sorrow for the family. But when C., upon his knees, and sobbing for the loss of an old friend, whispered me, 'If that wasn't a clergyman, and it wasn't a funeral, I'd have punched his head,' I felt as if nothing but convulsions could possibly relieve me."

It turns out that the "Independent Clergyman" who officiated on that occasion was Mr. Binney, of the Weigh-House Chapel, whose high and noble character, in every sense of the term, is enough to falsify Mr. Dickens's narrative, and to turn the tables against him in a way very serious to his reputation as a correct observer and a truthful witness. Mr. Binney has written a paper in the *Evangelical Magazine* exposing the gross incorrectness of the whole statement. He never went to funerals with bands on. It has not been the practice of Independent clergymen at funerals to begin with prayer, but with reading the Scriptures. The loud, emphatic voice Mr. Binney says is purely imaginary. The paragraph to which reference was made was one in which Mr. Binney was represented as having advised Mr. Hone to take to the pulpit when he had failed in certain speculations, as if the pulpit was just such another speculation. This, along with the family, Mr. Binney thought insulting to Mr. Hone's memory, while, at the same time, it was insulting to him and his denomination that they should be represented as giving him so low advice. Mr. Cruikshank has written to the papers denying that during the prayer he whispered to Mr. Dickens the words ascribed to him in the letter. Mr. Binney hardly needed to impugn the accuracy of the statement, since no one who knows him could suppose him capable of the base, heartless and irreverent conduct ascribed to him in Mr. Dickens's letter.

Mr. Dickens may have become accustomed to view such things through the spectacles of exaggeration to such a degree as to be unconscious, or somewhat unconscious, of the liberty he was taking with the facts. If this explanation mitigates in some degree the blame to be ascribed to him in this particular case, it shows at the same time how little trust can be placed in him in any similar case. Even his statements of what he saw—of what he gives his word for—must be received with very considerable allowance. And as to his imaginary scenes and characters, we must make a very large discount for the effect of prejudice and dislike—the hatred he evidently had for religious men, and his disposition to draw their character in the most unfavourable colours.

A NOBLEMAN'S WORK IN A SUNDAY CLASS.

It is very singular, and matter for much thankfulness, that two successive Lord Chancellors of England should have been teachers of long standing in Sunday-schools. The "good old times" of Lord Chancellor Eldon could boast of no such phenomenon. The "Sunday-School Magazine" for January of this year has a portrait of Lord Selborne, better known among us as Sir Roundell Palmer, and an account of his labours as a Sunday-school teacher:—

"From twenty to twenty-five young men and lads of sixteen years and upwards," says the Magazine, "still find the Lord Chancellor regularly at the schools of All Souls' Church, Langham-place, Sunday by Sunday, with his Bible-lessons ready for them. Many of our readers know what it is to be hard-worked during the week; but let us assure them that they have no idea of the overwhelming character of the labours of a Lord Chancellor. Their work may be toilsome while it lasts; but in the vast majority of cases, the hour does come—however late at night—when it is over, and when their minds are free until the time for beginning again. But a Lord Chancellor's work, during the greater part of the year, is never done. Its responsibilities and anxieties never leave him; and it is almost impossible that he should ever be without the burdensome sense of accumulating arrears. The example of perseverance, therefore, which Lord Selborne has set, is one that should animate every faint-hearted or weary teacher to fresh exertions in the high and holy mission to which we have all been called. Two other features of Lord Selborne's work as a teacher we may without impropriety refer to, in both of which he sets an example worthy of universal imitation. In the first place, he does not rely even upon his well-stored mind, or upon his long practice in the arts of clear exposition and effective appeal, and go to his class unprepared. Most thoroughly is every subject specially studied for the purpose; most carefully are the notes drawn out in which the materials so gathered are woven into a well-constructed lesson. In the second place, he is not content with meeting and teaching his boys on Sunday. Each one has a place in his memory at other times; and those who have left are not lost sight of."

We do not copy this extract from any vulgar desire either to add to the eulogy of the Chancellor, or to throw round the humble work of the Sunday-school teacher the halo of an illustrious name. If Lord Selborne be the good man we take him for, he will care very little for the eulogy of his fellows. But there are two things well worthy of our notice here. In the first place, our busy men are our men for extra work. We find this alike in Church and State. The men who have most to do of their own are the men who do most for others. If we think to get much service from people who have plenty of time, we shall most likely be disappointed. When there is some pressure on a man, and his mental machinery is in full active operation, he is compelled to be methodical, and he hates to be idle. The other remark is, that if all labourers in Sunday-schools were as conscientious and careful as Lord Selborne, the results would be very different. Probably there is no body of professed workers where there are so many un-

skilled and uncared members as in the ranks of Sunday-school teachers. Many have been the recent complaints of the comparatively insignificant results of Sunday-school teaching; but would such results be experienced if all teachers took as great pains, and were as devout and earnest in their work as the Lord Chancellor?

MORE ABOUT ASSYRIA.

At the University of France, M. Jules Oppert, one of the great Assyrian scholars of the day, has commenced a course of lectures on Assyrian philology and archæology. He spoke of the new cuneiform record, relative to the Deluge, which has excited so much interest in this country. In regard to that document, it was of much more importance in reference to Assyrian archæology than in a Biblical point of view. The fact was, that the account of the flood preserved in Berossus was more close to the Biblical narrative than this newly-discovered record. What gave its chief interest to the latter was, that it explained the origin of the Assyrian myths transmitted by Ctesias. After commenting on it in this point of view, he remarked that the real discoverers of the document were Mr. Layard and Mr. Loftus.

Mr. Smith, the more immediate discoverer of the record, has made an interesting communication as to the probability of further documents being discovered in Assyria, and their probable contents and value. It is all but certain that immense stores of such material exist under the ruins of the ancient cities. The natives do not care for them one rush, but they have the idea that vast treasures are to be found in the localities, and that circumstance may quicken their research. Among the interesting topics on which light may be expected to be thrown by the coming discoveries, one of great importance is the origin of that Semitic race of which the Jews were a branch. Western Asia was originally peopled by a race quite different, with whom originated the Chaldæan civilisation. Another point relates to the early history of the Jews. Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees before the time of Chedorlaomer, and if the documents throw light on the time of the latter it will be useful in connection with the life of Abraham. The history recorded in the Books of Kings may likewise receive important elucidation. Then we may look for samples of the Chaldæan literature; a celebrated treatise on Chaldæan astronomy, for example, may be restored. And in other departments of literature the Chaldæan excelled, and our curiosity may be gratified in reference to these.

In connection with these things it may be added that an announcement has been made by M. Manch, an African traveller, that he has no doubt but that he has discovered the ancient Ophir, containing the ruins of a temple on the model of Solomon's, and a palace with surrounding edifices, which he believes to have been inhabited by the Queen of Sheba and her suite. The reasons given for believing in his discovery are too brief to be as yet of much value. The temple was of granite, with beams of cedar, and much cedar

had been employed in the erection of the palace. The ruins were in tolerable preservation, and the ornamental designs indicated a high measure of antiquity.

SPIRITUALISM AND SCIENCE.

A controversy has been going on about Spiritualism. A long paper appeared in the *Times*, narrating what had been seen by the writer, and challenging the scientific world to tell how the phenomena were to be accounted for. Some of the phenomena were inexplicable so far as the known laws of nature went; and in calling on the leaders of science to throw light on them, the writer of the paper used a tone of sharpness that seemed to reproach them for their silence hitherto. A somewhat varied correspondence followed; and other journals took up the subject. According to some the whole phenomena of spiritualism are the result of trickery and deception. According to others they result from some law of nature hitherto unknown. According to the Spiritualists themselves they are caused by the spirits of the dead, or even of the living, entering into mysterious relations with men. And according to others—though this section has hardly been represented in the recent discussions—they are caused by Satan and his emissaries, who seem to act differently, at different periods of the world's history, in exercising a malign influence upon the sons of men.

For our part, notwithstanding the hasty and scornful manner in which the whole subject is in some quarters dismissed from view as degrading and unworthy of serious notice, we are disposed to agree with the writer in the *Times*, that the alleged phenomena do demand more careful scientific inquiry than they have yet obtained. Not that we have any sympathy with those who ascribe them to the influence of departed spirits. If ever there was an hypothesis that carried its own refutation, it is that the spirits of the departed occupy themselves with the silly, contemptible, and useless proceedings done under the auspices of spiritualism. It is hardly possible to conceive anything more strange than that certain men and women should reject all the evidence for the Holy Scriptures, and yet believe in the presence and operations of departed spirits through the turning of tables, and rappings performed thereon. But it is of some importance that the public should be helped to decide whether the alleged phenomena are due to deception, or to a subtle law of nature, or to the influence of evil spirits, or to these causes conjointly.

For ourselves, we do not profess to be able as yet wholly to solve this question. If there be in the phenomena any facts inexplicable on the ground of deception, or on the ground of some subtle law of nature, there remains only the agency of spirits, and these certainly not good spirits. We fall back on the old Scripture doctrine so much ridiculed by some, of satanic influence and "familiar spirits." In its wisdom "modern thought" has leaped to the conclusion that all the statements of Scripture on that subject are proofs of the dark superstition under which its

authors laboured. The Duke of Somerset, in his recent book, now so nearly forgotten, laid it down as certain that the Gospels could not be historical, because they admitted the agency of evil spirits. Modern criticism, too, has been very hard on our forefathers for believing in witches, and punishing them severely. Perhaps this age is not quite so enlightened as it thinks. Evil spirits may get nearer to some of us than many suppose. And it needs not to be remarked that the result will be pernicious. In so far as modern spiritualism is concerned, we know of no instances in which contact with it has elevated the character or brightened the life. We know of many in which it has been degrading and demoralising. It is admitted generally that many who have taken it up have become insane. We do not wonder much at the repugnance to it of men of scientific power. But to solve the perplexities of many who know not what to make of it, it does seem desirable that it were examined more closely.

II.—GLANCES AT WHAT IS DOING ABROAD.

FRANCE.

While President Thiers has been fencing with his friends in the Assembly, who, not disguising their wish for a monarchy in some shape, have been eager to prevent too decided recognition of the Republic, Providence has so far cleared the boards by removing from the scene the late Emperor Napoleon. What Orsini and others tried in vain to do by bombs of terrible construction, God has done by a little bit of lime. The death of one whose name at one time was such a power, has been received very quietly, and indeed it would have been better for Napoleon's own reputation had it happened some three years sooner. He had outlived his power, and his name had lost its fascination. Misfortune had already caused men to form a more tender judgment regarding him; and within the few weeks previous to his death the knowledge that he was afflicted with one of the most tormenting of maladies, and that he could have no royal road to relief—nothing different from what avails for the poorest labourer—brought him closer to the hearts of men. The quiet domestic scene too, the distress of the Empress, the emotion of the boy of seventeen, and then at last the sudden falling of the shadow of death, have drawn to Chiselhurst the genuine sympathy of very many hearts.

Viewing the career of Napoleon in its relation to Christian interests, it is generally admitted that in France his rule was favourable to toleration. The Protestants had more freedom under him than under their previous rulers. As to his personal character, there seems to have been a remarkable absence of religious sensibility or impression of any kind. What were his views, or whether he ever examined the subject with any attention, seems to be hardly known. In regard to the interests of the Papacy, much though he long strove to maintain them by his troops in Rome, he undoubtedly helped to deal the blow under which it has reeled so terribly. Whatever may have

been his intentions regarding Italy, he undoubtedly helped to give it that unity and independence which have been so fatal to the temporal power. And in so far as Great Britain is concerned, he ever strove to maintain a cordial friendship with us,—all the more remarkable that from his uncle he might be said to have inherited a legacy of enmity. His removal seems to make little difference either to the present or to the prospective condition of France. For anything that yet appears, the name of Napoleon may be held to belong only to the past.

GERMANY.—AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A CONVERTED PRINCE-BISHOP.

An interesting work has just appeared in Berlin in the autobiography of Count Leopold Sedinitzky von Choltitz, once Bishop of Breslau. The current of conversion has been flowing so largely in this country from the Protestant to the Romish Church, that it is with equal surprise and gratification that we find an instance of the contrary taking place within the last ten years, in the case of a member of an influential Roman Catholic family, once the holder of the largest bishopric in the Church of Rome. The particulars of the case are mainly these:—Sedinitzky, while a child, being the member of an old patrician family, was designated and set apart for the priestly office, and, somewhat to the surprise of his friends, who thought only of the dignities he might attain, he gave himself earnestly to his serious calling, showed a great interest in theological study, and had a real and devout regard for the advancement of the kingdom of God. He was particularly marked for his unsectarian and candid frame of mind, fitting him for acting with great moderation in Silesia, where the population was partly Protestant and partly Catholic. Hearing of a Bible Society which had for its object to give the Scriptures to all without regard to sect, he was greatly captivated with the idea, and joined the Society, though ere long the chapter of which he was a member let him know emphatically what an imprudent step he had taken. Deeply interested in educational matters, he observed that the Protestant institutions were generally more efficient than the Romish, and he applied himself to increase the efficiency of the latter. His fair and liberal spirit did not suit the genius of the ultramontane faction, who were driving hard to get their views paramount in Silesia. In consequence of this he fell under the suspicion of the Pope, who, urged by the Jesuits, very plainly indicated to him that he had lost his confidence. By this time he was Bishop of Breslau, but seeing the energy of the Jesuits against him, and despairing of being able to reverse their operations, notwithstanding that he had the support of the Prussian government, he, after a time, resigned his see. Then he went to reside at Berlin. His further investigations into the great questions at issue between Protestants and Romanists terminated in 1863 in his slipping quietly into a Protestant Church at Berlin, and receiving the Lord's Supper. Throughout his declining years he retained the same interest in religious matters, the

same candour, geniality, and conscientious attachment to duty which had characterized him before. Deeply interested in the German war with France, he lived to see its successful termination for his country; and his last recorded utterance was, "May Germany continue united, and become a land of peace and devoutness, never forgetful of what the Lord has done for it, and what it owes to Him." Memorable words!

THE POPE SCOLDING GERMANY AND ITALY.

The Pope has been raging against Germany, and Germany is raging against the Pope. There are some men that are hardly aware of the strength of the language they employ, and we would charitably hope that the Pope is of their number. To be an amiable man he has a large command of strong language. We have known a good man to affirm that a much-esteemed brother had been guilty of the lowest trickery and most consummate Jesuitism, and when remonstrated with explain that he meant to ascribe to him nothing more than the average share of indwelling sin. Whatever may be the Pope's meaning, his language is sufficiently strong. The Germans are persecuting the Church, not only with concealed machinations, but with open force, in order to destroy her, root and branch. Yet they impudently declare that they mean her no harm. The German papers say that the Pope has cut the last thread that bound him to the new Empire, and that there must henceforth be war. The Pope has offered an insult to the German nation. The path of the Government hereafter will be clear, and their action against Ultramontanism more decided.

The Ultramontane papers represent the Pope as having let in light on some den of dirty vultures, and "in the interior of their unclean hearts, liberals are now tearing and roaring as if the State were coming to pieces, and the earth opening upon them."

The Minister of the Interior, Count Eulenberg, prohibited the publication of the papal allocution as containing insults to the Emperor, and misrepresentations, fitted to bring the Executive into contempt.

Such having been the allocution of 23rd December, it does not appear that the Pope was in more amicable mood on the 1st January. The Governments that are going against him and their cities are like the Pentapolis of Scripture—the five cities of the plain. Rome and other places were revelling in festivities while the fire was descending that was to burn them up. When Goliath fell under David it was with his own sword that David cut off his head; when Judith slew Holofernes, it was also with his own weapon. "Thus," said the Pope, "will the revolution fall by the very weapons which it has brandished against truth, justice, and the Church." In the midst of his other trials, the Pope has learned that France will make no effort for the restoration of the temporal power. She cannot listen to the counsels of the clerical party; she requires peace and concord; and the counsels which they offer would lead her in the opposite direction.

III.—JOTTINGS FROM THE MISSION FIELD.

JAPAN.

A very remarkable degree of missionary interest is now drawn to Japan. From having been looked on, as it was very lately, as about the most hopeless of all fields for missionary labour, it has come to be regarded as one of the most hopeful. The reason of the change is partly owing to reforms in the civil government of the country. The day of the Tycoons has set; the government is now in the hands of the Micador. The new government has shown a remarkable tendency towards liberal views. As is well known, an influential embassy has been visiting this country, inquiring into our government and civilisation, and endeavouring to find out the causes of our prosperity. Members of that embassy have been brought into contact with our Christian institutions, and have been made to understand the share which these institutions have had in bringing Britain to the stage of civilisation and prosperity which she has attained. A member of the embassy visited the house of the Bible Society, and showed a great interest in the work there going on—of supplying all nations with the Word of God. Unfortunately there is not at present a complete Japanese Bible, the one printed some time ago being out of print; but a copy of the Bible in Chinese was given to him, and also a copy of the English Bible, which he had expressed a desire to purchase.

It is hoped that a new era will now open for the Gospel in Japan. The Government has been trying to discourage the *imported* religions of Buddha and Confucius, and to give support to Shintooism as the national Japanese religion. Amid the confusion incident to this policy, there is more chance of attention being given to the claims of Christianity. It is said that the Japanese have been accustomed to preaching on the part of their own priests, and will, therefore, be so far ready to receive it from our missionaries. It is also said that access to the female sex for instruction is by no means so difficult as it is in some other Eastern countries.

In connection with these changes in the prospects of Christianity in Japan, an interesting conference has been held by the various American missionaries (who have been the chief instruments, hitherto, in the Protestant missions of Japan), and a few others, in order to come to some understanding about future operations. Among the points agreed on are the following:—1. That a committee be formed to translate the Scriptures into the Japanese language. 2. That all native churches organized should be on the same plan—the government to be through ministers and elders, with consent of the brethren. 3. That a native ministry be raised up as speedily as possible. 4. That a committee be formed to take steps for the formation of a Christian literature. 5. That medical missions be associated with the other evangelistic agencies.

It was also resolved to encourage as far as possible the substitution of Roman for Chinese characters in

printing works in Japanese, a change by which great saving of labour would be effected.

Encouraged by the hopeful changes that have taken place in Japan, the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland have resolved to establish a mission to that country. They propose to begin by sending out three missionaries, and in order to do so efficiently, they are to raise a fund at the beginning of eight or ten thousand pounds.

IV.—OUR MEMORIAL RECORD.

DEAN RAMSAY.

Edward Bannerman Ramsay belonged, if ever man belonged, to the church catholic, and would be entitled to a place in our memorial record, even if his numerous and valued contributions to the earlier volumes of this magazine did not demand such notice at our hands. Such was the fragrance of his character, that while we are embalming his memory his name gives fragrance to our page. The younger son of a titled family, he gave himself to the ministry of the Scotch Episcopal Church, without any left-handed view to family livings or ecclesiastical dignities. He himself has recorded in these pages some memorabilia of his English curacy in Somersetshire,* but his active life and ministry were spent in Edinburgh. When first his voice was raised in the community, the message of grace which he delivered was less frequently heard than it is now; and those whose recollections go back to that period speak of the affectionate earnestness with which he used to proclaim the great truths that concern the salvation of sinners. In mature life, the character of Mr. Ramsay was remarkable for its mellowness. The mildness of his natural temperament, raised to a higher tone by the Christian love which impregnated it, fitted him for exercising that gentle influence which more than any of his contemporaries he wielded over the community of Edinburgh. He had a great dislike to the extremes of party, and found it difficult enough at times, when pressed by men of more partisan spirit than himself, to maintain the calm and catholic position to which his principles and his feelings alike drew him.

In schemes for ameliorating the condition of the helpless and distressed, for rescuing the neglected and aiding the infirm, Dean Ramsay was peculiarly in his element. Our own pages have contained evidence of his affectionate interest in cabmen,† a class of men exposed to much hardship affecting both soul and body, for whose Christian and domestic welfare he had many earnest longings.

Dean Ramsay had a hearty appreciation of the character of his countrymen of all ranks, and his "Reminiscences of Scottish Life and Character" were designed to extend that appreciation, and deepen kindly feelings between class and class.

Towards his brethren of all denominations in Edinburgh he had the most brotherly feelings, and with some of them he was on terms of more than ordinary intimacy.

Bishop Cotterill and Dr. Lindsay Alexander, in their funeral sermons on the late Dean, have both touched on the manner of his death.

"He did not speak much of death itself," says the Bishop, "but repeated over and over again the lines of the touching Scotch song—

'I'm wearing awa'
Like snaw wreaths in thaw.'

It will interest many to know how the prospect of death as it drew nearer affected his own mind. Early in his illness he asked me to say the prayer in the end of the Communion Service:—"O most mighty God and merciful Father, who hast compassion upon all men." He asked also, as most people do, for the 14th chapter of St. John's Gospel, and for various hymns in Lord Selborne's 'Book of Praise,' most frequently of all for two which were his special favourites, and expressed the deepest feelings of his heart, 'When I survey the Wondrous Cross,' and 'Rock of Ages, cleft for me.' These two hymns were repeated frequently to him at his earnest request, and also sung by a kind and dear friend, whose rendering of them soothed and delighted him by its perfect music, and its devotional and feeling character. When, on Friday afternoon, he grew much weaker, and the doctors pronounced that he could not live many hours, his mind remained quite clear and tranquil. I repeated from time to time verses of Holy Scripture, which he took up and finished in every case himself. So, too, with the 23rd Psalm, and various short prayers and passages from the Litany. He asked for the 103rd Psalm, and went along with me in saying it to the end. Then he began the 'Gloria in Excelsis,' from the Post Communion. His articulation was beginning to fail, and at first I did not catch the words he was trying to utter. But when I did, and went on with the Eucharistic thanksgiving, he seemed pleased and said it after me, though with increasing difficulty, till it was finished. And it proved to be his last utterance on earth. He was only about an hour or so less conscious. I happened to be out of his room speaking to a person on business, when I was recalled suddenly as he had begun to sink more rapidly. It was evident that his end was very near, and so we knelt, and I said the commendatory prayers—"O Almighty God, with whom do live the spirits of just made perfect," and, 'Into Thy merciful hands, O Heavenly Father, we commend the soul of Thy servant now departing from the body;' and just as the final amen was said his spirit passed to its rest in God."

"After death," says Dr. Lindsay Alexander, "his features composed themselves into a statue-like repose. All signs of age and decay had passed away. The wrinkles were smoothed from his brow, and he lay like one who in the vigour of life had fallen asleep. It seemed to those who looked upon him as if they heard a voice from heaven saying, 'Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, said the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.'"

DR. WILLIAM ELMSLIE.

We must spare a niche for the name of the devoted medical missionary who did so good a work in Cashmere. Hardly had he returned to India, in company with his young wife, when he was prostrated by illness, and when he sank amid the hardships of a laborious journey. Many a tear has been shed over his premature removal—and many a prayer offered that the work he carried on may have men of as devoted spirit to continue it.

* See SUNDAY MAGAZINE, vol. i., p. 313.
† SUNDAY MAGAZINE, vol. iii., p. 196.

AGAINST THE STREAM:

The Story of an Heroic Age in England.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE SCHONBERG-COTTA FAMILY."

CHAPTER IX.



HERE are many mornings in our lives, many moments which are as fountains, from which the rest of life continues to flow.

The old promise has been kept. Day and

night, winter and summer, seed-time and harvest, have not failed.

And hereafter, also (I trust), it will be thus. It is in a pagan Elysium, not in a Christian Paradise, that "everlasting spring" abides.

What are blossoms which never ripen into fruit but painted shows? What is childhood which never awakens into manhood but a dwarfed or undeveloped humanity? What are seed-times which have no harvest but promises perpetually renewed and never fulfilled?

"No night there" must mean no darkness, no bewilderment, no losing our way, no missing our end, no horror of doubt, no shadow of death; certainly not, no fresh mornings. So often we confuse divine suggestions by vulgarising symbols into pictures, or by hammering out poetical images into prosaic parables!

Again and again in our lives "God takes us by the hand," as the old Moravian hymn sings, "and says, Start afresh."

Here, indeed, our fresh startings are made necessary, too often, by our wanderings from the way, or our weariness of the way. But the fulness of life there will surely not be less rich in variety and glorious growth than the

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hindered and fluctuating and failing life here. For ever it will be walking in "newness of life." O wondrous fulness of joy, when all the past shall enrich, not burden and sadden, the present; when before the heart, satisfied with the present in His presence, shall spread endless ranges of hope in the unveiled future, also in His presence!

We shall not be gods hereafter, but children of God; and, for ever, in our Father's hand, will be infinite possibilities of growth unforeseen by us, and divine surprises of bliss.

One such morning, or fountain head, in my life was that memorable afternoon when Miss Felicity exalted me to the stool of repentance and crowned me with the fool's-cap, and afterwards exalted herself and human nature in my sight by confessing herself in the wrong, and crowned me with the kiss of reconciliation, which sealed me her loyal subject thereafter.

For then and there three great friendships of my life began: that dear discipleship to Loveday Benbow—that tender affection to Claire des Ormes, half motherly, half lover-like—that faithful "cameraderie" with Amice Glanvil in many a pull "against the stream."

Before that day, in looking back, it seems as if life had still been cradled in the mountain tarn, mirroring the little world around, filling its own little cup. After that it began to flow.

And not mine, but my brother's also, which was in many ways more than my own to me. Our lives began to flow; and they began to part, into those two streams of womanhood and manhood which are each one so much more for being two,—so much more to each other, so much more to the world.

In the first place, it was just after that morning that for the first time I remember Piers took an opposite course to me.

When, in due time, the invitation came for us from Madam Glanvil to spend a holiday with Amice at Court, he would not go.

He was not quite ten, and I was not quite thirteen. I had in my small way been "a mother to him" for so many years. His refusal surprised me greatly.

My father did not seem displeased at Piers declining; indeed, he appeared to wonder a little at my delight in accepting.

Mrs. Danescombe, on the contrary, commended me. She said it was a very desirable house to visit at, and she was pleased to see me appreciate it.

"It is a big house certainly, Bride," said my father; "but you know we do not grow bigger by being in big houses."

"Mr. Danescombe," remonstrated my step-mother, "let me entreat you not to teach Jacobinism to Bride: for girls at least it cannot be suitable."

"It is not the house, father," I said; "it is Amice."

"Amice, with the glory of the big house about her," he said, "and the black servants, and the sedan-chair. How long have you known Miss Glanvil?"

"Oh, father," I said, "all our lives long."

"A very extensive period," he said. "I did not know you had ever spoken to each other."

"No, not exactly *spoken* until yesterday," I said, "but *looked*, and understood each other always."

He laughed, and said no more.

But in the evening I endeavoured to shake Piers's resolution.

We were sitting in that very miscellaneous lumber-room, music-room, and workshop of my father's, called the Summer Parlour.

I was planning Armadas, and talking of great naval campaigns. (We were just at the outbreak of the first war with the French Republic.) Piers was constructing a little ship; a division of labour frequent between us. He was essentially a maker, not a critic, except as far as criticism is necessary to construction. Whilst I was content with anything that would float, his quick eye caught the angles and curves which made the difference between swift and slow sailing. He was never satisfied until the little vessel was as perfect as his accurate hands could make it. I believe from early years he had an opinion that the talking of the world is mostly to be done by women, and by men who cannot, or will not, work.

"You will not go to Court, Piers?" I said. "It never can be because Amice called you a 'little boy?'"

He laughed.

"How like a girl, sister!" he said (not satirically; I never heard him say a satirical thing in his life, his nature was too downright and too sweet). Later in life I know he thought satire only the poor refuge of people who could not fight the battles—"not like *you*! What difference can calling me anything make? Besides, I *am* a little boy,

rather; and I like Amice Glanvil. She is almost as good as a boy herself."

Feminine and masculine distinctions were becoming very pronounced. My Protectorate was evidently tottering; and also I felt a little jealous.

"I don't believe boys like girls better for being like boys," I said; "at least only quite little boys do. Claire des Ormes is not like a boy; and I am sure you like her."

"She is not like a boy or a girl, or anything," he replied.

"Less?" I said.

"No, you know very well, sister," he said, "*more!*"

"Yes, I think so," I said. "When she kissed me, it felt as if it had been the queen. What *is* she like? A fairy? or a princess? or an angel? or a hero?"

"How can we tell, sister? We never saw either. Only it would be worth while to do something for her, like what she did for you."

"Yes," I said, "it would. But there is nothing to do."

"Something always comes to *do*," he said, "when we are ready."

It was a cheerful view of life, and more axiomatic than Piers knew.

We had wandered from Amice and Court.

"And you will not go to Court? Not if father wishes it?"

"Father does not care," he said.

Which I knew was true.

"Not to see Amice? who is nearly as good as a boy, and all those wonderful monkeys, and parrots, and models, and museums?"

"I can see Amice at school," he said.

"Oh Piers, why won't you? Not with *me*?"

"Sister Bride, I *cannot*," he said. "I cannot be waited on by slaves."

We had heard so many stories of the wrongs and cruel hardships of slavery!

I had cried over them so many times; and planned so many wonderful schemes of rescue; and had sometimes thought Piers rather lukewarm on the subject.

And meantime, the griefs which had melted into tearful dewdrops with me, had been entering into his very heart.

I could say no more.

So, I went alone to Court.

It was more awful than I expected. I was met at the door by the two black footmen, and ushered with bows through the hall, museum, and dining-room, into the large withdrawing-room.

No one was there ; and alone in those great stately rooms, among the ancestral portraits and the ancestral chairs, and the Japanese cabinets ; alone, without Piers to matronise, I felt a very little girl indeed. And that uncomfortable consciousness of clothes not quite duly identified with me, which through my stepmother's monitions had become the spectre of my darker moments, came on me.

Only until Amice came in, and by her presence filled the grand old rooms with life, not rushing or gushing, by any means, but with that essential reality and absence of self-consciousness about her which always made everything of the nature of clothes and conventionalities sink into due subordination.

That, I suppose, was partly what Piers meant by her being like a boy.

She came forward and took my hand.

"Where is Piers?" she said, "your little brother?"

My eyes fell.

"He could not—did not—come," I said, in some confusion.

"*Would* not," she said decidedly. "He is a strange little boy, but I like him."

She seemed to me rather candid about my kindred.

"He is the dearest brother in the world," I said.

"No doubt," she said, "to you. He is your own. You are not in the least alike. But I like *you*."

She never asked if we liked her.

"You have another brother who is not like either of you," she said, "very little. I do not like him. He looks as if he had been born old."

That was unfortunate, for my stepmother, I knew, looked on my friendship at Court as an introduction for Francis.

I began to think her confidences as to the family had better stop.

But she continued.

"I like your father; he is a gentleman, although he does think it wicked to have slaves. I am glad your mother is only your stepmother. She is like your little brother. And I always want her to be well tossed about in a wind. A storm at sea would be best. That shakes one out of many things."

It was very curious to find we had all been looked at and through so long, by those wistful, inquiring eyes.

And here was a new and most interesting glimpse into her former life!

"You have been in a storm at sea! That must be wonderful," I said, not sorry to reverse the telescope and turn it on her own life.

"Yes. I liked it," she said; "especially when it was dangerous."

She had her hat in her hand; she put it on and led me into the garden.

"The waves were very high?" I asked.

"It was not the waves I liked," she replied, "it was the people. It was as good as the play, indeed it was much better, because it was the other way. Every one changed characters—changed into themselves. It was great fun. People who had told wonderful stories of their killing lions and tigers, and frightening slaves, turned quite white, and wrung their hands, and kept questioning the captain, like women, if there was any danger? And one man, who had laughed at the Methodists, and had sworn big oaths, actually came and asked my poor Chloe to pray for him. It was capital fun."

I began to think her rather elfish and hard-hearted—"cynical" I should have said had I known the word.

"Chloe is a Methodist," I replied, rather evasively. "I know a Methodist too, old Reuben Pengelly."

"Yes," she said; "the old man with the violoncello, in a scarlet waistcoat. Chloe loves him like a brother. And Chloe heard from him about you. He loves you all so much. Only Granny won't let her go often to the meetings. She says it gives those poor creatures notions."

"What notions?" I said, rising out of my life-long awe of Amice, with some indignation. "No one would get anything but good notions from Reuben."

"Good notions for white people, very likely," she replied; "but white people and black are not the same. At least so Granny says. I am not sure; however, it makes very little difference to Chloe. For she has her notions, wherever she is, and they make her very happy."

"What notions made her happy?" I asked.

"That God is very good, and loves every one, black and white. That He can make black people have white hearts," she replied softly. "It makes her very happy. But I cannot quite see it. At least if I were black I should find it difficult to think God had cared much, or taken much trouble about me."

"I did not see it once," I said, "till Reuben showed me."

"Did not see *what*?" she said, looking full into my eyes.

"That God was good to *me*," I said.

"To *you*!" she replied, rather scornfully. "Then you must certainly have been very cross and ungrateful. I can see that plainly

enough. You have a father and a brother!"

"He had taken away *Mother!*" I said. It nearly choked me to say it, but I felt I must. "And I *was* ungrateful, and did not understand Him. But I do now!"

She smiled a little peculiar smile of her own, sarcastic but not severe.

"*Understand God!*" she said, with a strange depth in her tone. "That is a good deal for a little girl. You are a year younger than I am. Reuben told Chloe."

"Understand that He is my Father, and is good, always," I said, "to every one."

"That is a good deal too!" she said; "more than I do. But Chloe does. She says our Saviour let a black man carry his cross. I am not quite sure of that. Because, they were not all black then in Africa, the history says. That is the worst of history. It disturbs so many nice notions. But Chloe knows nothing of history, at least only that one History. And it comforts her to think of that black man carrying the cross. Why I can't exactly see, even if it is true."

"Ah, Amice, I can see!" I said. "Wouldn't you have liked to carry it for Him?"

She paused a moment, and then said, very slowly and gravely—

"If He had given it to me. But He did not. It was only the Romans."

"It is almost always the Romans or the Jews who do lay things like that on people," I said. "But it was *His* cross. Ah, I do think I should have liked that! To have helped Him a little!"

"I think you would," she said, with a sort of tenderness that had not been in her voice before. "I would rather have beaten off the Jews and the soldiers."

"I should not like to have been the Romans!" she added, very low and sadly. "Do you think any one *can* be like that now?" she asked, with one of her sudden, inquiring looks, as if she would surprise an answer out of one's eyes.

The whole meaning flashed on me, and I was dumb.

"Because," she said, "if *that* History is always going on, as Chloe seems to think, there must always be the two sides, and one would like to be sure on which side one is."

"Do you care for flowers?" she resumed, changing her tone and subject suddenly. "I don't; unless they are wild. Furze and heather on the down, when one is galloping over it, are nice. But in beds they are tiresome. And especially in green-houses—

mere *things* in pots. It is dreadful to have to grow up. When I am seventeen I shall have to show Granny's visitors round the green-houses, and listen to them saying how gorgeous this flower is, and how lovely that leaf is, on and on for ever. Animals are what I like. They are so queer, and yet so fond of one. And one can so easily make them happy. And they have no souls, which is a great comfort, when creatures belong to one; it saves one from so much perplexity. At least no souls that can be lost; no conscience; that is the troublesome thing. Are you sure they have no souls of some kind? Dogs now, and some horses look as if they had some kind of souls *growing* in them, something *beginning* to be a soul. Don't you think so?"

I had never speculated on the psychology of animals. My chief personal attachments had been among cats, except indeed Pluto.

"I certainly never thought my step-mother's cat had a soul," I said. "If it has, it must be such a very bad one, I am sure I hope it hasn't. And I am sure it has no conscience. Nor my own kittens. They purr and rub against one, and are so soft and comfortable that I never thought of their wanting anything more."

"Cats? Certainly not!" she replied, decidedly. "I always think, one could have made a cat oneself, almost. All fur and purr, and wanting to be stroked. That is, *some* cats. There are others, like tigers, all cunning, and stealth, and spite, one could *not* have made, *would* not if one could. Ah, Bride! (may I call you Bride? It is so much more like you than Bridget) how many puzzles there are! Does it not seem as if the devil must have created some things?"

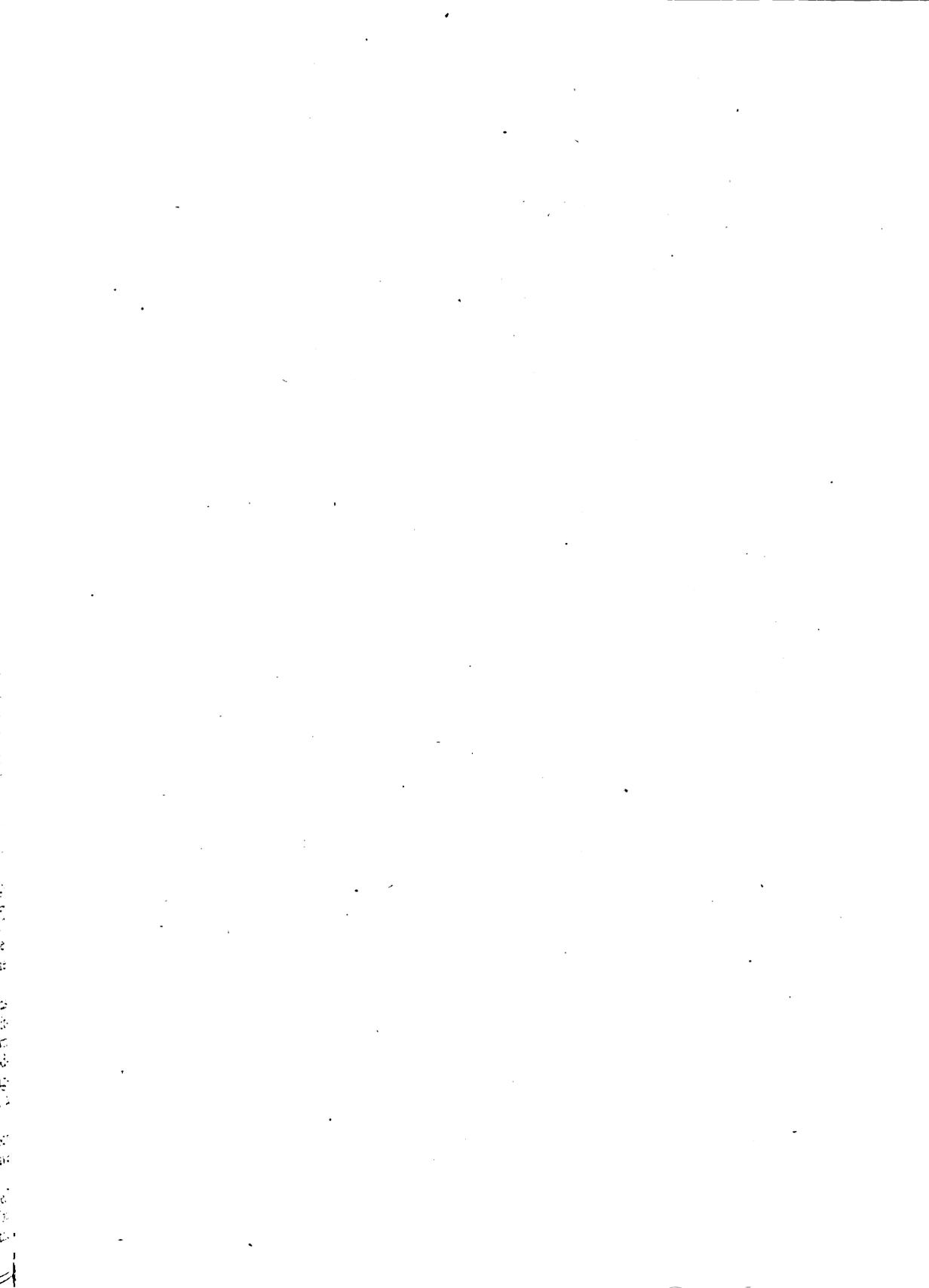
"The devil *create* anything!" I said indignantly. "No! God—the good God—created everything, and created everything good."

"It is not all very good just now," she said, shaking her head. "At all events, the devil has spoiled a great deal."

All this was said at intervals, as she was showing me round the place, garden, rabbit-hutches, pheasantry, poultry-yard, her own horse in the stables, where the great blood-hound fawned on her, and the large stag-hound put his paws on her shoulders in a rapture of welcome.

"There!" she said, "down Leo! poor fellow! Dogs one certainly could never have made."

"Some creatures love me, Bride, you see," she added. "I am not sure that *you* do. You think me too like a boy. You see I was the





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only child, there was no son, only a daughter, and I have to do for both."

She did care, then, to be loved. So daring and apparently independent, yet so sensitive to every change of feeling in those she cared about—she, too, had need of love, as much as I had.

For I had been feeling just a little doubtful about her; and she knew it as well as if I had said all I felt, in plainer words than I could have found.

We came to the kitchen garden.

"I like this," she said. "The vegetables have something to do. They are not like the flowers, fine ladies living to be looked at. Especially geraniums and dahlias, and camellias. They are as if they were stiffening into wax-work. Some of the flowers are just sweet and lovely because they cannot help it; and so natural and full of life, no gardeners can spoil them. Roses, lilies of the valley, the great white queen-lily, and violets. But vegetables, poor things, are always doing their best in an honest and simple way, and not thinking about themselves. And the flowers in kitchen gardens are always the nicest, don't you think? I suppose the company of the useful humble creatures improves them."

Then she led me silently to a mouldy little arbour in an angle of the wall.

"Don't you hate arbours?" she said. They are the most ridiculous things. They are neither open air nor indoors. And I hate all things and people that are neither one thing nor another. There is Clapham, for instance; stuck-up houses and bits of gardens always trying to look like country. How I should hate to live there; although your hero, Mr. Granville Sharp, does live there, and other people who are something like him!"

How much she had seen! Clapham, I knew was near London. My father had a first cousin there, to whom one day we were to pay a visit.

"What is it in you, Bride Danescombe, that makes me like you, and say everything I ought and I ought not to you? You don't say much. And I am sure you don't always like what I say. But you know it is quite useless for me to seem somebody else, and make you like that somebody else, and then wake up and find it was not me."

I wanted to say how much I did like her. But I could say nothing.

"Now," she said, with a little monosyllabic laugh—(she never laughed in peals, only

with her lips and eyes, and that one little quiet musical dropping of laughter)—"I will show you my likeness. I have kept it for you since the day you called Granville Sharp a hero."

And from a corner of the seat she took a little crocus-bulb. It had a curious long appendage to it like an ivory knitting-needle. "I found it, lying forgotten and forlorn, in a piece of turned-up ground," she said. "It could not get at anything to root itself in, in any natural, proper way, like other crocuses; and so it shot down this ugly thing, feeling and feeling for something to twist its roots about. *And at last it found something.*"

"Oh, Amice, Amice," I said, feeling those motherly wings fluttering all warm in my heart once more, "you mean you found *me!*—*Me!*"

And I knelt down and put my arms all around her, and hid my head in her lap, and began to cry.

"I do love you. We have liked you so long, Piers and I. But oh, indeed, you want more than me. What am I?"

"You are a good, dear little soul," she said; "as kind as old Leo or poor Chloe. And with a kind of soul and conscience which makes you, on the whole, better than Leo, especially as I have nothing to do with it."

And she gave me such a long kiss, and such a long, close hug—her whole heart seemed to come into mine.

And then, with her little short laugh again, she gently pushed me away, as one puts down a little child.

"There! what would Granny say? She would call it a 'scene.' And Mrs. Danescombe? All your pretty feathers ruffled as if you had been out in a south-wester. Come in and preen yourself, and Chloe shall help you."

Then again, with that quick sympathetic interpretation—"Not Chloe? Well, then, I will. But you may tell your little brother, Chloe is *not* a slave. There are no slaves in England now. Your Mr. Granville Sharp got that settled years ago, as you might have known, if he is such a hero, and you such lovers of blacks."

On our way in we met Madam Glanvil, as she was usually called in Abbot's Weir.

I had never seen her before, except at church, or in state in her coach. And now she was in her ordinary attire, a plain, closely-fitting woollen dress (woven in the cottage-looms of Abbot's Weir), rather short, with a hood, all grey—not Miss Loveday's grey, dove-like, but prosaic, black-and-white grey.

A very fine, erect, manly old lady, pacing through her fields and gardens in stout leather boots, with her steward.

"Grannie is like me," said Amice. "Since my grandfather died, she has to do for both."

Described in colour, her whole effect was steel-grey, as Loveday Benbow's was dove-colour. Her eyes were steel-grey, with clear, steely gleams, and also stormy, thunderous flashes.

She looked me all over, not, however, in a way which made me conscious of clothes. Then she nodded, rather approvingly, and then she said—

"Go in and get ready for dinner. You have seven minutes. Do you think I can wait for children?"

"She says whatever she likes, and no one can answer her," said Amice. "She is deaf, you know—so deaf that she never hears anything but what she likes, so that it is quite useless to be angry or to defend one's self. But she likes you, I see from her nod. Grannie's nod is like Jupiter's, you know, in the Homer; so don't be afraid."

The dinner was silent. And again, the weight of the big rooms, and the black footmen stepping as softly as my stepmother's cat, and the plate, and the Nankin china, like our very best, which was never used—were a little oppressive to me.

After dinner Madam Glanvil settled herself to her nap in a great chair by the window, and told us to go and amuse ourselves. But before she spread the Bandana silk handkerchief over her face, to keep off the flies (of which she spoke in language so strong, it sounded to me rather like swearing), she called me to her.

"Stand there in the light, Bridget Danescombe," she said, "and let me look at you."

There was something in her direct, imperious way which amused me; and not feeling under her sceptre, I stood fearless, looking up occasionally into her grey eyes, wondering what she would say or do next.

"That will do, child," she said, with her Jupiter nod. "You may go away and play. You are like your father, except bits of you that I don't know—your eyes and eyebrows. I suppose they are your mother's. The Danescobes are not a bad stock to come of, as old a family as any in the county, only on the wrong side, generally, as to politics, when there *were* politics worth thinking or fighting about: the older branch, but Parliamentarians; the younger branch managed better, stuck to the king, and are in the House of Peers. And I hear your father is

following the family ways—Whig or even Jacobin, or one of those philanthropists who are worse, always minding other people's duties. Don't flush and blush, child. People cannot help what they inherit. I have no opinion of people who change their family politics or religion; although it is a pity for them, of course, if they happen to be wrong. Your father is a gentleman, and a Danescombe—Danescombe of Danescombe. The pedigree is right enough. One thing I regret—he should not have gone into trade; though, certainly, younger branches and decayed branches sometimes must. It is better than begging, or than that vile law. I've seen enough of that—always leading one on, and then turning against one, and making charges for talking and writing. Beggarly! And the king's service certainly does not pay, or the Church, unless there is a family living. However, that's no affair of yours. You may come here whenever you like, and Amice likes. Only don't flush and blush, or throw yourself into raptures. And if Amice lends you a horse, which she may, to ride over the Down together, don't be nervous and throw it down, as town children are apt to do. And, if you can help it, don't be a philanthropist. I will have nothing to do with philanthropists. You look a sensible little maid, but rather soft and melting—the kind of stuff those people are made of. And being in the family, it is dangerous—infectious too. And, remember, I will have nothing to do with philanthropists. There, go and play, or ride, or anything you like."

And drawing the Bandana handkerchief over her face, she dismissed us.

"But," I said to Amice when we were alone, "it is a little trying that your grandmother should be deaf just in that way. It makes one feel dishonest not to answer her, especially when she says things about other people. If my father is what she calls a philanthropist, I am sure the last thing he does is to mind other people's duties. The motto he gave me was, 'Other people's rights, and our own duties.' Is it quite impossible to make your grandmother understand? at least about father?"

"Quite," said Amice. "And if she did hear that motto, she would not like him any better for that. She would think he meant it was his duty to look after people's rights and wrongs; and that is exactly what she objects to, as to the black people you are all so fond of. But I like the motto, Bride. Only, it might lead one, no one can tell where; at least *me*."

The nearer I came to Amice the deeper the mystery in her seemed. It was like wandering through a great northern pine forest, in the twilight; glimpses here and glimmerings there, and everything seeming to lead into a new infinity.

What had the shadows been which had lain so deep in her early life that they had made the faith natural to her a Manichean dualism? that terrible faith always ready to spring on us from the darkness of sin and sorrow, that evil is co-eternal with good, and in might perhaps co-equal.

CHAPTER X.

A WHOLE ocean of new life and thought was opened to us through the advent of Madame la Marquise des Ormes, Claire, and Léontine. There was also an Abbé, madame's brother, who occasionally appeared, but preferred to live in a large sea-port town about fifteen miles off. M. l'Abbé, like many of his countrymen, was not complimentary to his land of refuge. He said the most comprehensible thing to him in the character of the English was their passion for the sea. He could for himself see no way of living in such an island of "*brouillard*" and "*bourgeoisie*," except by keeping constantly in view the one means of escape from it.

Among the four we had brought before us four sufficiently characteristic phases of the France of our day.

Madame was Royalist to the core, with the chivalrous old French royalty which the death of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette enkindled into a passion and exalted into a religion. Monarchy and martyrdom united had surrounded the son of Saint Louis with a halo so mystically interwoven of earthly and heavenly splendours, that to see prosaic fact through it would have passed the penetration of any mortal vision. In the later days of Louis XIV., and through the reign of Louis XV., her family had lived a good deal in retirement on their estates. The ladies of the race especially had not shared in the sins and splendours of that corrupt and corrupting court, but had lived in familiar and gracious intercourse with their peasantry, never contemplating the possibility of a state of things in which great ladies could do anything but reign and distribute alms, and peasants desire anything but rapturously to receive alms and serve.

That there could be any great fundamental wrong in the nature of things which made it the highest hope of the majority of labouring

men to end life as dependent pensioners on the bounty of the minority never occurred to them. How could it have done so?

Such wrongs intertwined with the innermost fabric of society are, I suppose, seldom perceived from within, until the slow growth of abuse at last interferes with some elementary law of gravitation or cohesion, and the whole edifice crumbles into decay or crashes into revolution.

Besides, unfortunately, it is precisely those who would most gladly correct such abuses who naturally come least in contact with them. Their own virtues clear the region immediately around them, and if anxious and foreboding politicians talk of "Augean stables," they reply, incredulously, "Was ever stall cleaner swept than mine?"

Madame des Ormes from the first seemed to single out our family. She was sure there was French blood in our veins—the highest compliment she could pay; there was a peculiar curve of the eyebrow in my mother's picture and in me, never seen in pure English faces. It was true. My mother's grandfather had been one of the exiles in the Huguenot persecution. Ours was the only house in the town she volunteered to enter. My stepmother she considered a little "*bourgeoise*," but my father's manners she approved. Some people's manners she said were too much for them. Like badly made dresses, you could never forget that they had them on; and some people were unfortunate enough to have no manners at all. In the last category she included Madam Glanvil, who was the only person I remember her speaking of with a little tinge of *hauteur*.

Her natural social level was that of the Countess of Abbot's Weir. And I well remember the glory reflected on Madame and Claire, and even on Léontine, when the Countess's coach stopped at Miss Felicity's door, and the Earl and Countess went up into Madame's apartment.

I never knew what happened at Court. Madame, with M. l'Abbé and Claire, had been invited there with all ceremony, and entertained with all state; and Claire told me Madam Glanvil had offered to have them driven home in the family coach. But her mother had declined. "She was only a poor *émigrée*," she had said to Madam Glanvil, "and must disuse herself from such pomps." To Claire she said that nothing was so intolerable as that etiquette of the province, or "the great airs of the little noblesse." And she would never go to Court again.

Nor was Madame altogether charitable to Amice. She pronounced her a little wild: Madame "liked wild creatures in the forest—they had a fine free grace of their own; but in the *salon* one never knew what they would do next." "In a word, the whole household was Insular." I am afraid to Claire, Madame said, with a little compassionate shrug, "in fact, *English*."

Madam Glanvil, on the other hand, whose classifications were rather generic than specific, at once set down Madame la Marquise as frivolous and given up to vanities, M. l'Abbé as an ancient dandy, and Claire as a butterfly, and all three as, "in short, *French*." The only person of sense and character among them, she considered, was Léontine; but then Léontine was a Protestant, and made



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bargains, and did her work, and came to church like any other Christian, "so that she was scarcely to be called a Frenchwoman." I tried often to bring my two groups of friends together, but in vain.

The inevitable result of contact was effervescence. Pressed closer, it would have been explosion, at least, on Madam Glanvil's side. So I had to desist.

Meantime, whatever else we learned or unlearned, the meaning of many words expanded wonderfully through our intercourse.

French and English ceased to be the simple, plain definitions they had been. It was evident to us there were so many kinds of French. And to Claire, at least, it soon became evident that there were many kinds of English.

Then that word "*bourgeois*," how many puzzles it made for me; and also how many it helped to explain, in endeavouring to translate it to myself or to Claire! How much of English and French social life and politics lay wrapped up in it! Had we absolutely no synonym for it?

I had heard Madam Glanvil use the expression "town's folks" with something of the same unflattering emphasis. But then, with her, that meant not merely the lack of a social distinction, but of country habits. She would have used it with little less depreciation for fashionable men about town than for unfashionable men and women in Abbot's Weir. It meant people who could not ride, or hunt, or tramp about ploughed fields; effeminate creatures who carried umbrellas, and could not brave a herd of cattle. It had indeed to do in some measure with trade. Certainly trade was not to be accepted except as a last resource, and people who contrived to get rich by trade were to be set down.

But, there even, was no sharp impassable barrier between gentry and "town's folks." People of good family had (unfortunately, of course) to live in towns, and to go into business. Claire's father, on the contrary, under the *Ancien Régime*, would have had formally to resign his sword, and his cachet of nobility, before he could demean himself by trade.

In England there was, indeed, an aristocracy prouder, perhaps, than in France; but prouder because less fenced in. Pride had to hold firm the barriers law had left open. Titles which in the third generation ceased entirely, and a nobility continually recruited from the bench, the manufactory, and the counting-house, were, in a very different sense, sacred from the great old noblesse of France.

"*Middle classes*"—did that express the thought better? In some respects. But it also expressed the difference. Middle; that is, between the upper and lower. But where the upper ended and the lower began, who could say? Especially as neither upper, middle, nor lower, were stagnant waters resting at their own level, but all in a continual state of ebb and flow in and through each other; so that, with all due respect to the catechism, the "station to which God has called us" is by no means a fixed line, always perfectly easy to determine in a society, where nothing is stationary.

"Pleasant old barriers," Madame des Ormes thought, "when people were not always strug-

gling upwards, but content with each other, themselves, and their station." There were "stations" in those days; and people had "leisure."

"Pleasant, picturesque old barriers," my father said, "except that, within them all the time was gathering the flood which swept all barriers away, and much soil, and much life, which no floods could restore."

Pleasant evenings they were, when Madame des Ormes and my father sat on each side of the great chimney in the Stone Parlour. Madame always preferred the Stone Parlour. She said to Claire, who told me, that the Oak Parlour was like a state-chamber without the court; and the great drawing-room like a mortuary chapel without the sanctuary, only entered once a year, and terribly *bourgeoise*. But the Stone Parlour was like France, like the hall of an old château where they met after the chase. There were the sporting-dogs, and the great logs flaming and crackling, and cheerful talk, and going in and out.

My father spoke French easily, and understood it perfectly, a rare accomplishment for Abbot's Weir in those days; and to Madame his manner had a deferential courtesy which she said always reminded her of the Old Court.

Her dress I cannot so clearly recall; I suppose because it always seemed such a natural part of herself. But her manner charmed me inexpressibly. There was such vivacity and such suavity in it; such grace and such freedom. And then her whole person seemed an organ of speech. She spoke not only with her voice; or with her eyes, like Amice; but with every graceful bend of her throat, and turn of her arms. And as to her hands, their movements were like music. They made her conversation as sweet and as varied as singing.

She was, however, not without serious anxiety about my father. She thought him, like her poor brother the abbé, too "*philosophe*;" and had not they proved in Paris to what that led? Many a fragment of their conversation used to drop into our minds, as I was playing with Claire or Piers by the window, or as we sat silent by the fire, and interested me more than anything we were doing.

They had many a debate over Arthur Young, the traveller, in the course of which all kinds of curious details of old French manners and customs used to come out.

And those debates were sure never to spoil any one's temper. Many sparks were struck, but there were no explosions.

There was a common ground of tender pity for human creatures in general; and a sense that the world, and even the Church, in every corner of it, even to that most unsearchable corner within ourselves, needs a great deal of setting right.

Mr. Young, she would admit, might draw but too truly, gloomy pictures of famished men, driven in herds across the hills, unfed and unpaid, leaving their own fields untilled to render serfs' service to the seigneur.

"But, Mr. Danescombe—he should not have left out the other side—there are hard masters and hungry labourers in all societies. Or are you, perhaps, so fortunate as to have none? Are those parish apprentices you spoke of all exactly content, and well fed? Mr. Young should have come to Les Ormes; and you also, Mr. Danescombe. We would have entertained you with an hospitality not quite, I hope, unworthy of your own. You should have seen how the services our peasants had to render us in harvest or vintage or even on the roads were made quite a fête to them. We killed our oxen and our fatlings, and spread tables for them on the terraces of the château; and we, the ladies of the Castle, waited on them ourselves, and the sons and daughters of the Castle danced with them afterwards on the greenward. It was Arcadian; the costume of the peasantry blending with the toilettes of the old Court (each, of course, keeping to their own), the prince hand in hand with the peasant. Our peasants complain of our preserving forests for the chase? They were never so happy as when they accompanied us in the chase, and I assure you many a fine brace of game found its way from the seigneur's pouch to the labourer's *pot au feu*. They were afraid to complain, perhaps, you think? Quite the contrary. I see here nothing of the free speech there was between our people and ourselves. The quick wit of our countrymen and countrywomen, moreover, I assure you, could give us as good as we gave."

(I had heard Amice say much the same of the negroes.)

"They say our noblesse did not care for the poor. Mr. Danescombe, never believe it. Did not our mother teach us to make petticoats and jackets for the old women? And did not we dress the young brides from our own wardrobes with our own hands? Did we not make dainties for our sick, and tend them by the sick-beds? You should have seen our Christmas fêtes and distributions. The people adored us. So completely of the past as all that is, I may say it now with-

out vanity. They said no garments wore, and no dainties tasted, like those which came from our hands. Ah, Mr. Danescombe, they make me forget the Sermon on the Mount, those false accusers. But in those days, believe me, there were little secrets of that kind between us and the good God, which, if the poor deluded people forget, perhaps He will not. You think we were an exceptional family? My mother was perhaps an exceptional woman. Her piety had been learned at Port Royal, and some of our friends did sometimes accuse it of being '*tant soit peu Janséniste.*' One of our estates was not far from Port Royal des Champs. As children, we were sometimes taken to see the ruins. My mother could explain them: the church which they filled with corn for the poor, the gardens and fallen cells made sacred by their prayers, made doubly sacred by their charity; and she would never leave those poor up-turned graves without praying in memory of the holy souls of those who had lain there. As a child, I never quite knew whether, because by some inexplicable mischance they had missed the way of salvation and needed our prayers, or because we needed theirs. It was difficult. They were so saintly, so heroic, and yet condemned by those who should have known. Ah! Mr. Danescombe, sometimes a sad thought comes to me about our France. I wonder whether it can be possible, what our poor Léontine says, whether indeed we have driven away our heroes and saints, who could have rescued us; and so have nothing left to our country but the martyrs, who can only die for us. These, you know, the good God, and the malicious foe, suffer not to fail in any age or communion. The tradition of those good men and women of Port Royal lingered long among the poor of the district. And we called our little daughter herself after one of them, Claire—from the friend of St. Francis, founder of the poor Claires—and Angélique after the Mère Angélique."

"It was a beautiful and tender tribute, Madame," my father said. "May Mademoiselle be worthy of both her patronesses."

"I do not say there were no evils that deserved chastisement, and needed correction," she would say. "God knows there were many. Our Great Monarch had been too much like a god, for a mortal man, though a son of St. Louis, safely to endure. There are traditions of Versailles we would willingly blot out. But we were changing all that. *We!* Mr. Danescombe, the poor

noblesse whom your Whigs abuse, and whom our Jacobins have guillotined. Was it not we, alas! who commenced the Revolution? Did not M. de Noailles (M. le Marquis) propose equal taxation, the purchase from our order of certain feudal rights, and the absolute abolition of others, such as the *corvées*, or any compulsory service without compensation? And Mirabeau, and M. de Lafayette, mistaken as some of us may have thought them, were these men of the *bourgeoisie* or of the *canaille*? We had true instincts. We felt the tide must turn, was turning, and that we must lead it. And did we not try? We, and even our king?"

"You did try nobly, madame," my father said, sorrowfully, "at last."

"Ah, I know; it was too late. The stream was a flood. The tide was a deluge. But how could we tell? What could we do? It was, indeed, too late."

"Ah! Madame," my father said very gently, "I am afraid all reforms are too late which wait until the tide turns. All reforms which save from revolution must be not with, but *against the stream*. God grant we find this out in time. God grant England may not silence her heroes, and only be left her martyrs!"

But little Claire! Madame des Ormes, charming and sweet as she was always, remained a foreigner, an exile, with all her sweet familiar grace, a little apart, on a height we never forgot, and I am not sure that she did.

But Claire was our own from very early days, our very own, with a difference, a fascinating difference of nature, of tradition, of ideas, of tastes, which made her always as fresh and interesting as a new story.

If Amice lifted me outside our home, not without a shock, so as to see that in a new light, Claire lifted us outside Abbot's Weir, and even England, and that without any shock. She saw everything and every person through such a sunny medium, and made the world so delightfully larger.

For one thing she learned English, which her mother never attempted, and Léontine and M. l'Abbé never achieved further than as a means of commercial intercourse with the "barbarous people" who had, they confessed, received them "with no little kindness." She learned it carefully, thoroughly, only to the end deliciously blending her own idioms with ours, and giving to our English a clear *staccato* definiteness and delicacy which *pointed* it, as often she pointed my work, with the last finish of her accurate fingers.

And she taught Piers and me, in return, her clear graceful French, enjoying our amusement with her mistakes, and never laughing at ours.

Claire was not exactly a child, according to our English ideas. She had no shyness, or awkwardness; she seemed to have been born with that gracious tact, and that ready *savoir faire* which made the wheels of every day's life run smoothly. Where we were self-conscious, possessed by self, she was self-possessed, possessing herself, and all her faculties.

It was her natural tendency to agree with people, and please them if possible; to find out their angles to avoid them; just as in our Teutonic natures there is often a natural tendency *not* to agree with people, and to find out their angles to rub against them. Hers was the graciousness of a true aristocracy, not instilled by maxim, but infused by the life of centuries. Stiffened into a maxim, it might have read, "*Yield; because it is our right to command.*" Through all the courtsey there was a touch of courtly dignity which made half its charm.

It was a sunny atmosphere that Claire lived in, a positive sunshine, like that of her own land of purple vintages and golden harvests; she actually saw things softened, illumined, with all possible lights brought out, and the shadows glowing with reflections of the light that dwelt within herself; whilst many of us see things at best through a grey, clear, defining, unilluminating daylight, and pride ourselves in consequence on our truthfulness; as if sunshine were not as true as mere daylight. If Amice was like a Northern forest, full of glades and mysteries, Claire was like her own sunny land of vintage and harvests and valleys, that stand so thick with corn that they laugh and sing.

To make every-day life as pleasant as we can to every one around us may not be the very highest aim, but it is a good golden background for the severer work of life to be relieved upon. And it was on that golden ground Claire's world was painted.

Brave she was by instinct, and by chivalry of race, and ready to make her little person a shield against the world for those she loved or pitied, as she proved that memorable afternoon when she kissed me with the foolscap on.

But the joys of the fight were not at all comprehensible to her. Her delight was to make every one at peace with one another, and pleased with one another, and also with themselves.

When she came into your house, she always found out something pleasant in it you had scarcely noticed before. If your windows looked south, there was nothing so pleasant as a sunny aspect; if due north, there was nothing like looking out from the cool shadow into the sunlight.

She taught us first to see how beautiful our quaint old town was, in its green hollow of the hills. She had especial delight in our wild flowers. The banks of the three ancient roads which wound from it up the hills, worn deep by the rains and tread of centuries, were, she said, each one a hanging garden of delights, from spring to winter. She and Piers and I used to go on endless expeditions laden with baskets, which in spring were filled with masses of primroses, violets, or blue hyacinths. These, of course, we knew and loved of old; but Claire had a liberality in her love of flowers beyond ours. Everything came well to her; things we had called weeds and rubbish, she contrived to make lovely nosegays of; ragged robins, "twelve o'clocks," foxgloves, woodruffe, blue corn-flowers. She made her mother's little apartment gay all the summer through; and when flowers failed she brought in leaves. Leaves were her speciality, she said, bramble leaves above all. She said the flowers were her English china, better than all the old majolica and Sèvres in the château, and the autumn leaves were her English bijouterie and bric-a-brac, richer than all the old bronzes, and ormolu, with their metallic crimsons, and bronze, and gold. And "in shape" she said, "flowers were nothing to leaves." "The good God," she thought, "having left out the colours and perfumes, had all the more beauty to spare for the design."

How choice and fair she made that little room of her mother's!

In the corner was a little, low, narrow bed, like a couch; but Léontine had draped it with white muslin, always fresh, and contrived a coverlid out of some antique brocade, so that it looked like a canopied throne.

Then there was a little table, with a mirror behind it, and upon it a few relics, such as a jewelled snuff-box, with a portrait of a grandmother, powdered and frizzed, and one or two toilet ornaments. And in the window a common deal table, draped with muslin and frills, and always set with those rich masses of flowers, or leaves, in common white earthenware dishes, but looking as natural and at home as if they were growing on their own green banks. In a corner, a little table like an altar with a crimson antependium, and a

delicately-carved, pathetic ivory crucifix on it; and a richly-bound prayer-book. On the walls were four or five miniatures grouped, and one larger head, often tenderly garlanded, of the king, Louis XVI.

We had nutting and blackberrying expeditions, Piers and Claire, and Dick Fyford and I, Claire declaring that no fruit in the garden was equal to blackberries; and many an opportunity was afforded to Piers of risking his life by gathering nuts and berries from impossible places up precipices and over rivers.

Our old abbey buildings, also, were great bonds of union between us.

These, Claire said, were as much hers as ours, being built by the monks, who belonged to all Christendom, when there was one Christendom, long ago. And she made the old arches and towers live to us, by telling us of an abbey close to her father's château, where real living nuns had been cloistered, where the lamp was always burning night and day in the church before the altar, and a sister kneeling before it, until the Revolution had quenched the lamp, and scattered the sisters, and turned the convent into a factory, and the church into a granary.

I suppose Claire would not have been a great reformer of wrongs; although she certainly would not consciously have inflicted any. She would scarcely have pulled of her own will against the stream. Side by side with any one on whom that strain of energy devolved, she could lighten the strain inconceivably by delicately indicating how to avoid all avoidable collisions, by keeping rowers and steersmen awake to every counter-current and every possible favouring breeze, above all, by keeping alive in the hearts of the toiling crew, that generous candour, open to every palliation and every excuse for opponents, which is not a little hard to maintain when the stream against which they pull is the injustice and selfishness of angry human beings.

As a sufferer of wrong, nothing could be sweeter than she. Her hardest epithet for those who had murdered her father, and driven them all houseless and destitute from their fair, bright country home, was "deluded." Or if any severer denunciations ever passed her lips, they were always levelled at an impersonal "On," which had deluded every one. "Our poor, dear, deluded people," she would say, "they ('on') persuaded them that they would find gold mines in our châteaux, that they would be Rentiers, and all their starving children live like princesses, without impoverishing us.

I am sure they never meant to ruin us. How could they, with all mamma and papa had done for them all their lives, and grandmamma before? We loved them, these poor peasants, and surely they had loved us. They had danced us on their shoulders, and sung us songs, and laughed with delight when I lisped in imitation. I was their own in a way much as my mother's. And all at once they (*on*) came from Paris, and told them a quantity of falsehoods about the cruelties of the noblesse; perhaps also some true things, but certainly not what we had done. And those poor peasants went mad. And one night Léontine came in the middle of the night, and drew me out of bed, and huddled on anything she could find, and took me by the little back door, where my mother was waiting, through the wood, up the hill, to a cabin, our woodman's hut. And there we looked down and saw the dear old château illuminated more brightly than for any of our fêtes, but for the last time; flames breaking out of every window, and those poor, mad people shouting and dancing round it, where they used to dance with us, or wait for alms. They did not steal our things. They burnt them, Léontine said. And all because of what some wicked nobles had done somewhere else to other people. Was it not strange? Léontine said it was because of things further off even than that. She said things more precious than ormolu and ebony had been thrown into the flames, in old times; men and women, men and women of God!—her forefathers, she meant,—the Huguenots. She said it was God 'avenging His elect' at last. But *we* did not burn the people, nor hurt them, nor any one that we could help. And it seems a very strange kind of justice that my father, who was good to every one, should suffer because some one else's grandfather was cruel to people we never saw."

Poor little Claire, "*solidarité*" was a word that did not exist in her French. And yet in other ways she understood well that nations are not mere conglomerations of independent atoms, but that there is a deep and terrible reality in the words "national life."

Léontine had her own interpretation of events, to which she steadily adhered. She was the only one among them to whom the history of the Revolution did not seem an unintelligible chaos. "Generation after generation, Monsieur," she said to my father, "our poor France has driven away her heroes, those who could and would have saved us. It was not only that they hunted the Protestants away. It was the *strongest* and *bravest* of all the Protestants they hunted

away. The gentle, and timid, and helpless, and womanly remained. The *men*, the soldiers of the faith, the heroes, fled or escaped, to you, to Holland, to Prussia. *Our* strength and courage went to strengthen you, in Holland, England, and Prussia. And so when the flood came, there were none strong enough to stem it. Even the ladies and gentlemen of Port Royal, Catholics of the truest, spoke too much truth for France, and they were trodden down. Generation after generation our poor France has driven away her heroes, and silenced her prophets, and now she has none but her martyrs left. But those, Monsieur, believe me, of the best. All our great ladies and lords can suffer, cheerfully, nobly, piously, like apostles. There is blood in France as pure and noble as any in the world. But, alas! it seems only to flow for the scaffold."

CHAPTER XI.

VERY soon after my first day with Amice Glanvil at Court, it was decreed that Piers's path and mine were to separate; that he was thenceforth to attend Mr. Rabbidge's boys' school, whilst I was to continue with Miss Felicity, with the understanding that three afternoons a week were to be spent with Miss Loveday learning embroidery, fine needlework, dress-making, and millinery in general, as far as Miss Loveday's exquisitely neat fingers and her very subdued tastes could instruct me.

It was a terrible day to me that first morning when Piers and I had to go our different ways to school.

He had a longer walk than mine, and had to start first.

He was full of glee. The last remnants of childish attire had been laid aside. There was in those days at Abbot's Weir no intermediate boy's costume. Piers sallied forth, fully equipped in a miniature edition of my father's "coat, hosen, and hat."

His very shoes had a manly tramp in them, as he marched down the street. And I stood alone watching at the old arched door, feeling terribly feeble, "female," and forlorn.

At the corner he had the grace to halt and turn, and give me a protective masculine wave of the hand, before he disappeared, so glad and free in his sensible tight garments, made of things that would not tear, made so as to be convenient for climbing and racing, and everything I delighted in, and in general with a view to being as little obstructive as possible; while mine seemed expressly constructed with a view to being obstructions in

the way of everything it was best worth while to do, and filling up all the leisure spaces of one's life with making and mending them.

He had good reason to be glad; and for him I was proud and glad too. I would not have had him go a day longer with me for all it cost me.

To him it was a beginning, and through him for me also. But to me it was an ending also: so many things that are beginnings to brothers are endings to sisters.

He was to go on and out in so many ways—out into the world of boys, and of men, out into the world of Greek and Latin, and all kinds of wisdom, ancient and modern—whilst I was to go no further than round and round Miss Felicity's history and mythology lessons, the geographical lists of countries, provinces, and capitals, and the first rules of arithmetic, my only progress being, out of "round hand," business-like and legible, into "small hand," angular, ladylike, and indefinite.

In my double relation to Piers I felt smitten. As his sister, I was never more to be his constant, hourly companion; as his "little mother" I could watch over him and protect him no more, except as a helpless hen-mother a brood of ducklings. He was launched into an element where I could not follow him; he must make his own way, meet his own temptations, encounter his own dangers, fight his own battles, whilst I could only cluck and flutter my wings on the shore.

And he liked it, of course; he delighted in it, felt a generous trust that I delighted in for his sake, and had no idea, should never have any idea, I determined, that when he was quite out of sight, I went into the Stone Parlour, and seizing the kitten, rushed up with her to the inmost recess of the old nursery, which was now my bed-room, and seating myself on the little cot that had been his, where I used to say my prayers beside him, and had felt like his little mother, cried bitterly, and sobbingly told pussy that now I had no one to take care of but her, "no one in the world!"

The old church bell striking the school-hour broke in on my lamentations. I symbolically anointed my head, and literally washed my face, crossed the market-place, and got into the school before the chimes had finished; so that no one, I flattered myself, would see I thought it anything but a step onward in life, to have a brother at Mr. Rabbidge's.

But all the morning the tears kept very near the brim, and I felt Amice Glanvil's searching, wistful eyes on me.

At the end of the morning school, when we were left alone, as we often were, whilst she took the dainty little repast prepared for her dinner, she came up to me and grasped both my hands with one of her abrupt passionate movements.

"Bride, I cannot be sorry for you," she said; "I have tried. But it is of no use. Next to being a man oneself, there can be nothing better than to see one's brother beginning to be on the way to be a man. Think of what they can do! Think what he is going to learn to be, he and Dick Fyford, and all of them. They are gone to learn to be soldiers, to fight for England, and sailors to man great ships for England; and doctors to cure people's diseases, and lawyers to set people's wrongs right. (For that is what I think lawyers are for, though Granny says they are only to puzzle right and wrong together so cleverly, that no one can find the way through without paying toll to them.) And masters, to employ men; or writers of books, to teach men. How can you be anything for a moment but glad that Piers is beginning?"

For she knew quite well I was not very glad.

"I shall be very glad to-morrow, Amice," I said.

"Then be glad to-day," she replied. "I have no patience with people who keep turning their faces the wrong way, and sighing and crying because we must leave things behind. Of course, we are always leaving things behind. Look the other way, and see what is before you, Bride Danescombe."

"I do not mind leaving things behind, Amice," I said, thinking her a little hard. "It is being left behind that is hard to bear."

"Then *don't* be left behind," she replied, with her rare little laugh. "Go on! I mean to go on, although I am only a girl. But then, of course, I have no brother, so I have to do for both. But if I had a brother—a brave little brother like Piers, wouldn't we set some things right, together!"

"But I cannot go on, Amice," I said. "You know I have come to an end of Miss Felicity's lessons. And there is nothing to do but to go round again, and to sit still and sew."

"Sitting still and sewing *is* dull," she said emphatically. "Happily for me, Chloe does all that, and there are plenty more." Then, suddenly, her face flushed as with a new thought, and she added, "Do you know, Bride, I think I will ask Granny to let me learn sewing with you. One never knows what

one may have to do. And in learning of Miss Loveday one learns so many things more than she knows she is teaching."

That was a bright prospect for me—afternoons with Amice and Miss Loveday; and I left the room greatly cheered.

But in the afternoon little Claire had made some excuse of a message to our house, and we crossed the market-place back to Miss Felicity's together.

She said nothing; but as she put her dear little hands in mine, I knew well what she meant. She wanted me to feel I had some one to take care of still. And in the evening, between Amice's bravery and Claire's soothing, I felt almost as bright as Piers himself when he swung into the passage, and his joyous voice rang through the house, calling for me.

There was a button to sew on and a rent to mend in those clothes which I had envied as so imperishable. And there was a history, brief but vivid, of the encounter with a bully of a big boy, which had occasioned the damage.

Piers had begun his battle of life with wrestlings literal enough. He did not tell me the name of his adversary, nor could I gather quite clearly the issue of the encounter, except what might be inferred from the explanatory statement that "he could not help it, he could not see any fellow, whatever his size, throw stones at old black Cato, and call him names, and not try to stop it, and if the big fellow were to try it again, he must do the same."

He had, moreover, a suspicious mark on his eyebrow, which, with all his anxiety to conceal it, and all my bathings, grew deeper in tint, so that Piers had to select retired places, lest my stepmother's vigilant eyes should detect that he had begun boy life so pugnaciously.

It was plain that there would be points enough at which my brother's life and mine would meet, and that he would need his little mother at many extremes yet.

Apparently, the "big fellow" did try it again, for Piers came back a few days afterwards with a peculiar twinkle in his eyes, and with a scar on his cheek.

"He did not give it me," was all he vouchsafed in explanation, "it was only a corner of a stone I came against in falling. But he was under, and I don't think he will try it again."

"Other people's rights and our own duties?" I ventured to ask.

But Piers would explain no further.

"It was a mean thing, in his opinion, to brag of things out of school before girls."

The force of the contrasts was strong on him.

Dick Fyford, however, told me enough to show that Piers had won his spurs.

Claire and I were decidedly proud of Piers's black eye. It consoled us for being girls and being left behind, to find him so unmistakable a boy.

But all our small public opinion was by no means unanimous on the subject. My stepmother "must beg that for the future, if Piers could not keep out of quarrels, he would quarrel in a gentlemanly way, with gentlemanly boys, and not get his face disfigured in a manner which made it unfit for ladies to sit at meals with him; and, above all, not in his new coat. She wondered Mr. Danescombe did not take the matter more seriously. But it was so difficult to persuade him to take anything about the children seriously."

My father merely said—

"My dear, it is impossible not to envy a little the sanguine Quixotism of these young people. Piers," he added, "if your black eye would begin to set the whole world and all its wrongs right, it would be a very well-invested black eye; and no doubt you are of opinion it will. But remember you have only two eyes, and only one new coat, and for our sakes, please take proportionate care of each."

Piers and my stepmother were both silenced, neither seeing clearly where the little sarcasm fitted best.

But Miss Loveday was profoundly serious on the subject.

"My dear Piers," she said, in her gentlest voice, falling, as usual with her in agitated moments, into the "plain," Quaker mode of speech, "thee will never win the true battles in that way. The weapons of the true warfare are not fists."

"But boys have not any others, Miss Loveday," he said.

"It is written, 'Love your enemies,'" said Miss Loveday, with tears in her eyes; "Forgive them that hate you."

"But I have no enemies," replied Piers; "and as to forgiving people who hurt other people who are helpless, I cannot. I might have hated him if we could not have fought it out; but now there is no need to think of it any more."

Miss Loveday shook her head.

"Pride can forgive an injury it has avenged," she said. "Besides, we are told what to do if we are smitten."

Piers made no reply; in the art of verbal self-defence he was not strong. Besides, Miss Loveday was a woman, and deaf; and to defend oneself against a woman in the vehement form argument is apt to appear to take with deaf people seemed to him, I believe, unchivalrous. But he said afterwards to me—

"It says nowhere, Bride, that we are to do nothing but be patient if *other people* are smitten on the cheek. And if the Sermon on the Mount means that, it must be meant for men, not for boys. Grown men have the Assizes and the Parliament, and all that kind of thing to stop other people from doing wrong; but we have nothing except our fists. Besides, there is the Old Testament. David and all of them often had to fight."

"Claire and I don't think you at all wrong," I said, "nor, I think, does father."

But this did not console Piers. I think he was more ashamed of our admiration of Miss Loveday's remonstrance.

"It *is* hard to have such a fuss about nothing, only because I was so unlucky as to get hit where it would be seen. Boys are always getting hit, of course."

In Ulphilas' translation of the Scriptures for the Goths, we are told that the translator left out the Books of Kings, thinking his Goths too likely to draw such encouragement as Piers did from the warlike proceedings therein recorded.

But Piers had plunged into the primitive age of Lynch-law, and "vigilance committees," with which the world is always renewing its boyhood for young human creatures.

Homer seemed to him an imperishable picture of life; only he could never make out how the Greeks could both scold and fight. The scolding, he thought, was the natural share of those who could not fight; and the talking, of those who could not work, or *make*.

Criticism he considered the natural province of women, or of men who have nothing to do. It was not till later that he learned how some talking is making, and some words are battling.

The streams of our lives seemed running very far apart. For as Piers's life went forth more and more into the din and tumult, mine withdrew more and more into retirement.

So much farther apart are boyhood and girlhood, than womanhood and manhood, the parting and distribution necessary to the deeper meeting and uniting.

Even our amusements separated. Claire and I pursued our strawberry, and flower,

and blackberry gatherings, and nuttings, our gardenings, and rambles alone, whilst Piers and Dick Fyford were shouting over cricket and football.

It was chiefly in making and mending that our lives seemed still linked.

For ministries in the form of mending there was no lack of opportunity. And Piers, now promoted to a real carpenter's bench and perilous workman's tools, constructed many a basket and box, and even chair and table, for Claire and me.

Amice, he always continued to maintain, was "almost as good as a boy;" besides, she had the glory of three additional years; and with her (his self-banishment from Court having been tacitly annulled in consideration of Granville Sharp's achievements) he had many a daring gallop, not to say, steeple-chase, over the downs and moorlands.

But it was always the flowers which Claire loved that he contrived to remember, and to pour out now and then in a careless, casual way from his pockets, when he returned from his expeditions, and to empower me, if I liked, to carry over the way.

Meantime, we sewed, and Loveday listened, like Joan of Arc to her "voices," and talked to us. That longing for the liberation of the negro slaves which she had inherited from her Quaker ancestry, and which had been as a patriotic passion to her lonely life, could not but come out in those long quiet afternoons. At first she hesitated to speak of it before Amice. But one day, when she had broken off in some story of wrong, Amice rose, and coming close to her, said, in those low clear tones Loveday always heard so well—

"Do not stop. You cannot tell me worse than I know. When I was a child, I heard the cries from the punishment house; I saw the spiked collars, and the scars. You cannot tell me worse than I fear. Tell me, if you can, anything to give me hope."

And Loveday told us the story of the struggle, so that the far-off fields of Pennsylvania and New England, where John Woolman and Anthony Benazet toiled for emancipation until not one Quaker held a slave, grew to us a land of sacred romance.

Dear to us also was the story of the poor bruised and half-blinded slave, Jonathan Strong, left to starve by his master, how he was nursed, and fed, and tended, and clothed by Granville Sharp and his brother the surgeon; and then how out of that movement of natural pity, obeyed, grew the whole noble immortal work of Granville Sharp's life; how, alone, against the stream

of lawyers and judges, and against the law itself embodied in an iniquitous decision, and confirmed by the opinion of Blackstone, he turned the stream, and brought round lawyers and judges, and at last the very law itself, constraining Lord Mansfield to demand the broad issue which he had so long evaded, and to pronounce the liberating words, that whenever a slave touches English soil he is free, thus virtually pronouncing slavery itself a wrong, and laying the axe at the root of the tree which from that moment began unperceived to totter to its fall.

So we sate and sewed and listened afar off to the echoes of many warfares, until under Miss Loveday's influence, sewing itself became ennobled to me, and seemed an essential part of the warfare.

"For in all wars," she said, "the battles are but the crises of the campaign, the tests of strength long-trained and long-tried. People are victorious by virtue of what they were before the battle. It is not only the men who wield the weapons that fight, but the men who bring the meat and bread, the men who till and plough, and sow the corn and herd the cattle, and," she added, with a growing intensity in her voice, "the women who bake, and milk, and churn, and sew, and bind up the wounds."

Men's work: tilling, herding, ploughing, and fighting.

Women's work: cooking, sewing, and nursing; that is, making raw material of all kinds, material, mental and moral, corn, axioms, principles, into bread for daily use and lint to bind up actual wounds.

Claire and I grew quite content with our feminine lot. But Amice said, "some women had to take their share in the actual fighting, she believed."

"Queens," I conceded.

"All women have to be a kind of queens," she said, "when there are no men in the family. There is no Salic law which screens orphaned or widowed women from taking their place on the throne, or their part in the battle."

And sometimes, she said to Miss Loveday, "It is the waiting that is so trying. If it were all real working, I would not mind a bit what the work was. It is the waiting and doing nothing for any one that eats into one's heart like rust."

"Waiting need not be doing nothing," Loveday said. "I have had a good deal of it, and I have not found it so."

"Waiting may be waiting on God," she added very softly, "and I think there is little work as good as that."

And as we looked at her patient face, so pale and worn, and yet so often radiant from within, we understood something of what she meant.

ON MONEY.

BY THE REV. A. W. THOROLD, M.A.

III.—LENDING AND BORROWING; AND CAREFULNESS AND CONTENTMENT.

AMONG the practical lessons which a careful parent will constantly inculcate on his children, and the pithy maxims that will be falling from his lips, almost without his knowing them, none can be more important in their nature, more incessant in their influence, or more permanent in their result, than those which bear upon money. It is easy to make too much of it, and it is possible to make too little. Where the one aim of the head of a family is plainly seen to be rich; and the constant burden of his talk is on the power and importance of money; his children will inevitably be trained for their father's Mammon-worship, and the air of filthy lucre they daily breathe will insensibly impregnate their moral character. If, on the other hand, they see money treated as a matter of utter indiffer-

ence; if before their eyes day by day, expenses are incurred without means to meet them, and the last question ever asked about anything is what it will cost, there will be a tendency in the other direction to impair the quickness of the moral sense in money matters generally, habitual self-indulgence will seem to be the natural order of things, and to wish for anything, will mean instantly to try to procure it. No doubt in many persons there are what may be called hereditary ideas about money: some are born frugal, others extravagant; and be the circumstances of life what they may, the original bias will assert itself from the nursery to the grave. But a great deal may be done by carefully educating children in the true value of money as means to an end. There are

various ways of doing it, and some of them will at first be disappointing. Different characters must be differently treated, and an age, which might be suitable for one young person to be trusted with money, might be very unsuitable for another. You begin to give your boy an allowance, with much good advice on the right way of spending it; and you are mortified, when he returns for his first vacation to find that you have to pay the money twice over; for his allowance is all spent—he really does not know how—and the bills, which it ought to have paid, are sent home to you. Well, give him a sharp scolding; be sure not to let him think you feel him capable of having wilfully deceived you; cheerfully trust him again, and the chances are it is the last time it will happen. If it is good for lads to be gradually trained to the use of money, it is quite as important for girls. Not only is it an additional interest in their life; but it prepares them for the time when they will have to keep house for a husband or a brother; and it is a constant opportunity of secret self-denial to devout hearts, that love to spare what they can for God.

The chief thing, however, that wise parents should din into their children's memory, and impress on their consciences almost from the first hour they are capable of understanding it, is the misery, and bondage, and even disgrace that come with debt. Borrowing seems so easy, and lending so natural, and youth is buoyant with hope, and conscious of integrity. "It is only for a short time, and payment will easily be made; and who need know?" But a tendency of this kind should be burned out of a young man's nature as with a hot iron. It is a fault towards which an inflexible sternness is at once the kindest, and the only effective remedy. An indulgent easiness in the early days of youth may foster a habit, which will paralyze the sinews of robust action, and reduce ultimately its victim to the contemptible condition of being either a mendicant or a thief. If the earliest commission of a fault of this kind is severely punished at the moment, the first fault may be the last; while one condoned offence may be, not only to the offender, but to all the rest of the family, a false symptom of parental weakness, that may result in a harvest of sorrow. It is true that if no one would lend, no one could borrow. But not all lending is to pay debts, and not all borrowing is to discharge them. As a rule, it is sometimes better where there is a claim of blood or friendship

on you, to give half rather than lend all. Where there is delicacy of feeling the request is not likely to be repeated from the same quarter, and often you are as happy to aid, as your friend to be aided. There will often also be cases where, from the conviction that the granting of a loan would be mischievous or useless, for very friendship's sake, though painful, it is our duty firmly to say No.

But lending as a rule from friend to friend or relative to relative is always a very hazardous proceeding on one side, if not on both; for the time of repaying is never quite convenient, and a borrower's memory is often treacherous. It is a cynic's remark, founded on painful experience of average human nature, that to get rid of a man you don't want, the shortest way is to lend him money; and it is beyond question, that in money transactions between near kinsmen,—to avoid a feeling of painful obligation to the one, and the possibility of real inconvenience to the other,—the best way of managing it, is as a matter of business.

A dry and somewhat dull subject is now drawing to its close; and it is not easy to light it up either with the gleams of fancy or the touches of feeling that float other topics on a reader's sympathies. There are still, however, two points of view, in which it may be usefully considered for the benefit of those who have but little of it, and for the study of all, who have yet to be convinced that be it much or little, it never leaves us as it finds us, it makes us worse or better. One of the wisest and kindest of our living authors has said, "How happy life can be with plenty of employment and very little money;" and his words will perhaps more easily find acceptance with those who have made their money, than those who have it yet to make. It will, however, seem less of a paradox, if we limit its application mainly to that period of life when the character is full of energy, the body active with vital power, and when the exquisite and unsated instincts of enjoyment find an ever-varied scope in pursuits and engagements to which advanced life is unequal. But paradox or not, it is true. In the increase of wealth there is ever an increase of worry. Your money must be invested, and you cannot easily decide as to the right way of doing the best with it. Or you make costly purchases, which often want more looking after than you ever bargained for. The more you buy the more the margin of your cares is increased, the more numerous are the hostages that you give to fortune. You can't lose what you don't possess. Burglars will not steal your simple plate, which they never

suspect to be silver ; no one cheats you with the horses you do not wish to buy ; you are saved perhaps a week's vexation by never being outbidden for a picture which you had resolved on securing ; the storm that sweeps down the lofty forest trees spares the humble shrubs that clasp the hill.

To have just enough, and to know that it is enough, and to be thankful for it,—this is the secret which the Gospel long ago proclaimed to mankind, but which the wisdom of this world rejects with scorn. And to suppose that a modest competence, such as modern times would call utter poverty, has no real charms or vivid enjoyments of its own, is a profound mistake. It is full of joy, though of the simplest and sweetest kind. Let some of us old married people who, after twenty or thirty years hard work, have a little more to live upon than when we first started (though, indeed, we have very much more to do with it), look back to the days long ago, when, in a tiny house, and with simple furniture, and the whole world in front of us, each other's love sweetened every care of life. Are we so much happier now, when every half-crown does not want such sharp looking after, than when we had seriously to consider if we could afford a week's holiday, or invite the visit of a friend ? How rich, too, we thought ourselves then, if we had once in three months a five-pound note to spare and spend ! How we talked over this way and that of doing the best with it ; and at last picked up something to make the little drawing-room brighter, or perhaps bought some second-hand books for the shelves. The enjoyment was so keen because the pleasure was so rare. Incessant work brought its own reward with it ; never to expect is never to be disappointed. This is also just as true in the question of holidays. Many people now travel third-class without being in the least ashamed of it ; and if they are a little more tired at the end of the day, they have the money in their pockets which the difference in the fare has saved. A country farmhouse where you have to keep your jar of live-bait in the same room where you eat your meals, and where you share your simple shelter with the dogs of the house, if not with the pigs and chickens, will cost less, but be every whit as enjoyable as the well-furnished villa, with its walled garden and greenhouse, but where at the end of your stay, you have to pay for every dent in the wall and scratch on the paper, the air no fresher, the country no lovelier, but the rent greater, and the life so much less of a real change.

Besides, a certain scantiness of purse makes the wits strangely keen in ways of laying out money to the best advantage. You take trouble, you make inquiries, you hunt, and compare, and calculate ; and when you have run down your game, it seems doubly earned. Majestically to walk into a shop, calmly to select the first thing that suits you, always to have money enough to pay for it, never to be compelled to choose what is worse because it is cheaper, no doubt has its advantages ; and who would undervalue them ? But there are real compensations for the multitude, who, so to speak, have to make an appetite for their food by first earning it ; and among the simple and innocent enjoyments of quiet people, none, perhaps, has more zest in it, or reward after it, than a long day's search for some special object, which they cannot give more than a certain sum for, and which they know is to be had if they are not afraid of trouble.

Besides, there is not only much happiness to be enjoyed consistently with the circumstances of what is now called poverty, there is also much happiness to be given. The secret of being well off is to know how to do without things. The secret of helping others to be well off is not the monopoly of those who can give great presents or confer big favours ; it is also with those who can make trifles go a long way on the errands of kindness, and who can brighten their gifts with love, if they cannot gild them with splendour. This age is dear in some things, but it is cheap in others. All round, probably, it takes much more to keep a family even in the simplest fashion than a generation ago. But life is much less dull, and shut up, and commonplace, and uninteresting, than it used to be, when there were no railways, no cheap press, no penny postage, no croquet, no Mudie's library. There is more refinement in some homes, if there is more luxury in others ; and if meat and rent cost more, clothes and tea cost less. But all this bears on the possibility of making others happy, limited as our means may be ; in the occasions of simple hospitality, in the lending of books and writing of letters ; and interchange of trifling but pleasant gifts. No doubt it is delightful to receive a fifty-pound note from a kind grandmother, and to be told you are to do with it just what you please ; but sometimes that which costs only five shillings gives just as much pleasure ; and a bright heart that loves to see a child smile may buy as many smiles as it wants for sixpence apiece.

Money, too, is character, in the way it indicates and develops the moral disposition,

whether for evil or good. Almost the first advice that a kindly man of the world would give to a youth just entering upon it would be, "Never treat money affairs with levity." It has been said of horses that they are noble creatures in themselves, but that somehow they contrive to demoralise all who have much to do with them. It may with equal truth be said of money, that in itself it is a necessary and useful thing; but unless we handle it carefully it will burn our fingers. A professional man who permits his wife to open his letters, had better keep his counsel to himself, for cautious clients may not like it; and when a person entrusted with other people's money permits any one but himself to sign his cheques, he runs a risk which it may be hard to justify.

Then every one has some weak point about money, and almost every one is extravagant in some things and penurious in others. A noble nature is noble with money. It is just what one would have expected of gallant King Amadeus, that he should insist on restoring the Escorial out of his own purse. Small-natured people are small with their money, and to get sixpence out of them is like drawing a double tooth. Wasteful people are often stingy; for this is their only way of recouping themselves for their improvidence. Stingy people are often wasteful, just because they are stingy. A stitch in time saves nine. Timidity often defeats its own purpose. Rome in the end had to pay as much for the three remaining books of the Sibyl as would have bought the six others; and a little courage in buying is sometimes the truest economy. It is an inspired maxim, "that he that hateth suretiship is sure." But it does not need inspiration to see that no one should consent to be a trustee for others who is not prepared to take the necessary trouble, or who is not qualified by the proper experience for fairly doing his best. Money committed to us for a particular purpose should, in the absence of discretionary power, be strictly spent on it, or fresh instructions procured. With certain persons it is a necessary precaution, not only to indicate the way in which your money is to be expended, but to take care that it gets there. Some people have a deep crack running from head to foot through their moral nature. If you send them money for a child's schooling, it is spent on a silk gown; or the cheque that you intended to fill their coal-cellar is as likely as not to go for a trinket. Where some people make their money go much farther than others do, it is not necessarily

because they are so much more clever, but because they give their minds to it, and feel it a duty, as well as a pleasure, to make the most of it. *It is almost always those who have least money who indulge themselves most, and those who have most money who indulge themselves least.* Do you doubt it? the reason is clear. When you have something to lose, it is a matter of importance not to lose it. If you have nothing to lose, to plunge a little deeper under water can hurt no one but the unfortunate tradesman who gives you credit. In solemn truth, there can be no kind of doubt that excessive expenditure of living is one of the great vices of the time; and it would be well for all of us if the power of the pulpit were more frequently and vigorously exercised in sternly discountenancing the selfish thoughtlessness that buys what it cannot pay for, and in stigmatizing a deliberate and persevering extravagance by its proper name of fraud.

Yet carefulness about money has its own dangers. When an Apostle wrote to the Church of God, "Let your conversation be without covetousness," and a Hebrew prophet ages before him sternly denounced the then growing habit of adding house to house and field to field, it was because then, as much as now, every virtue has a tendency to deteriorate into a corresponding vice; and if to waste money is a fault, to love it is a sin. Now it is much easier to come to love it than some of us may suppose. To be always worrying about small expenses, or regretting past losses, or talking about prices, or even comparing too closely and anxiously one year's accounts with another's, will secretly, but inevitably mildew the spirit with a kind of sordid earthliness. To give away will become harder, for we shall soon fancy we cannot afford it; and what at first was but a just carefulness about daily spending, if not watched against, will presently change even a liberal man into an utter screw. And then your punishment will come in the shape God sees you to need, and in the shape you will most dread. Either the wealth itself will be taken from you, and the idol of gold will be shattered before your eyes; or some child or heir for whom you were destroying your very soul is taken from you, to the incorruptible treasure of the better country; and then the psalmist's sentence comes home to you as with the thrust of a sword-point—"He heapeth up riches, and cannot tell who shall gather them."

Perhaps there is hardly any sin to which religious people are more prone than covet-

ousness; nor any kind of inconsistency which worldly people are more quick to detect, and more severe to denounce; nor any which a righteous God hates with more perfect hatred, and more inflexibly pursues with his loving chastisement until either it is scourged out of the soul, or the sinner is left to his idols.

The end of it all is this. If money comes, let it come. He who sends it does not mean it to hurt us. We need not fear it with a feeble terror, though no one sin has ruined so many souls as covetousness. We will not spring at it with a flutter of excited joy, for it is a grievous trial to the humblest and simplest.

And if money goes, let it go. Only let us see that it does not go through folly or sin of ours. Job lost his in one way, and Lot lost his in another. The end of Job was a crown of glory, but the candle of Lot went out in hideous night. Probably there are few of us who have lived to middle life, very few indeed who have passed it, to whose door could be laid no error of judgment in spending their money, no taint of conscience in making it. In this greatest of great trusts who has not sometimes failed? Conscience has said, "Give," and we have not given. We have steeled our hearts, and summoned our coldest judgment to justify us in refusals, which now we would gladly get back; but it is too late. Witnesses to our self-indulgence surround us in every room we enter; if we have done something for our Lord, our heart whispers we might have done so much more!

But there is time in front; and He who gives us power to get wealth will also give us wisdom to use it, if we really ask Him. Let us be wise, simple, and kind.

Wise as those who have been called to liberty, and mean to use it; believing in God's love to us, understanding that He intends and expects us to be happy; with a healthy conscience that does not chafe us about every halfpenny, yet guided in all we do by the steady purpose of a heart that has been taught to value the precious things of God.

Simple, so that money shall not spoil us with its influences of power, nor vulgarise us with its tendencies to vanity, nor coax us with the softness of its luxury. Surely some allowance should be made for rich people as well as for poor. If God, who knows their difficulties, must be ready to bear with them, let us bear; but let us also see how blessed is the lot of those who, being neither rich nor poor, dwell in the temperate zone of a

kind of safe table-land, which is neither chilled by want, nor swept by tropical storms. Oh, how terrible must death be to a rich man, who has never so used his riches as to have friends to welcome him into the heavenly habitations, and whose only idea of Lazarus, in the other world, is that he should still wait upon him there!

And kind, for "blessed is he that considereth the poor;" and if every one is poor in something, in which some one else is rich, great are the opportunities of little kindnesses, not only from equals to equals, but from one class to another class, whereby but a small amount of money will enable thoughtful hearts to smooth the hard pillow of their suffering kinsmen. There are many and various cups of cold water which tender hands can lift to hot lips with the promised blessing of their Divine Redeemer; many little gifts, and many secret offerings, which He will publicly recognise in the Great Day. Do we all quite see what is put into our power if our hearts are kind, though our means be scanty? Do we clearly understand that the true virtue of almsgiving is in being our own almoners? that the trifle from our own hand pressed into hot and thinned fingers, with a smile that gleams with sympathy, and a word that recalls the presence of Christ, is worth ten times more to man, perhaps also to God, than a purse of gold sent through a stranger. Oh, there are so many ways, if only we cared to think of them and walk in them, of softening hardship and cheering sadness, of lifting off burdens from heavy shoulders, of making the breaking heart to leap with joy. If the night is wet, and times are hard, and my heart moves me to it, no police table of fares shall prevent my giving a sober cabman half a crown, if I please, instead of a shilling. Street beggars let no one aid, they are a cankerous imposthume on English life; but political economy shall not terrify me into totally surrendering my private conscience to the cast-iron orders of mendicity societies; and no amount of annual subscriptions to philanthropic institutions can excuse a Christian man from personal assistance to the want that meets him at his own door. To love, even as we are loved—here is the effort of earth and the blessedness of heaven! No doubt there are many ways of showing it; but one way is money, and God asks for it. "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of Hosts."

PASQUALINA—THE YOUNG MISSIONARY OF ELBA.

By Miss WHATELY.

IF you were to stand on the sea-shore at Leghorn, where the Mediterranean rolls in on a flat sandy beach, you could see on the horizon, on a clear day, the faint outline of the coast of the Isle of Elba.

We have all read and heard much of the first Napoleon's being exiled to this little island, and reigning over it for a few months, before his last attempt to recover the Empire; but it is not of these things we are going to write.

The inhabitants of Elba are mostly seafaring people, and till lately were all of them very ignorant and bigoted Roman Catholics, praying to the Virgin and saints, looking to the priest to forgive all their sins, and knowing nothing of the Bible. But the Elba sailors in fishing and merchant ships often touch at the towns on the mainland of Italy, along the coast of the Mediterranean; in one of these towns, a Christian lady was living who made acquaintance with the captains of some of these ships, and being anxious to do all the good she could, she used to read the Bible with them, and give them copies of the Scriptures and tracts to take back. In this way many of the Elba people began to know and love the Word of God, and at last they wished to have a pastor to come over and teach them more. One was sent by the Waldenses, and before long there was quite a little church formed of people who chose to worship God as the Bible tells us to do, and would not follow the ways of the Romanists. The next thing to be thought of was a school for their children, as these Elba Protestants did not wish their little ones to be taught as the priest would have liked: and it so happened, that about this time the schoolmistress of the priest's school became a Protestant herself, and was made mistress of the new Protestant school. She was so much loved by her pupils that nearly half of them followed her; but there was one little girl, Pasqualina, a child of seven years old, whose mother would not let her follow her schoolmistress. The child loved her so dearly, that all her wish was to go wherever her dear kind teacher went; but her mother said, that would never do, *she* must keep to the priest's school.

Poor little Pasqualina was in sad trouble. She could not bear to give up her old teacher; but at last a plan came into her mind. She

set off very early in the morning, before it would be time to begin at her own school, and went round by the place where her old schoolmistress was keeping the new school. Then she peeped in, and listened to what they were doing there. It was only what you are all used to see, at our schools at home. They first prayed to God to bless their day's work, and then they sang a hymn, and read a part of the Bible with their mistress. But all this was new and wonderful to little Pasqualina. She had never heard prayers said except in Latin; she had never joined in singing sweet hymns about Jesus and his love; she had never heard anything of God's holy word, and all the beautiful Bible stories which we have been familiar with all our lives were new to her. She had come first, perhaps, out of love to her teacher; but she stayed out of love for what she heard. She could not stay long; she had been ordered to go to the Romanist school; and she would not disobey her mother: but every morning she made a round, came by the Protestant school, and listened to the opening prayer, singing, and reading, and then reached her own school in time to begin the lessons.

This went on for some time; but the more Pasqualina heard of the Bible teaching, the more she longed to know; and she was constantly begging her mother to let her go to the "Scuola Evangelica," or "Evangelical School," as they call in Italy the schools where the Bible is taught. "Oh! mamma," she would say to her every day, "if you would but let me go to the Evangelical school! They teach such beautiful things out of the Bible there!"

At last, tired with the little girl's entreaties, her mother said, "Listen, Pasqualina; I will allow you to go to that school if your father consents when he comes home. You must ask him." Now, the father, who was a sailor, was most of his time away from home, and at that time was on a voyage to Spain. However, the day of his return came, and Pasqualina ran to meet her father as he entered the house, and sprang into his arms, and, almost before he had time to speak, she cried, as she clung round his neck, "Oh, father, do let me go to the Evangelical school!"

The father knew and cared nothing about

this school, most likely, and could not make out what his little girl meant, but he saw she was very eager about it. "Would it make you very happy to go there, my child?" he said.

"Oh, yes, yes. Do say I may go!" cried she. "I wish it so much."

"Well, I have no objection; go, if you like it."

You may fancy how quickly Pasqualina flew to her mother. "Mamma, papa says I may go to the new school."

The mother had nothing to say, as she had promised to let her go if the father consented; and from that day little Pasqualina never missed the school. She learned quickly to read, and, having a clear, pleasant voice, she used to read to her father and mother, neither of whom knew a letter. It was quite a new pleasure to them to hear the reading lessons and Bible histories read to them by their little daughter, and they grew more and more interested in what they heard. She learned texts and hymns by heart, and repeated them to her parents, telling them how these things had been explained to her at the school. She had learned now, young as she was, what it is truly to come to Jesus to be saved, and her great joy was to try and lead others to Him; and, at last, this little missionary was the means of bringing her father and mother, and her aunt, who was with them, to know really and trust in Jesus alone, and to give up all the foolish superstitions they had been taught. But she was not content with doing good in her own family. She had many relations who lived near her. She used to go and visit them in their houses, and, while she was there, she would begin to sing one of her school-hymns with her sweet, clear voice. They liked to listen to her, and often would ask her to sing. Sometimes, however, she would be asked mockingly, and they would be inclined to laugh at her for her love of hymns. If she perceived this, she would leave at once; but if she saw they really wished her in earnest to sing, she would go on with hymn after hymn, and then tell them the meaning as she had learned it at school. In this way she was the means of bringing several of her relations to God.

But Pasqualina could not be satisfied while she saw her parents going constantly to the Romish mass, praying in a strange tongue, and worshipping images. She would say to her mother, "Mamma, do you understand what you hear at mass?"

"No, of course, child: it is all Latin."

"Well, if you would come and hear the minister, you would understand all he says quite well; he explains it all, and makes it so clear! To-day he told us so-and-so—" And she would repeat what she had heard at the sermon.

At last, her mother began to feel curious to hear for herself, and thought she would try and go; and, by degrees, Pasqualina was able to persuade all her family to come to the Protestant church. They came first in the evening, when they would not be so easily known; but, at last, they got courage to come in the daylight, and, by God's grace, this whole family became decided, earnest Bible Christians.

But little Pasqualina's work was nearly done. In her short life she had been an active missionary for her Saviour; and now He was going to take her to himself. When she was nine years old she became very ill, and soon she felt that she would not recover. One morning, after a night of great suffering, she repeated the 121st Psalm very earnestly—that beautiful Psalm which begins, "I will lift up my eyes to the hills, whence cometh my help." Then she prayed, and then, turning to her aunt who was watching beside her, while her mother, quite worn out, was in another room resting, she said, "Dear aunt, listen! I know I am going to die, I shall soon be in heaven. I know I shall not be here long. I am afraid when I am taken there will be a bustle and noise which would disturb poor mother; I want her to sleep. Will you carry me to your room, where she will not hear the noise?" Her aunt took the thoughtful child in her arms, and carried her to her room, and there little Pasqualina presently fell asleep in the Lord. Her work on earth was ended; but the joy she was looking for is only just begun.

She left her poor parents in sad affliction. "What shall we do without our Pasqualina!" said the sorrowing mother. "She was the light of our house, she taught us the truth, she read the Word of God to us, and we cannot read it for ourselves."

But Pasqualina left a younger sister who went to the same school, and was soon able to read the Bible to her parents, and, we hope, tried to fill the place of the precious little one who had left them for a happier home.

Are we, who live in the land of Bibles and schools, as ready to profit by our advantages, and as earnest to work for Jesus as this little girl of the Isle of Elba?

A POSSIBILITY.

The Thought of a Mourning Mother.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "JOHN HALIFAX, GENTLEMAN."

MY little baby is buried to-day;
Gone—down in the depths of the churchyard
clay,
Up in the sky so dim and grey.
Who will take care of my little baby?

Who will kiss her?—her waxen feet,
That have never walked, and her small hands
sweet,
Where I left a white lily, as was meet—
Who, who will kiss my little baby?



Who will teach her?—her wings to fly,
Her tiny limbs their new work to ply,
Her soft, dumb lips to sing gloriously—
Oh, who will teach my little baby?

I have a mother—who long ago died;
We speak of her now with our tears all dried;
She may know my pretty one, come to her side,
And be glad to see my little baby.

Christ, born of a woman, hear, oh, hear!
Thine angels are far off—she seems near
Give Thou my child to my mother dear,
And I'll weep no more for my little baby.

Surely in Heaven, Thy saints so blest
Keep a mother's heart in a mother's breast,—
Give her my lamb, and I shall rest
If my mother takes care of my little baby.

ON CONFESSING CHRIST.

TO THE YOUNG.

THERE are different significations of the word confession. In this paper it will be used in the sense of open avowal, in some way, of internal Christian faith. No one can read the New Testament without seeing that confession—in forms and degrees of strength however various, according to circumstances—is a perpetual and peremptory requirement of the Master on all, without exception, who are really his disciples. Think of Him for a moment, as here. No strange or violent supposition surely, for when is He not here? Go up into his presence, and you will hear such words as these—“Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.” He spoke them when He was here in the flesh to a little group of listening men. He speaks them still when He is here in the spirit, to a vaster assembly—to the whole Church, in every country and of every tongue. Nor to the Church alone—to all who read the Scriptures, to all who in any way hear the gospel. Whatever the words may mean to each individual particularly, they do, beyond all question, convey to each a demand for something which cannot be denied without forfeiting all right and title to the name of Christian. If Jesus Christ should come to make this claim, tenderly but peremptorily on each one who comes to Him, on each one who but begins to look his way, it would be a sign that he no longer wished to draw the attention of mankind.

First, then, let us try to ascertain what the confession involves as its abiding substance. The language we have quoted is, on this point, or seems to be, very plain. He is to be confessed—“Whosoever shall confess me.” In some way this single expression comprehends all. A Christian confession is the confession of Christ. The confession of Him before men, faithfully and unto the end, will bring to him who consistently makes it, Christ's public and approving acknowledgment before God and the angels.

Yet our Lord's language, when we thoughtfully consider it, is not quite so simple as it looks. It has heights and depths in it, and fact linked to fact; and argument and inference, and far relations, and profound expe-

riences. Not that the language is therefore abstruse or inexplicable. It is simply comprehensive, as it was designed to be, and needs for explanation the facts of his life from first to last, and the inspired apostolic teachings relating to them. It is certain that some of our Lord's simplest and grandest words could not be understood at all, and in fact would not have a meaning, without the historic events that came after, with the apostolic commentary on them. It should be no matter of wonder to us, therefore, that we need, in addition to the words of our blessed Lord, some of the words of the Apostle Paul to instruct us as to the heart and substance of this confession of Christ. In writing to the Romans he says that the word of faith which he preached was this—“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” Here we have the needed exposition of our Lord's requirement—“Confess me.” First of all it is made clear that this confession is not a thing of words merely; is in fact nothing if not springing from, and associated with, heart belief. It never can be a duty, it never can be less than a sin, to confess, in religion, what is not believed. We are to confess only what we believe. Then what are we to believe in order to a saving confession? The answer is clear and very striking. A fact. We are to believe one historic fact. That and no more is requisite, together with the open confession of it, to secure salvation. To believe that God raised Jesus from the dead, that and no more is required as the heart-faith of the man who, then, with his mouth, *i.e.* in every practical outward way, may make confession unto salvation. But any one may see that it must be that fact in its historic and moral relations, the belief of which has this saving power. The fact of the resurrection as an isolated thing, would be nothing. That fact, as the representative of many more which are gathered inseparably about it, is everything for the case. It becomes the most significant, the most illustrious of a whole train of facts and things, antecedent and consequent. As thus:—To believe that Jesus

was raised from the dead, is, of course, to believe that He died. To believe that He died is to believe that He had lived. To believe that He had lived a human life is to believe that He had been born. So far by natural necessity, by the simple logic of the things, every man must go. He cannot believe the one fact without comprehending in it the others also.

But more than this. For these facts might be received as such, and yet have to the mind of the believer of them no particular significance. A young man might say, "Yes, I believe them, because I think the historic evidence on the whole is sufficient to establish them. Unquestionably a person named Jesus of Nazareth did exist—did live, and teach, and get a wonderful power among his countrymen; did suffer crucifixion at their hands; and (according to the same testimony and evidence which make these things undeniable) did rise again from the dead. But I do not know the meaning of it all." There must, therefore, be something more received than the mere shell of the facts. They have moral relations, indwelling powers and influences, divine meanings which come out in the Scriptures as doctrines or teachings of God.

We have such teachings condensed in the phrase, "God hath raised Him from the dead." The direct action of God in the resurrection of Christ is the supreme circumstance in the case which gives interpretation to all the rest. It is like the seal of a great monarch put to anything to give it the highest sanction and the strongest confirmation. There is the seal! Let men give heed. Let them render obedience. The resurrection of Christ is like the broad seal of God on the whole earthly life of his Son, from the moment when the angels sang his coming to the moment when the soldiers watched his dying. All is confirmed and approved, and in a sense transfigured and glorified, by the resurrection from the dead. It is the public acceptance in this world, as his ascension into heaven was the public acceptance in that world of his whole earthly work. He was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."

Then on the other, the hitherward, side of the resurrection, there is a whole series of facts and their involved and related truths—the ascension which followed soon and which was seen; the entrance into heaven, which was not seen by mortals, but which was proved to have taken place by the wonderul

pentecostal donation and outpouring of the Spirit, and by the rapid progress of the gospel among the nations. The coming judgment, too, follows as a consequence from the resurrection. God will judge the world by Jesus Christ, "whereof He hath given assurance unto all men in that He hath raised Him from the dead."

The resurrection, from its relative position among the facts of Christianity, has often been likened to the keystone of an arch. If a man looking at an arch says, "I believe in the keystone of it," he must believe in the stone next to that, on each side, for it could not hang in the air; and he must believe in the stones next to them, for they too must have support, and so down to the foundations. A man who believes in a keystone must believe in a whole arch. So he who believes that God raised up Jesus from the dead, believes in advent, incarnation, atonement, sacrificial death, and in ascension, in heaven, in coming judgment, in eternal blessedness. The great scriptural facts carry in them the doctrines of religion, certain moral relations to each other, and to God, and to us, and certain moral energies, which make them *vital* facts when believed. This peculiar combination of fact and doctrine will always give Christianity immense superiority over any system that may dare to compete with it. No other system has any such facts substantiated; no other system can make any such uses of facts which it has.

Such is the Christian truth; and it becomes saving by a full and free entrance into the whole nature of a man. Then it is believed "in the heart;" not in the emotional part of the nature as distinguished from the intellectual, but in the whole nature. Indeed, it will not do to say that truth is to be embraced by the heart considered as the affections, although the judgment is not satisfied concerning the value or validity of its claims, for that is simply impossible. Reason is as divine as emotion. To "believe with the heart," in the scriptural sense, is to believe with the reason. Nor will it do, on the other hand, to rest in a simple intellectual assent which does not touch the emotions, which does not command and guide the will. The Christian truth is of such a nature, and carries within it such relations to us, and such stupendous possibilities of advantage, that a man, let him be of the coolest temperament imaginable, may be sure he is not believing it as he ought, if there passes no vibration from the act of mental acceptance of the truth into the inner world of feeling.

The faith of "the heart" is thus the faith of the whole nature. The Christian truth irradiates the understanding, wakes up the reverence, quickens and cleanses the conscience, gently, yet with almighty power, engages the affections, summons the will to life-work, dwells in the memory as a life-treasure, claims the whole of the practical spheres—and all this is meant, and nothing less than this is required by our Lord when He says—"Confess me before men, and I will confess you before God and the angels."

2. Now, secondly, as to the confession itself—does it not spring naturally out of such a faith as we have described—a faith in Christ Jesus, held in the very heart? Could Christ release us from the obligation even if He would? Ought we not to be true to our profoundest beliefs? Ought we not to obey our deepest convictions? Are we not inflicting an injury upon our own souls, which may in a while even be irreparable, by failing, in whatever way, to speak out and stand by what we undoubtedly believe? Is there a reader of these lines who has, through grace, begun to cherish in his heart of hearts one great dear name—and yet is he going about the world, from day to day, in secrecy, and even in a kind of disguise, dark and undeclared—sometimes even a little nervous and anxious lest the secret should be discovered and made known? If that be the state of things with any of us, it will not continue to be the state of things for long. The great name which now fills, and, at moments, floods the heart with tenderness, will grow less sacred and dear, and in a little while, either the charm of it will have passed away before the advancing chill of spiritual death, or we shall have to come, by a very sharp repentance, into honesty, and truth, and boldness. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness"—not unto fear, cowardice, concealment. Salvation, the salvation of any man, but especially of a young man, considered as a thing, which at least in its beginnings, is to be substantiated and wrought out in this world, consists in having the nature all together, knit up into closeness, composed into a divine harmony—power with feeling, passion with principle, from centre of inmost emotion to circumference of outmost habit, from circumference of outmost things back again to inmost and deepest faith, heart with lips and lips with life. We say this, attained, is salvation. For such unity as this never can be in sin. No man can be so sinful that there are no protesting powers, no soft

relentings, no tender memories left within. But such unity as this may be in religion and by the fulness of its indwelling power. Sin divides, weakens, rends, scatters, and leads on towards complete disorganization, which is "death." Religion, or Christ in the heart, is the centre and fountain of unity. He recovers, restores, knits together in harmony all powers and affections, and builds them up after his own image, "into one new man." He "unites our heart to fear his name."

As to the methods and ways of confessing, it is not possible to be very definite; and, therefore, it is not wise or just to be rigid or exacting. Much must be left to each individual—temperament, circumstance, opportunity being so various. Only this much would we insist on very earnestly, and with full conviction of its inestimable value, that young people should, when inwardly resolved on the Christian side, *in some way form open connections with Christian people.* In work, in communion at the Lord's table, in church membership, in prayer—there are many ways by which we can, and ought, to show where our heart is, by which we make "confession with the mouth unto salvation." Of course all is included in leading a consistent outward life. But a life cannot be outwardly consistent if the inmost convictions are hidden or denied. The first disciples "were all together:" and still, Christian people in all the different sections of the Catholic Church, under a felt need and by a common impulse, go much into companies in order the better to celebrate their worship and do their work. Happily, now, association may be made with any church or company of Christian men in the simplest and most unostentatious way. No ordeal has to be endured. No violence is offered to sensitive feeling. Indeed, some think there are hardly walls of sufficient height around the spiritual Church in these latter days. At any rate, all must allow that the gates are thrown wide open, and that admission is given to all who reverently come seeking it. In this we cannot but rejoice. But it makes abstention the less excusable and the more serious. *Still* to hold back, and tread the solitary way, and keep the life-secret shut up in the heart, cannot be harmless.

And now may I speak with some of the young on this matter, as though "face to face?" What is the hindrance? Is it that you are not always quite sure of the reality of the faith you are thinking of confessing? You look, you feel, within, and sometimes it is there, and sometimes it is not there. The

glow comes into your breast and then the chill. There is a flush as of the morning, and then something like a deepening of the night. What if your hope should not be the good hope? What if this early promise should be illusion? Would it not be, in such a case, a heavy addition to the sin of insincerity and unbelief if you were to make any public profession of that which has no existence? I answer that it is purely imaginary to suppose any guilt contracted by such a profession, if it be in the main honestly made. Of course it is desirable there should be a conscious faith and some glow of a present love in the breast before making any open profession. But on the other hand, to wait until these and kindred feelings are in full strength and activity before giving the least hint to others of their presence, is to wait for what will probably never come—never come in that way. Even experienced Christian people are subject to great vicissitudes of feeling. Sometimes everything is bright with them; and sometimes all is dark enough. There are comparatively few who dwell in unruffled peace. It therefore is too much for a young or new disciple to demand and wait for that at the very threshold of his course, which but few attain in perfectness even after much experience of the divine ways. Come forward, humbly and modestly, although the balance may incline but slightly to the favourable side, and you take the surest means of driving away the fitting shadows of uncertainty, and reaching some true "establishment" in grace, in which you will be able to say, "My heart is fixed, O God: my heart is fixed. I will sing and give praise with my glory."

But still, you ask whether it were not better for you to wait a little while, say another year, before pledging yourself, in order that the faith which you are thankful to be able to regard as real and true—not a merely vaporous emotion and transient glow in the breast, but something gracious, steady, growing—may have time to grow, and be a little, if only a little, stronger? It is real and true. You do believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, and that He expresses a Father's love, and that He brings to us in all practical forms a Father's grace, and that "his blood cleanseth from all sin," and that his death is your death unto sin, and his rising your rising unto righteousness; and, in brief, that you have all in Him, if only you had receptive power and sensibility to take of the all according to your need. But, alas! that is just what you lack. Your

faith is so weak, so young, so little to be trusted yet! You feel yourself truly described in a single phrase occurring in the message to one of the seven churches—"Thou hast a little strength." Very, very little it seems to you! It certainly is not battle-strength, or racing-strength, or hard-working strength, or long-enduring strength. No epithet is so truly descriptive of it as "little," and you want it to be more, and you think it will be better to wait until it grows!—Which is to say that you think it will be wise to decline the use of at least one divinely appointed method of growth—and this, in order that you may grow! You have come from famine to plenty, but you will not eat at the table with the children—you will take your food in dark corners and hidden places where no one sees you, and will try, in fact, to keep it a secret that you are eating at all until you are plump, and well fed, and full of health. You have come from the "far country"—not perhaps that you have been in the ordinary sense "a prodigal," wasting your substance in riotous living, but—you have felt as every one feels on coming home indeed, that he has been in a far country while living without God, although clad the while from top to toe in respectabilities, with ample change of raiment—you have come from the far country; you have been met, embraced, welcomed home! And you have heard that word to the servants that they should bring forth the best robe for you! and the ring for your hand! and the shoes for your feet! But you say, "Nay, not yet. It is too soon to be washed and clothed and set among the children. Keep the best robe in its ward, and the ring in its casket, and the shoes in their place. I must sit down somewhere as I am—with soiled hands, with bleeding feet, with matted hair, in rags, in weariness, I will sit down to meat with the servants, or somewhere out of sight, until I can dress myself, and learn how to behave." Oh, when will men learn the very simplest things in the religious life? That the way to banish hunger is to eat, that the way to slake thirst is to drink, that the way to be warmly clad is to put on suitable provided raiment, that the way to make progress is to go on step by step, that the way to honour Christ is to obey Him in everything, and that the way to grow stronger in his grace is to use that grace in every form in which it is administered.

Once more. It is often alleged or felt that confession may, with propriety, be delayed, from fear of failure. This excuse has great force with many; and they evidently

think there is something reasonable in it, and that it goes far to justify delay. Yet when closely examined it is found to be one unmitigated fallacy. Suppose the worst, or what is considered the worst that could be—confession made, and then failure. Is that really worse than failure without confession? I mean to the individual so failing. I own I cannot see how. The difference on either side must be infinitesimally little. But I am not sure that the balance of advantage does not lean a little to the side of profession rather than to the other, and that the responsibility is not lightened rather than enhanced by making it—always supposing it made sincerely. Here is something to be done, difficult but full of advantage. Two men are asked to do it, and are told that there is one way better than all other ways of beginning to do it—that there is as it were a gate leading to it. One of the two says, "I will not pass that gate. I dare not. Failure is much too serious a matter. I will not begin." The other says, "Failure? Why this is failure—not to begin. I fail in the whole enterprise unless I do. And if I begin in some hidden manner, passing through some gate of my own making or finding, or through none at all, I am far more likely to fail than if I go to the business at once, boldly, and in the appointed way." Which of those men has reason on his side? Young people sometimes fall into a mere dream, and persuade themselves that there will be no failure at least if they do not confess! As if the missing of opportunity, and the neglect of grace, and the loss of time, and the sinking of the living soul into ruin, day by day, were not failure enough! The soldier who dies on the field on the way to the fort or city he wishes to take is nobler surely than he who sits shivering in his tent and dies there. Nobler too than he who starts for the city on his own account and by his own paths, hoping to steal into it under cover of the darkness—and, being found, is shot as a spy. There is no way so good as to stand out among the soldiers. Answer to your name in the roll-call. Go with the king's army, and you will get into the city. For "the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."

Nor is there much more in the objection akin to that we have been dealing with, that you fear the greater dishonour which will come to the name of Christ, and the greater discredit which will be

done to his religion among men by a Christian profession inconsistently maintained. You cannot help doing dishonour and bringing discredit now, and where and as you are, if you do not lead a Christian life. How thoughtlessly some people regard this matter! Hearing them talk, you might suppose that between Jesus Christ and themselves there are, as yet, only the most indefinite and the most indifferent relations, and that it quite depends on themselves whether those relations are strengthened and made more vital, or neutralised and almost annihilated! And yet Jesus Christ died for us! and loved us, individually, before we were born! and loves us now! And has, himself, brought down a kingdom of God out of heaven for us, and has so settled it here that it cannot be driven out of the world; and has given us birth, in a sense, within it; and many of us our first home in the Christian family; and our first growings amid Christian things! Here, undoubtedly, we are, and here we are living through our life, where we see every day many buildings which stand only for his worship, where the bells sound his name, where is sabbath silence every week, where literature, and law, and many social institutions, all do—in form at least—what some of the young are declining to do—they "confess," in their own way, the power of his name. Yet you say, that you can, if you choose, live so, that if Christ gets no glory by you, at least He will get no dishonour. He is dishonoured by every formalist that lives; and by every laggard that lingers; and by every procrastinator who has no to-day, whose whole religious life consists in writing, "To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow;" and by the miser who grips; and by the spendthrift who squanders; and by the great man who is vain and heartless; and by the poor man who is envious and bitter; and, in short, by every one who is not "for" Him, because that is to be "against."

In saying all this, I am supposing that you really wish to honour Him. Then you will trust Him, and you will obey. You will go where He leads; and be where his loved ones are; and his grace will be sufficient for you also; and you will do Him no dishonour which He will not soon wipe away; and you shall do Him loyal service which He will abundantly reward; and none shall pluck you out of his hands.

ALEXANDER RALEIGH.

CUTHBERT OF LINDISFARNE.

PART II.

THE triumph of the Roman party over the ancient British Church at Whitby, all-important as it was in its after results, at the time involved few, if any, changes of belief. The Asiatic Greek who ruled the English Church in St. Peter's name had no especial love for Roman innovations, and is known to have been unfavourable to sacramental absolution, as he pronounced "confession to God alone sufficient for spiritual safety." Gregory the Great repudiated the authority claimed for his see, and disapproved of the adoration of images, and the English Church, though it received the Roman Easter and St. Peter's tonsure, continued long after Cuthbert's day to reject the dogma of transubstantiation, and its religious system differed widely from that put forward centuries later by the Council of Trent. The great resemblance was in ritual, the great variation was in doctrine.* It is necessary to bear these facts concerning doctrine in mind, when we contemplate Lindisfarne and its inmates. That great missionary monastery was widely different in belief and practice from those which were righteously swept away at the Reformation, and the carrying out of the decision of the great historic council at Whitby by Eata and Cuthbert, by no means subverted as a whole the early British system under which both had been trained at Mailross.

Although Colman, with all the Scottish monks and thirty of their English brethren, had abandoned Lindisfarne, and most of the monks were new-comers, there was still nothing like harmony in the holy island on the subject of the paschal dispute. Cuthbert, whose leading ideas were personal holiness and evangelistic work, who was not learned nor scholastic, in a word not theological, found himself precipitated into the midst of a community agitated by the sweeping changes consequent on the decision of Oswy. The great power of his character here became speedily manifested. To a brotherhood vexed by jealousies and dissensions, he brought a nature which had no selfish aims to prosecute, and a sweetness and cheerfulness which nothing could disturb; a heart as pure as when the good Baisil recognised in him a Nathanael without

guile, and that rare combination of imaginative fervour with great practical wisdom, which had given him the mastery over the shrewd churls of the Northumbrian border, and had been felt in every detail of the great missionary operations originated at Mailross. Rich in the sympathies which move men's hearts; meek, fervent, zealous, self-denying; living at once a life of the highest spirituality and the lowliest service, Cuthbert all unconsciously became the master-spirit of Lindisfarne, and imbued its inmates with his own tolerant, loving, forbearing spirit. Monastic duties alone might have seemed sufficient for the prior of this great and growing monastery, but the spirit of evangelism was still strong within him, and for several years he preached throughout Northumbria, travelling on foot and horseback through its wildest regions, by vigorous truth-speaking correcting the perpetual tendency to ally the new faith to the old superstition, deferring to none, neglecting none, spending the days in preaching and baptizing, and the greater part of the night in praying and chanting psalms.

But during the later years of his residence at Lindisfarne, Bede recalls less of apostolic labour, and more of growth in a mystical piety. He imposed upon himself the most severe austerities, and spent whole nights in prayer, warding off sleep by manual labour and walks round the island. It might be that the melancholy situation of Lindisfarne, and the unaccustomed murmurs of the northern sea, affected with too deep a gloom his highly susceptible and imaginative nature, which required the wholesome influences of long walks and rides, hearty meals and outdoor evangelization, to preserve it in health. His fame, which now brought crowds to Lindisfarne for advice and sympathy, might well be a burden to him, and human beings stimulated his emotional nature to assert itself at this time in various ways, some of which had a great power over men. He never celebrated the last supper without weeping; he moved congregations not so much by words as by groans, which evidenced his own agitation; and when penitents came to him for confession, he wakened in them a deeper penitence by his passion of tears over their sins. But the cœnobite life, so abundant as it was in fruit, so rich as it appears to have been in beatitude, was insufficient to satisfy the cravings of this remark-

* The ever-increasing errors of Rome in 792 produced a most powerful protest from Alcuin, the greatest Anglo-Saxon scholar of his day, and one of the noblest representatives of the Anglo-Saxon Church.

able man. He groaned under the burden of indwelling sin, he saw Him who is pure, and yearned after that communion with Him on earth which can only be realised in heaven. He wearied of the strife of tongues, and gradually but surely fell under the power of that spirit which impelled the eastern anchorite to the grim gorge of the Kedron or the solitudes of the Thebaid. We live in an age of rapid movement and "ceaseless toil and endeavour." Our religion has caught the infection, and our piety tends rather to be restless, militant, and aggressive, than contemplative. God forbid that we should undervalue the zeal and effort of any of our brethren! But the spirit of that early day tended rather to the perfecting of individual holiness, the development of the individual regenerate life, the attainment of unbroken communion with the Father and the Son. God forbid, likewise, that we should sneer at aspirations so lofty, though they were allied with the mistake, that in this sullied world, the spiritual could be completely sundered from the carnal, and that the mortification of the body could secure the enfranchisement of the soul! Cuthbert was completely in sympathy with the spirit of his age when he bade adieu at once to the dear friendships and labours of Lindisfarne, and withdrew to a cave on the main-land at no great distance, to seek unbroken communion with God. Did he find it? we ask with earnest inquiry, or was not his old adversary the devil near him in a thousand shapes, driving him from his caverned retreat on the slopes of some low-lying hills, to seek a yet deeper seclusion in the tempestuous solitude of Farne? Did he find it there? we ask still more earnestly, as the tale of his austerities and conflicts becomes more vivid and detailed. But the anchorite himself has left nothing to tell us whether the thick walls of his cell shut out the darts of temptation, or whether his eyes, deliberately closed on the troubled world of his day, were open in perpetual beatitude to behold the Father of lights.

Farne was an island of evil repute, demon-haunted the people believed, so that no man dared to dwell upon it, and much all men wondered when the saintly prior of Lindisfarne withdrew to its ill-omened solitudes, and took possession of them in the name of Christ. Farne, the largest of the sixteen islands which now bear its name, is a little more than two miles from Bamborough Castle. It is hemmed in by an abrupt border of basaltic rocks, which on the landward side rise to a height of eighty feet. On the ocean side there is a

gentle slope, on which Cuthbert fixed his abode. It is only a few acres in extent. Now that it is civilised by a trim lighthouse on its summit, it is not easy to recall its unutterable loneliness and desolation when the prior of Lindisfarne chose it for his home. The dark wall of rock, the coarse tufts of grass hardly concealing the sand, the clouds of undomesticated birds for ever sweeping with wild cries round their rocky dwelling, the bleak and inhospitable coast of Northumberland looming grimly through the unlovely mist which for half the year broods over the chilliest and stormiest of the lesser oceans; these were the surroundings of the hermit's cell. Nor was this all. Popular beliefs had located a whole army of the infernal powers in Farne, and Cuthbert's first and severest task was to dispossess them.*

This, however, being successfully accomplished, the hermit, assisted by some beloved brethren from Lindisfarne, built a cell and an oratory. Bede and Symeon minutely describe the dwelling. A part of it was excavated out of the rock, and the rest was enclosed by a rude wall of stones and turf, and had a roof of timber roughly thatched with coarse grass. The hide of an ox hanging at the entrance protected him slenderly from the fury of the climate, and a hole in the roof gave him light. A window with a shutter was added for the use of visitors. A slight partition divided this structure into a cell and an oratory, for even in Farne the recluse must dedicate a place for prayer to Him that seeth in secret. At the landing-place they erected a larger abode for the use of visitors, and then the brethren departed with many tears to Lindisfarne, leaving their beloved prior alone. By that wise arrangement which preserved the earlier British monks from some of the worst evils of the monastic system, manual labour was combined with devotion, and Cuthbert cultivated a plot of barley for his own sustenance, though he provided richer viands for his guests. He had now attained the position which he had sighed for during the twelve years of activity at Lindisfarne.

During the earlier years of his life at Farne

* They were supposed to have seized upon an adjacent island, and a hermit named Bartholomew, who died on Farne in the twelfth century, minutely describes their diabolical appearance. "They were short in stature, with black locks and long beards. They wore black cowls, bestrode she-goats, and brandished lances like men-at-arms! For some time their machinations were frustrated by brandishing a cross before their faces; but this seemed only a temporary expedient, for they became so outrageous and turbulent, and interfered so abominably with the Christian burial of the monks on Wedum, that it became necessary to enclose the plot with a boundary of straws, signed with the sign of the cross."—*Vit. S. Bartholomew, MS. Harl. 4843.*

he was easily accessible to his brethren. He received them upon the beach, entertained them in the refectory, and even ate with them, bathing their feet in warm water, and receiving once a year the same service from them. Otherwise he never removed his sandals. He entered warmly into the conversations and discussions of the monks, occasionally enforcing a pause for watchfulness and prayer. Bede has preserved the remonstrances addressed to him on this practice, showing that the worthy brethren were as anxious to enjoy a holiday as secular beings. On one occasion they came to celebrate the feast of Christmas with him, and when on this, as at other times, he exhorted them to pious duties, they replied, "Nothing is more true, but we have so many days of vigil and of fasts: at least to-day let us rejoice in the Lord." This is very touching, very human. It is pleasant also to read that the anchorite who himself subsisted on the produce of a barley field was so genial as to reproach his monkish guests for not eating a fat goose which he had hung in the refectory for the express purpose of fortifying them against the fatigues of the return voyage to Lindisfarne.

Placed upon a pinnacle of holiness by the whole Northumbrian population, who attributed to him power with God, men, and devils, he preserved a humility worthy of a disciple of Jesus. "It must not be supposed," he said, "because it is my preference to live out of the reach of secular cares, that my life is superior to that of others."

For once, in order to do honour to an abbess eminent for her saintliness, Cuthbert left his cell at Farne. The woman, to whom he paid a tribute most singular in one whom tradition represents as a confirmed misogynist, was the youthful abbess of Whitby, the Princess Elfreda, niece of King Oswy. Like other Saxon princesses, she exercised a great political influence, and it was as much to gain from Cuthbert an opinion concerning the future of the Northumbrian kingdom, as to seek his advice in ruling the great company of souls gathered under her crozier, that she induced him to grant her an interview on a small island on the Northumbrian coast, called then, as now, Coquet Island. It appears that when Cuthbert had answered all her questions concerning the government of her monastery, she threw herself at his feet and besought him to exercise his reputed prophetic gift, and tell her whether her brother Egfrid should be "long living and reigning." "I am surprised," said he, "that a woman well taught as you are, and versed in Holy

Writ, should use the word length in regard to a human life, which is of no longer duration than a spider's web: as the Psalmist saith, "Quia anni nostri sicut aranea medi labuntur." How short then must life be for one at whose door death is!" At these words Elfreda wept long, but still persisting in her desire to gain light on the future, she implored Cuthbert to tell her whence Egfrid's successor should come? Turning her attention to the numerous islets which fringe the Northumbrian coast, he said, "You see how many isles there are in the vast ocean. It is easy for God to bring a king from one of them to reign over the English."* So when Egfrid was slain in battle, and a prince whose life had been spent as an exile in Iona ascended the Northumbrian throne, this vague remark was construed into a prophecy.

The comparative sociability of the early period of Cuthbert's residence at Farne gradually changed into confirmed seclusion. He conversed with his brethren only through the window, and shortly even that was closed, except to the few who ventured to ask his advice on difficult matters, or came from far to seek his blessing. Of this lonely and (to our thinking) least profitable time of his life we know nearly nothing. It may be that in those nine slow-moving years of fasts and vigils, he won nothing except the reputation of being the holiest man in all the north. Meanwhile, England was torn by the struggle concerning Roman unity and the supremacy of the see of Rome. Wilfrid and King Egfrid were waging bitter war; but the news of Wilfrid's expulsion from the see of York, his first appeal to Rome, and his return with a decree in his favour, the determined resistance of Egfrid ending in Wilfrid's imprisonment and exile, if they were heard at all, made no impression on a man whose ambitions were higher and whose conflicts were more deadly, though these events were destined to bring his seclusion to a close. But Cuthbert, though separated from the outer world, was still held in remembrance, and the story of the apostolic successes of his earlier years, was kept alive in Egfrid's court, where not only the king but many of the nobles must have remembered the personal appearance of the athletic young Prior of Lindisfarne, who was often at court in the days of the Queen Etheldreda, and the marvellous stole, and maniple stiff with gold and precious stones, which she had embroidered for him with her own hands.

ISABELLA L. BIRD.

* Bede Vit., c. 24.

CROOKED PLACES:

A Story of Struggles and Hopes.

BY EDWARD GARRETT, AUTHOR OF "OCCUPATIONS OF A RETIRED LIFE," ETC.

PART III.—MILLCENT'S ROMANCE, AND WHAT IT WAS MADE OF.

CHAPTER IV.—COLLECTIVE WISDOM.



IT might be amusing, but it would scarcely be profitable, to detail all the domestic difficulties which Fergus Laurie had to meet before his party came off. Fergus said that the

dwindle down to the veriest minimum of cups and saucers. It was now found to be as unique as if of the rarest porcelain. Robina wasted a whole day, and ever so many omnibus fares, going hither and thither vainly trying to match it. Fergus was so angry at this revelation of shiftlessness that Robina felt there was nothing for her but to obey without protest when he summoned her to accompany him to buy a new service, though it was a dreadfully wet evening, and she knew she had neglected to have her boots mended. Next day she was laid up with a cold, consequently the new service was not washed or arranged till the afternoon before the visitors came, when the charwoman did it in a great hurry, with considerable results of breakage.

However, everything was ready at length. During the last few hours, Robina made what she considered to be superhuman efforts, with marvellous results. In the morning all arrangements were chaos, by the afternoon they were just what they should be, but by such a strain upon Robina's temper, that when her brother came in and suggested some trivial change, her endurance gave way utterly, and she rated him soundly, and inconsequently—the two essentials of a fine scolding—till she was interrupted by a double knock.

George Harvey and his wife were the first arrivals. Mrs. Harvey and Millicent came next. David Maxwell and Mrs. Maxwell were the last. Mrs. Maxwell was invited because she was "a professional gentleman's" wife, and Mrs. Laurie and Robina thought that her presence would show that Christian was not their only opportunity of genteel society. Mrs. Maxwell, in her turn, having in reality no place to keep, was very particular "to keep her place," and her way of doing it was to cause tea to wait for her fully half-an-hour.

Mrs. Laurie and Robina intended to be very polite to Mrs. Harvey and Millicent. They said to each other—

"We must pay them a good deal of attention, poor things."

They had made up their minds to pity them, because they were self-dependent, and Mrs. Laurie and Robina had their own private opinion that it was such hard lines to

Harveys had a full, bright flower-stand, and he could not understand why they should not have the same. Now the Harveys' flowers were always supplied by Mrs. Webber, who kept her old skill and luck with them, and fostered a few pennyworth of seeds into plants worth half-a-guinea. However the Lauries bought six flowers in pots at a shilling each. They had only been transplanted on the morning of the purchase. Robina deluged them with water, and set them out in the sun and wind. Then she forgot all about them for three days, in fact till Fergus lifted them in again to adorn the room. They held their heads up fairly, poor things, for the evening of the party, and after that died as quickly as they possibly could.

It was the same with everything. Also Fergus found that money was not only needed for the few "extras" which he had sanguinely calculated as within an easy expenditure of two or three pounds at most. Money was also needed for the sudden supply of things which should have always been kept replaced and repaired. Their tea-service, of a pattern which could once have been easily and cheaply matched, had been allowed to

earn one's own living, that nobody would do it who could get any one else to do it for them. Mrs. Laurie used a sympathizing tone whenever she happened to name George to his mother—for surely Mrs. Harvey must have "felt" his marriage. Mrs. Harvey caught the tone, but innocently wondered what it could mean, and only hoped that Mrs. Laurie did not think George looked delicate.

Milly was very glad to see David Maxwell again: indeed, she was too glad, for her pleasure was as frank as it could have been had he been a girl! All unsophisticated as he was, David's heart taught him the difference between the gay, cheery greeting which he got, and the deferent reserve with which Milly received Fergus Laurie's welcome.

"Of course, she must prefer him," he quietly settled it within himself. "What could she see in me, and what does she know of me, and what can she ever know? Now, Fergus is so clever, and is able to show himself her friend. It is only to be expected."

It was strength and not weakness which helped David straight to this conclusion. For what was happening was really quite natural, and also quite right in its way, and it is not courage but infantine perversity which kicks against pricks that cannot be removed. But David himself did not know his own strength. He thought that he was constituted not to feel things as hotly as some people. He supposed that he was not "high-spirited"—like Fergus for instance—and forgot how that which is called "poorness of spirit" is the very chivalry of heaven!

"How do the pictures get on?" Fergus inquired of Milly when the tea was fairly served and the little party had settled down in something like composure.

"I have nearly done them," Milly answered brightly; "that is to say, I have done their hardest part, but they will take some time yet, for I must take care to make the vegetation what it would be in such a place, time, and season."

"Ah," said Fergus, with that peculiar critical voice which Milly was already learning to hear with respect. "Mind you don't let your details run away with you. Don't smother your ideal. Treat it largely."

What a wonderful young man for a mere clerk! Who was to remember that he had an art-loving master, and that artists and art-critics gossiped sometimes in the counting-house? Not that this need depreciate his talents. They were very real. Power to

adapt and to apply is a great talent, and one without which all others are useless. Yet it, too, must have talents to work upon, and when it has not them within, but must grasp them from without, it often has a peculiar vanity of desiring to merge its own individuality in theirs. The quick to learn are prone to think that they taught themselves, and many a "self-made man" seems to forget even that he himself did not put his own brains into his own head.

But George Harvey was not so likely as his other hearers to let these dogmas pass unquestioned.

"I do not see that truth in a detail need destroy truth in the whole," he said. "God individualised every moss which He spread as an unnoticed carpet over the world. And however careful a grass is drawn, it will not be its finish, but its want of finish, which will give it undue importance in a picture. In proportion to its degree of finish it will fall into its proper place in art, as in nature."

"Yes, truly," Fergus responded. He had not followed George's argument beyond its first proposition, because he had been thinking what he should retort in his turn. "What I mean is, that we do not want the bare truth, but something more than the truth. For instance, there is a truth in the dry correctness of botany-book delineations, but that is not all the truth about flowers that grow in dew and sunshine. Nay, it is not the truth at all, for the very self-displaying attitudes in which the flowers must be posed for botanical purposes is a lie."

"Granted," George answered readily, "but I maintain this, that an artist who would give flowers their proper human interest, who would make a heartsease, Bunyan's 'herb-heartsease,' or a lily to outshine Solomon in all his glory, had best know about these flowers all that the botany-book can teach. Who could accept an emblem of cheerfulness and content with less petals than it ought to have, and the wrong sort of leaf!"

"Those who did not know," said Fergus lightly; "and that would be most people!"

"And what, when they grew wiser?" George asked seriously. "When they learned to mistrust and condemn the symbol, would they grow in trust and love for the thing symbolized? Wherever a feeling is to be produced there should never be a jar or a failure in fact."

"Nor in fiction either," added Christian half-playfully; "I mean when anybody is writing a story he should not be so carried away by his heroics as to change his hero's name, or

age, once or twice, and forget all about dates and times and seasons. It is done sometimes, though, and it destroys all my interest. I can't sympathize with a Harry whose name is occasionally Dick, and who keeps Christmas within a month of Midsummer. I know such a being never shed a tear or felt a pang. In fact, I can't believe in him."

"No, and that destroys one's pleasure," observed David: "one likes to believe."

"Do you?" Fergus asked half-scornfully. "Then, I suppose, your highest praise is to say a book is 'just like life.' I want something more than that."

"A good deal depends upon what one thinks 'life' to be," said Christian in an undertone.

"Oh, I do think books would be dull, if they were exactly real," said Robina Laurie. "One likes one's heroes and heroines to be something better than the common people around one—more beautiful and braver, more forgiving and more interesting altogether."

"But don't you think that is real, after all?" Milly interposed. "Don't you think it is only our own fault for not seeing it? It seems to need less insight to admire a shadow than a substance. Haven't you known people delighted with the picture of a place, in which they never noticed any particular beauty? I think that is like most of us with stories and real life."

"There is a great deal in that," said Fergus meditatively.

"Is it not dreary work to separate the ideal from the real?" she went on eagerly. "Are they not the same? Is not the ideal simply the best view of a thing, and is not the best likely to be the truest? Would you not take a man's character from his friend rather than his foe?"

"I am entirely with you," Fergus observed emphatically, with a quick response in the hazel eyes that looked so grave and keen.

"Well," suddenly put in Mrs. Maxwell, "I am sure it is generally those who know most about people who think least of them. I'm sure I don't think much of anybody I know."

The acid tone, even more than the bitter words, damped everybody for a moment, and made David's heart ache and sink.

Mrs. Harvey spoke first. Her words seemed to ignore the sour interruption, and yet they bore subtle rebuke for it and healing for any whom it might have wounded.

"The nearest may be wrong in judgment or in praise as well as the farthest off," she said. And then she gave a kindly illustra-

tion. "Don't you remember a certain poor old neighbour of ours, George, who would look at one out of two blackened eyes, and say that nobody need wish a better and kinder husband than her man, take him for all in all!"

"But who shall say she was not right?" answered Milly, with flashing vivacity. "Perhaps he was really good and kind, although circumstances and temptations of many sorts made him appear otherwise sometimes. Perhaps when God made him, He meant him to be specially kind and good, and the eyes of love could see that meaning still, like writing under a smear!"

"I think God means us all to be kind and good, but if He designs it specially for some and yet they fail in it, I think they are the worst of all, and least deserve charitable interpretations." Christian made this observation in an undertone, and only David Maxwell heard it.

"I am with you entirely, Miss Harvey," said Fergus.

"Only be quite sure, Milly, that your faith in another is not mere stubborn sticking to your own opinion," observed George. "But more seriously, are you not stating a truth which while whole in itself, is only half of another and greater truth? Did not we hear you say a minute ago that it seems to need less insight to admire a shadow than a substance, and that many people would value the picture of a spot which they would not walk half a mile to see? May not that be also true in your metaphysics? When people are often so undeniably short-sighted on the lower levels, must they always gain correctness of vision on the higher ones? Is it not possible that there too, the semblance may command more attention than the substance? Is it not so in our commonest experience,—is not the man who simply does, what under circumstances is easiest and pleasantest for himself and others, constantly called gentle and kind-hearted, whilst he who does what is right at the expense of an unspoken inward struggle and some temporary inconvenience to others, is pronounced hard and unfeeling? Nor is the judgment readily reversed, even when time destroys the one man's work and establishes the other's. The one is only pitied, but though the other may be praised, it is with a grudge. No, Milly, though I am ready to grant your propositions so far as to say that if we could get a perfectly wise and good man, his idealisations would possibly come nearest God's truth, I am not prepared to trust all ideals. A tele-

scope shows us more of the truth of the firmament than the naked eye. But what if the telescope itself be defective?"

Milly shook her head gently. She was not an easily convinced person, which was not at all against Milly, since it at least proved that she was not made of that stony ground, where if seeds take root quickly they are as quickly dried up. Not that she did not at once see and acknowledge the force of her brother's arguments, only while they appeared to her to dash something good and grand in her own, she would not wholly accept them.

"Then is a friend's love and faith to go for nothing?" she said wistfully.

"Oh surely not," said Christian warmly. "But don't you think they may have quite a different value? Don't you think they may be God's sign of a relationship between souls, upon which He ordinarily chooses to work spiritual good and blessing, just as He generally blesses our outer life by our physical ties? I don't think we ever do good to any one unless we love them and believe in them."

"But we ought to love everybody," put in Robina Laurie.

"Those who don't trouble themselves about the practice, are always very strong on the theory," observed Fergus, half-aside to Milly.

"Certainly we should love all in the sense of wishing and trying to do them good, or to be good to them," said Christian. "But with some, I believe our very wish and endeavour to do them good will cause us to place them under other influences than our own. I once had a certain child in my Sabbath class. I had myself secured her attendance, and whenever it flagged I hunted her up. I tried to give her even more attention than I gave the others, because she seemed to need it more. But there always was a barrier between us. That child's eyes were no sooner fixed on my face than my thoughts seemed to freeze on my lips, no matter how warm they lay in my heart. It distressed me dreadfully; for I made every effort in my power, and was still baffled by a mysterious law that lay beyond it. Suddenly a fellow-teacher said to me, 'What an interesting child your little pale pupil is! It ought to be quite a help to you to have such a face in your class.' And I had grace given me to be frank, and answer, 'If you feel so, you will do her the good that I shall never do her. Take her into your class.' And it was so arranged, and I saw the child's face gradually brighten and her soul come forward until even I could recog-

nise its lovable features. I know she never liked me while she was in my class, and was always glad to run off without any good-bye. But afterwards she always came to kiss me every Sunday afternoon. And if she could come to my class now, I am sure we should get on capitally together. The ice between us is thawed, though we could never melt it by ourselves. And in this way I am sure that there are many circumstances, when the best that our love can do, is to stand aside and make way for the appointed love that can do more."

"Yes, that is true," said David, "and if love cannot so stand aside, it is not love but selfishness. But it is hard sometimes," he added, with a checked sigh.

"Yes," responded Christian, "its present 'is not joyous but grievous,' and yet it is the only way to joy. If love could be content to grasp what it could for itself, regardless of its object, it would not get what it really wanted, but only a very poor substitute. While if it invests itself entirely in its object, God himself secures it a rate of interest which shall suffice its needs, and keeps its principal safe in that bank of his, which transmutes poor stock of earthly affections and hopes into rich store of everlasting treasure."

"How do you know that?" Fergus asked in his abrupt way. "Don't you think now that you may be putting faith in your sweet fancies?"

Christian answered gently, "Who spake saying, 'There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come, life everlasting.'"

"And how many have proved it true!" said Mrs. Harvey.

"Ah, but that speaks of surrender for 'the kingdom of God's sake,'" Fergus replied, rather triumphantly.

"And what is the kingdom of God?" Christian asked; "and while we are in the flesh how are we put in any relationship to it? Is not the kingdom of God, like his chosen, something in this world, though not of it? Is it not that the law of equity and harmony which underlies everything? Is it not the duty which every circumstance holds for somebody? I believe every action, nay, even every spiritual motion of each of us, is either a stone contributed or taken from that 'building of God not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.'"

There was a pause, but Milly, who had been wanting to speak for some time, broke it.

"Is not what Christian says almost exactly what I said, after all?" she asked. "I said that I thought the ideal was God's truth, and is it not likely to be so, if, as she says, it is one of the most powerful instruments of good?"

"I think I can see a vital difference between your propositions," George answered. "You give the value of the ideal to the idealised. Christian keeps it for the idealiser. You make it a mental insight. Christian considers it a moral influence. You maintain that in some mysterious way a man really fulfils the highest ideal of himself, however he appears to fail. Christian, on the other hand, asserts that the ideal may be far above his head, not the measure of his soul at all, but the measure of the soul which creates it, but that it is his best help upward, and that its very height gives it the more strength to help him as far as he can possibly go."

"Yes," said Mrs. Harvey, "I have once or twice seen that a mother's faith in the superior industry and ability of scapegrace sons, has shamed and encouraged them, till it has finally made them just passable members of society."

"Well, I don't know," observed Mrs. Maxwell, "I've heard it said, 'Expect nothing, and then you'll not be disappointed.' I think there's a deal of truth in that!"

"I'm sure it wouldn't matter much what I thought of Fergus," said Mrs. Laurie. "He'd take his own ways, and be what he chooses, anyhow."

"Well, I can see a great deal of truth in your idea," Millicent observed to Christian, "but I still think there's a little truth in mine."

"Don't you know, Milly," her brother went on, in further explanation, "that many people have to give up their ideal at last,—that somehow, however much they try, they can no longer believe that their friend is what they once thought him."

"It may be their own fault," Milly responded; "some anger or enmity in their own hearts may have come like a mist between them and their ideal. When we cannot see the opposite side of the street on a foggy morning, we do not say that it is not there. We know it is only lost in the fog, and wait till it clears."

"Milly is right so far," said Christian.

"But suppose there is no anger or enmity," David suggested quietly. "Suppose one only loves more than ever, and longs as much as

ever to be kind and faithful, and yet can't help not being able to believe any more."

"I can't understand that," said Milly fiercely, with a biting flash in her dark eyes. "If I had loved and trusted anybody I would do it till I couldn't—couldn't—do it any more, and when I couldn't—I should hate him!"

"I can believe you would," said Fergus Laurie, so quietly that nobody but Milly heard it, amid the storm of disapproval that her hot words called forth.

"That's always the end of thinking too much of people," observed Mrs. Laurie, shifting her knitting-needles; "those that are called 'dears' one day are generally 'devils' the next. I suppose they shake the two up together till it comes even."

"People that have fine ideas have the same feelings as common folks, it seems, and so it all comes to one in the long-run," said Mrs. Maxwell, "only it's more shame to them."

"Those who feel so when they think of such a thing beforehand," Christian remarked, "are sometimes the first to be patient and forgiving when the trial really comes."

"But such would be happier if they prayed God to regulate their minds as well as their actions," said Mrs. Harvey, with a gentle rebuking gaze at her daughter. "I think I know Milly's real meaning, and that her words don't exactly give it."

"But people must expect to be understood as they speak," added Robina, in her little clipping, satisfied style. At that moment Millicent did not like Robina Laurie, and thought within herself that her sister Hatty was generally very shrewd in her judgments!

David's gentle words had seemed the spark to Milly's gunpowder. It is often so, nor is it thus unreasonably. The voice of love and patience suggests their long-suffering and agony, and the bitter rejoinder it calls forth is often half-sympathy, half-outraged justice. The tempter has a peculiar temptation for the soul which has a strong sense of justice—he deceives it into a fancy that God's justice is asleep, and must be aroused by some shrieking vengeance on its own part.

But Fergus Laurie's quiet "I can believe you would" rankled in Milly's heart after all the other rebukes, spiteful or kindly, were forgotten. Did he mean that he could understand the feeling? or did he mean that he could understand it as consistent with her character?

"I dare say he thinks me a vixen, only caring to hold my own," said poor Milly,

within herself. "Well, well, never mind, perhaps he will know better some day."

When the evening was over, and all the visitors were gone, the three Lauries drew their chairs round the fire, and talked everything over among themselves. And Fergus found his mother's and sister's spattering tattle very wearisome, and presently went away, and sat by himself in his bed-room.

"These Harveys are the right kind of people for me to associate with," he said. "They are all clever and have beautiful ways of thought. One can quite understand how such would grow in such conversations as we had this evening."

It never struck Fergus that one's thoughts must be the growth of one's life, if they are to be warm and stimulating lights, and not mere fireworks struck off by the friction of brain with brain.

"This is the right life for me to live; hitherto I have only existed. But judging from what Robina says of the cost of this evening, intellectual pleasures cost a great deal. We've always lived so up to my salary, that I shall have to take four or five pounds from next quarter's to pay to-night's expenses. And yet I can feel this enjoyment is as necessary to my mind as air or food to my body. I must have it. And as my present means will not suffice to procure it, I must try something else."

Alas for the schemes that are concocted, and the ventures that are taken, not because of a comfortable surplus, but because of a gnawing deficit—not in reasonable hope, but in self-willed desperation!

CHAPTER V.—A MESSENGER IN THE NIGHT.

WHEN Mrs. Maxwell and David returned to Blenheim House, they were not admitted very quickly, and when at last Phoebe Winter came to the door, she said not a word, not even in answer to David's cheery words; but followed them into the parlour, and there resumed a position, physical and moral, which she had evidently been holding before. Her master sat leaning back in the great leather arm-chair, in an attitude at once defiant and cowering. The defiance, or rather indifference, was assumed, with all dramatic exaggeration, the cower was very involuntary and subtle. But David could see it.

"Either do it or don't do it, now I've told you the consequences," said Phoebe, in her harshest judicial voice. "I'll not go from my words, you may know I'm not the sort o' woman. A woman that'll starve on here,

year after year, and put up with her sauce" (with a significant movement of the head towards Mrs. Maxwell), "for an objec' that she has, is not a woman to say one thing an' mean another. You know I don't want to shame your son, an' if it has to be done, it ain't me, it's yourself as does it, an' as it can't be helped it'll be overruled for the best. Maybe, when I didn't do it, when I first could, a good bit more than twenty year ago, now, it were a doing evil that good might come. I didn't think so then. I thought it might be called a showing o' mercy; but it's a dangerous thing to call it showing mercy, when one's an objec' in view. But there's some people that you can't save, whatever you do. If you take 'em from the very gallow's-foot, they'll get a rope an' hang themselves. I spared you before most for your boy's sake, and because what was done couldn't be undone; but if I spare you again, it's a helping o' your sin, and it'll get him into it as well; for Phoebe Winter knows what the world is, bitter well, and that there wouldn't be one in a dozen that would think but what he aint as bad as yourself."

"Now you've done your wild Irish oration, Phoebe," said the surgeon aggravatingly, "perhaps you'll go and draw me half-a-pint of ale."

"I know I'm your servant, sir," Phoebe returned, "and I do what you tell me, and you can't say I haven't served you faithful, whatever I've done it for; but Phoebe Winter isn't going to stand by and watch while dirty ways is going on, though once she did think it was maybe no harm to hold her tongue, and let bygones be bygones." And Phoebe stalked back to her kitchen to fetch the ale.

"A pretty thing for me to come home and find you being lectured by that woman, Mr. Maxwell," said his wife, in her high-pitched cantankerous tones. "A nice degradation for a respectable married woman! I've always felt there was something behind the scenes, sir. I suppose she knows all about your wicked early life, sir, and the woman that David belongs to. She may know something very pretty about her, I've no doubt, sir, although you've had no more proper feeling than to let her brat live in the same house with your lawful wife, sir."

The door flew open, and Phoebe stood blazing on the threshold.

"An' what if I did know her?" she cried. "I won't say she was as good as you is, for them's not the words for either of you; but I will say, you're as bad as she were! There

ain't a pin to choose between ye, 'cept that you've lived to have one sin more and be a self-righteous Pharisee! I ain't lived twenty years in this here den of iniquity for nothing. I knows the date when ye first come home as missis, an' I should like to see the date o' the fine marriage certificate that you're so proud on! It were against the grain o' Phoebe Winter to stay in the house wi' the likes o' you, I can tell ye. I've heard say ye may gen'rally know the ways that's right, 'cause they're the hard uns. But I can tell you it were as hard for me to stay as to go; it were a precious sight harder to stay, 'cept for the objec' I had. And as for the 'brat' that affronts ye so much, it's because o' that brat that ye haven't had to go to a prison to see the man that you're so proud to call your husband, though any woman that hadn't evened herself to him, would be ashamed o't. 'Brat,' indeed! Many's the time I'd ha trembled to be where I was; only thinking that the Lord who'd ha' spared great big cities if they'd had five good people in 'em, would perhaps spare this wicked house for the sake o' the young soul that I b'lieve He's taken up and redeemed to himself."

"Oh, Phoebe, do be quiet!" David entreated.

And Phoebe looked at him, put down the flagon and glass, and withdrew with that high step which all her household moil had never made heavy or shuffling.

"Oh to think I should have been brought to have to bear this!" said Mrs. Maxwell, with dry sobs. "It's a regular shame, and that it is! I expected everything to be so different. I'm sure I've hardly had better dress or victuals than I could have got myself, and I've not been taken about or spoken to, except like a dog. Lots of girls that have stuck to their work have done better, and yet I've had to give up a good deal, and live like a hermit, and put up with that woman, and with seeing your child, that wasn't mine. It's a regular shame, Mr. Maxwell, and that's what it is, and it shows that you're not a man, sir, to stand by and see me bear it!"

"Hey, what, what, what?" said the surgeon. "What are you talking about now, Poll? What do you know about it, eh, Poll? Eh, Poll? Hadn't you better hold your tongue?"

David stood sorrowfully looking at the pair. There was nothing remarkable in his father's irritable incoherence. It was but too common. David knew by many a painful experience that it was worse than useless

for him to offer a soothing word. Because it was his word, it would be but oil on the fire to Mrs. Maxwell. He might have tried to speak to his father had he been alone. Early influences that had been about the surgeon, and even the cultivation that had necessarily come to him by his profession, had kept one or two spots in his character, which though not soft, were at least not always actively repellent. His son could reason with him sometimes, even though it always proved fruitless. David wished he could be alone with his father just for five minutes that evening. Next morning he was glad to remember that wish.

He did what he knew to be best—left the husband and wife together. Quarrels always died out so. Two people, full of mutual indifference, only enlivened by a little hatred, did not quarrel when they are alone. They are quite aware that nothing either can say will pain the other, when safe from the humiliation of outer eyes and ears.

David went along the stone passage to the kitchen. When he opened the door, he found Phoebe sitting poking over her dim candle darning one of his stockings. There was no trace of the recent storm about her, except that she did not even look up when he entered, but went on darning as if there was nothing in the world but herself and the stocking.

"Phoebe, what is all this about? What has made you say such things?" he asked, gently, standing beside her—rather behind her.

Phoebe did not answer. Perhaps she thought she had given her darling a shock about his mother, and that he had come to claim some withdrawing explanation. But David had been wiser than she guessed. A man's knowledge of the world had long since translated the once unintelligible sense of inferiority which had been forced on him by Mrs. Maxwell. Perhaps he had cherished a hope against hope, but it had not sufficient vitality to die hard. Still, he had a natural yearning to know something of the mother whom he had never seen or heard about. If Phoebe knew anything, as he strongly suspected she did, surely she would tell him. He remembered asking her about his mother years and years ago, when he was quite a little child, but the only answer, a curt command that he should never speak about her, had made itself imperatively binding on his sensitive nature. It was all the only thing he could remember Phoebe's speaking sharply to him. And though looking back

upon this of late, he had argued within himself that Phœbe must be able to give some cogent reasons for such repression, still he would never have re-opened the subject had not others done it for him. Even as it was, the living present, with its possibilities, rose nearest to him, and crowded out the past.

"Phœbe," he said again, "what is the matter between my father and you? What makes you speak so to him?"

This time Phœbe dropped her stockings, threw her apron over her head, and burst into loud sobs.

"It's hard to know right fra wrong, and I'm only a poor ignorant woman. And it's hard to think you've bin doin' wrong when you've put your whole life in it, and to find that it'll be right to do what'll waste years and years o' patience. But I'll do it! I won't go on doing wrong the minute I sees it, and there's none o' us can leave off afore. And come what may, David, I'm glad I've stuck by ye all these years, and ye are a bit the better for't, ain't ye, David?"

"Very much the better, Phœbe," the young man answered soothingly. "You have been my best friend always."

"An' that's where it is!" she cried passionately. "And yet if I hadn't done what seems wrong, I couldn't ha' bin your best friend without doing of it. It's all in a muddle—there's something that you can't say is certain right or wrong, neither black, white, nor grey, and yet it lies in the way to something else that's certain great glorious good! For why, I ask, ain't I your best friend? Because I think I'm the only one that's tried to lead you to Him that's the Father of the fatherless and the motherless, as you a'most are and allays have been, David. I can't make out why God sets things so."

"But He does not," David argued gently. "If there's a right thing to be done, and we seem to have to pass through a wrong thing on our way to it, depend upon it, Phœbe, there's another way to it, and a better one, and it's our own fault, and not God's, that we do not find it."

Phœbe spoke more quietly. "It's comfortin' to hear you," she said. "Whatever I taught ye once, ye've made a precious deal more out of it than ever I could. I can bear a'most anything 'cept gettin' mazed and puzzled about the ways o' the Almighty, and kind o' thinkin' that either He can't know or doesn't care. That puts me fair past myself."

"That is because it is not a trouble sent

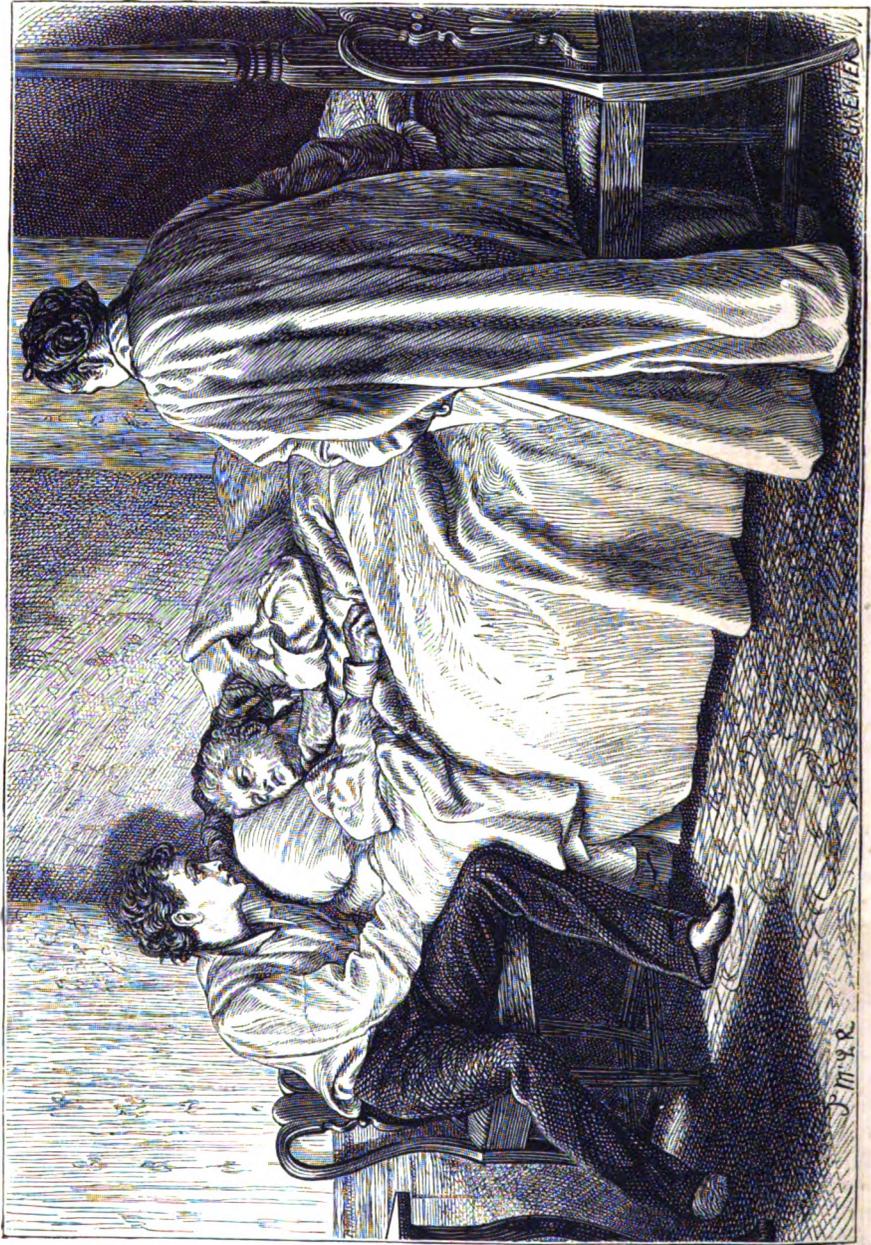
from God, but growing from our own faithlessness," said David; "and I think it generally begins, Phœbe, when we've been letting in wrong feelings of some other kind. We do what God tells us not to do, and then grow unbelieving and impatient because the light of His countenance is withdrawn. We walk in roads which He has told us are dark, and then murmur because we stumble. I do not yet know what has been the matter to-night, Phœbe, and you will not tell me of other things which I feel sure must have happened to trouble you, so that I cannot tell what may have been your provocations; but still, dear old Phœbe, don't forget that the wrath of man never worketh the righteousness of God."

"It's a true word, David," she said, wiping her eyes; "and yet things is so peculiar. There's something I didn't do, years ago, which, maybe, I ought, and yet, if I had done it, maybe it would ha' been wi' a good bit o' vengeance an' spite. But there's no good sittin' up a' night talking o't, or I'll not be up in the morning, and there'll be words agen. I've heard the master and missus go off quiet enough to their room, and now you go to yours, and get a good sleep. Things mend theirselves while a-body's napping."

David needed no second bidding; but slumber did not come so easily. In spite of his strengthening words to Phœbe, he held to his own faith in God much as a poor mariner clings to a rope in the dark, rough, midnight sea.

Oh, it seemed so hard to pass from the bright, wholesome atmosphere of the early evening into this murky cloud of mystery and degradation. It was like going from sunshine and breeze into the dark, tainted chill of a charnel-house. What must it be to be like George Harvey, with such mother and sisters, and such a wife—helped, encouraged, stimulated, comforted on every hand, just as naturally and simply as a plant is nurtured by showers and sunbeams! The past evening had been as a festive robe to David's spirit; it was the others' every-day wear! And there must be so much of it in the world, and yet none for him who longed for it so much. The doubts which he had allayed in Phœbe returned to torment himself. Why did God create yearnings to leave them unsatisfied? "It must be right, it must be right," he cried in his heart. "But, O God, keep hold of me, for I cannot keep hold of Thee!" And yet better to be he, believing in the bright and innocent and happy, though shut from them, than Mrs. Maxwell, who concluded





"CROOKED PLACES."

that everybody's home was like her own, "if one only knew."

He lay wakeful for a long time, but was just in the midst of a troubled dream, when he was awakened by a piercing scream, followed by Mrs. Maxwell's voice, crying—

"David! David! Phœbe! Mr. Maxwell is in a fit. He is dying!"

The son was in his father's room in less

than a moment. He had sufficient professional knowledge to perceive that the surgeon was in no fit, but in a paroxysm of *angina pectoris*, slight touches of which he had suffered once or twice before. But this was no slight touch; and Phœbe no sooner appeared than David hurried her off to fetch some brother medical man, even though it might be the humdrum parish doctor, at whom the



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sharp surgeon had so often scoffed. Once or twice the anguish abated a little, only to return with renewed force; and when the hastily-summoned doctor turned from his patient's bedside, his face spared David from asking a single question.

The dying man tried to speak once or twice and failed. It brought the agony upon him like a fate. Oh the poor opened mouth

and hungering eyes! they stamped themselves on David's heart, and he ever afterwards remembered his father so. And it was well! For it was a kindlier memory after all than any other could have been!

He got a word or two out at last. Oh if he had only wrestled with his spiritual foes, as he did with the physical agony that he might accomplish this! Only by putting his

ear close to his father's mouth could David catch his meaning.

"You will do what is right. Phoebe is a good woman, and——"

No more! The fierce agony was down upon him again, and as it passed away life passed with it.

And next day the windows of Blenheim House were blinded, except the kitchen window, which had no blind to draw.

"I suppose my words killed him. I know them sort of diseases come when people are put out." Phoebe vehemently sobbed this out in the presence of her mistress, whose philosophic composure was such as not to render such a statement unfeeling, while Phoebe seemed eager to take a wild revenge upon herself by draining the deepest cup of remorse and humiliation before the very woman who had aggravated her bitterest invectives the night before. "That's where it is," Phoebe went on; "when one begins to think one may have been wrong, and to try to be right, it's just then that one gets punished, and one seems to bring it on one's own head."

Phoebe's rough hand was unconsciously laid upon one of the deepest secrets of divine government.

"Well, let it be a lesson to you," said Mrs. Maxwell, without one thought as to her own share in the excitement of the previous evening; "and of course you'll always feel like a murderer, and can't ever expect to prosper. With all his faults, Mr. Maxwell was a good man in his own way, and that's more than you'll ever be with your violent temper."

CHAPTER VI.—"THE HACKNEY MERCURY."

The death of the head of a family generally brings many changes with it. It could not fail to do so in Mr. Maxwell's case.

There was no will, and David knew he had no right to anything. His father's private income had all been derived from funded property of increasing value. Mrs. Maxwell would take her widow's moiety, and the rest would go to the next of kin, the surgeon's only nephew, who had never even been seen at Blenheim House. David would scarcely have wished it otherwise, nay, would positively have rejoiced in it, but for the actual pinch of necessity. There are certain ties of life which seem to pollute and corrode any gold that passes over them. And though David had loved his father in a way, and would have taken any kindness from him in life when it might have savoured of a personal

affection, in his heart he rather preferred the plain legal cutting off of a legally nameless child, to any subterfuge.

Mrs. Maxwell promptly announced her intention to leave Hackney instantly, and go into apartments at some watering place, until she had time to secure a suitable permanent residence. She had secret visions of visiting and visited dowagerhood, wholly free from the cloud that had hung over her in Hackney. Mrs. Maxwell was so densely ignorant as to think nothing of her own defective grammar, or even to suspect that her manners were coarse and ungainly. Everything would be well so long as her dress was rich, her apartments spacious, and her table good. She judged thus in unsuspecting vulgarity. Other people might have confirmed her judgment in worldly cynicism.

On the very early date when she left Blenheim House "for good and all in every way," as she elegantly expressed it, David received a letter from the next-of-kin. It was couched in very courteous terms, asking him as a special favour to retain possession and keep everything going as usual until this unknown relative could himself appear upon the scene and wind up matters.

David was not ungrateful for this breathing time, for his future course was sufficiently indeterminate. His medical studies had proceeded so far as to render their completion desirable, and it seemed to David that his best plan was to offer his services to the parish doctor until such time as he could pass his examinations, since he believed he could make himself quite useful enough to deserve some salary in the meantime. He had a very natural desire to have arranged his future before his father's relation arrived. Phoebe's future he carried with his own, in his mental eye. He had never sought further to probe the mystery about her. It was connected wholly with his father, and he had in remembrance his father's dying encomium, and knew the surgeon well enough to have full faith in it. David would have been glad to receive Phoebe's confidence, yet he would not ask it. But he was determined to provide for her to the very best of his power. She had, indeed, been more than a faithful servant to him, and he was resolved to do his utmost for her, to keep her with him all through, if possible; if not, to aid her as much as he could at present, and hasten to bring about a speedy re-union. He did not hesitate in bringing this tie upon himself, nor forecast that there might come a time when he should have other uses

for the income that must certainly be very narrow for a long time. David's was one of those simple, straight minds which, beneath the scriptural warning, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," reads a command, "Sufficient unto the day is the duty thereof."

With quick tact he felt that Phœbe must be anxious about many things of which she would be too reserved and delicately-minded to speak. For with all her homely bluntness, Phœbe was a woman of many fine perceptions, and nobody knew it better than he who was almost her foster-child. It was not lost upon him that the moment he became the apparent head of the household, Phœbe prefaced her old nurse-like "David," or "Davie," by the title of "Mr." He was made owner of nothing else, neither acre nor coffer, but to that one plain faithful woman, he had become "master."

So, in pursuance of his desire to set her heart at rest as much as possible, he announced to her—

"I am going to call on the doctor, Phœbe, to see if he will take me into his surgery until I can set up for myself. Perhaps he will give me a salary to live out of his house, and then we must manage so that you can be my housekeeper. I know you are not particular about doing any sort of work that may come to hand, and I should prefer one kind woman overlooker all to myself to paying heavily for part shares in faithless landladies, laundresses, and needlewomen. It would not only be happier for me, but really cheaper, I think, Phœbe."

"No, it wouldn't; tho' I've got clothes for two or three years, and needn't take any wage, and can live on taters, as I used to, once't before. Why can't you speak truth, Mr. David, and say you're doin' it out o' kindness to me?"

David laughed. "Kindness to myself," he said. "If you will have it that it is dearer, be it so, but what should I have to give elsewhere for the same article? What is the market value of care and kindness like yours? Can a king's revenue buy them? So, when I have the chance of them, I think they are dirt-cheap even if they do cost an extra shilling or two. Why, I set such store by them, Phœbe, that if the doctor wants me to live in his house, I was going to get you to take a little retaining salary, so as to be ready to come back to me whenever I want you."

"I'll be that without taking a wage for it," returned Phœbe, with a toss of her head.

"Trust me. Bless us, if it wasn't for the look o' the thing, I'd be your housekeeper, and keep myself, and bring home money into the bargain. It's made my fingers itch to hear what women get a-washing and charing. There's a poor fal-de-ral of a thing down the lane that gets three shillings a week for dusting out an office before eight in the morning, and cleaning the doorsteps o' Saturdays. And don't do it, either. For I troubled myself to walk past one Saturday night, and I'd ha' been ashamed o' them steps, and couldn't ha' gone to church on Sunday wi' such slobbered work on my mind. I ain't going to take your money to live idle away from ye, Mr. David. An I'll never engage myself for more than a day, wi'out telling the folks that I may have to go off without notice if my old master wants me."

"I think there'll be no need for that, Phœbe," David answered, and then he went off, to call upon the doctor.

That gentleman received him kindly enough till he knew his errand, and then he grew cool, except in eager reiteration of his belief, that he believed his visitor to be personally all that he should desire either as assistant, colleague, or housemate. And though the good doctor did not intend it, there was an emphasis on the word "personally" which gave David an insight into his real meaning, and prevented him from seeking any detailed explanation, when the doctor went on to repeat "that though personally you are all that I could desire, and though for some reasons such an union of our forces might be highly desirable to both, still—there are—other considerations—certain drawbacks—things that cannot enter into any agreement."

The worthy man could have thanked David heartily when he put him out of his misery by courteously acknowledging the civility with which he had received his unwelcome overtures, and then rising and taking his departure.

The doctor meant what he said when he followed him to the door, and shaking hands with him twice, begged him "to let him know if he could serve him in any other way. He should be only too delighted—in any other way."

David understood, and yet he did not understand. As we have said before, from the inside and from the outside, things show differently. He knew his dead father was as far removed from what a doctor should be as he was from true Christian manhood, which, in fact, must be the foundation and finishing

of all technical excellences. But David knew that his own ideal was founded on standards which the world in general ignored. He believed that all professional etiquettes and prerogatives should be so permeated by Christianity that no lawyer should accept a client, unless assured that he had true and sufficient legal or moral claims for plaint or defence, and should find his sweetest professional success in the weight which such a man's name would presently carry with it; and that a medical man should be as severe and as curt to the criminal or imaginary diseases of his rich patients as he would to those of his poor ones, and as gentle and patient to the really suffering and dying poor as to the afflicted millionaire. But just as David knew that many lawyers were honoured and prosperous in the world, mainly because they could successfully make the worse appear the better cause, and show trophies of doubtful titles established, and criminals set scot free, so he knew that many a medical name stood high and fashionable, not only although he did not keep these ways, but partly, perhaps, because he did not! Whenever he had reasoned with his father on this or that grasping, selfish, or hoodwinking practice, his father, whether he yielded the point or not, had always proceeded to justify it by precedent, gilded by some name, often truly great in scientific skill, and in undeniable possession of the world's good opinion and respect. Therefore David had never supposed that his father stood condemned in the world's eyes save as an eccentric, coarse-mannered man, who failed to make the best of his talents either for himself or for it. Truly, David was never quite sure that he knew all, and Phœbe's speech to his father the night before his death, had changed his suspicions into certainty. Still the style of Phœbe's hints, and, though inconsequently, the heat shown by Mrs. Maxwell, had led him to conclude that this something was a skeleton in the household rather than the surgery.

Therefore, though he felt that some cloud about his father overshadowed his prospects, he was mystified. He half shrank from any attempt to analyze it, and he walked moodily along, wondering, with the vagueness always attendant upon a new groove of thought, into what other channels beside medicine he could possibly turn his knowledge of chemistry and anatomy. The former was his favourite, and this instantly struck him as fortunate, being the more adaptable of the two. He knew that the world was all before him, but dismissed that thought in an instant. There

were three reasons why he should remain in Hackney. They must be written down in succession, but it need not, therefore, be inferred that they presented themselves so to David. He might have seemed more heroic if they had, but, in fact, they all came together, shading into each other, so that it was hard to say where one ended and the other began. First, he would not wish to extort from ignorance a confidence which was not to be obtained from those who knew his antecedents. Second, a confidence that goes so cheaply is seldom worth having, and in his case could scarcely be procured without evasions stronger than silence. Third, a charmed link held him to Hackney; had it been stronger, it might have been elastic; as it was, the least strain would snap it at once, and for ever. If he stayed where he was, he might in time become Millicent Harvey's friend, her second brother, a familiar face in whatever household she blessed with her presence.

David kept his castle-building within these modest limits, and yet somehow it brought the blood to his pale face, and it was still flushing there when the corner of a cross-road brought him face to face with Millicent herself.

She paused and greeted him; and then, as for some few hundred yards their ways lay in the same direction, they walked on side by side. They had not met since the evening of the Lauries' party before his father's death. And Milly wondered rather awkwardly what she ought to say, which wonder resulted simply in more emphatic inquiries after Mrs. Maxwell's health and whereabouts, and in an observation that her sister, Mrs. George Harvey, had been telling her husband that he should call at Blenheim House, but that George had said he feared it would be too early an intrusion.

"Tell your brother that I shall only be too happy and honoured," David responded. His very earnestness gave a hesitation to his manner, and Milly scarcely thought he was sincere. After a few moments' silence, he asked whether she had seen Fergus Laurie lately.

"Oh yes," she replied, "he was with us last evening. I am very busy—just as busy as I can be—for him!"

"Dear me, has the firm so much on hand?" David observed.

"No; I am working for him," and Milly became a little embarrassed. "I am working for him apart from the firm. Of course you know he is soon going to set up in

business by himself. I thought you were sure to know. I thought you were the same as himself!"

"I did not know," said David. "I have not seen him much this last week or two. I knew he was very busy. You see there was no object in his telling me. Dear me, and he is going into business by himself. Once he starts, Miss Harvey, he will be a great manufacturer. You can't think how clever he is, nor how generous!"

"I can fully believe it," Milly answered; and thought to herself, "Of course Fergus did not tell him about his plans, because it would have seemed so heartless, when this one is so miserably circumstanced." For in course of conversation Fergus had imparted to Milly all that he knew, believed, or imagined about the Maxwells. And then as they parted Milly said in her frank, off-hand way, "Tell Mr. Laurie that I told you. I did not think I was revealing any secret. It would have been safe from everybody else. Good-bye."

David walked on homewards. He knew that he was Fergus's nearest friend, but for all that he was not so near as the girl whom his friend had scarcely spoken to six months ago! "Well," David thought to himself, "it is only natural; in fact, it is as it should be."

He pushed open the garden gate at Blenheim House, and made his way to the back door to save Phoebe the trouble of leaving her kitchen.

He lifted the latch and went in. The

room was bright with what Phoebe would call a fine "cooking fire," and there were savoury smells rising from sundry pots and pans grouped about the grate. But Phoebe, active, bustling Phoebe, sat apart, leaning heavily on the table. A local newspaper lay a little way from her, as if she had given it an impatient push. She sprang to her feet as David entered, and her face was ablaze with wrath, and sorrow, and tears.

"Ye might as well read it at once't," she said, holding out the journal. "There'll be plenty that'll speak on't, and it's well to have on your front ready. Says the baker's boy to me, 'You look in the second column, third page of our *Mercury*,' and I saw the milk-man a-smirkin'. There's no use in a-hushin' and a-hidin', I sees that. The only way to get rid o' dirty clothes is to wash 'em. Shut 'em out o' sight and they smells! It's a poor work to have set one's life to, that can be all unpicked in a minute, like mine. But oh, Mr. David, Mr. David, don't turn like that, but remember that the Lord himself says that the son and the father may differ as dark and light, and anybody that reads the Bible knows it!"

For David's face had grown white and rigid over the paragraph which poor Phoebe's thumbing had made painfully conspicuous. But he gently stroked the hand she laid on his arm.

"Don't fear for me," he said.

Still he gathered up the paper in his hand, and went off to his own room and shut himself in.

THOUGHTS BY THE WAY.

III.

THE pitiless anathema belongs to ecclesiasticism—the hard sneer to infidelity. True religion does not curse, and honest doubt will not scoff.

Because mental force draws on the physical system and exhausts it, materialists argue that mind is only a manifestation of matter. In proportion to the exercise of thought there is brain expenditure, and therefore thought is only action of the brain.

This argument makes large demands. When I see the substance of a candle passing off into flame, can I justly conclude that the

flame is nothing more than the etherealisation of wick and tallow? I have left out the invisible oxygen, which is the most essential of all. And in thought, may we not hold that there is as large a residuum unaccounted for, when these physicists make mind only the flame of matter? The spirit-oxygen is the one grand requisite.

It is not isolated great deeds which do most to form a character, but small continuous acts, touching and blending into one another. The greenness of a field comes not from trees, but blades of grass.

A religion of the bare intelligence makes everything disputable ; of the feelings, everything vague ; of the conscience, everything rigid. Intelligence in religion gives form to feeling, feeling gives warmth to conscience, and conscience gives a firm basis to both.

To think of the infinite, say some, limits it ; therefore we must ignore the infinite. When I look on the sea, I limit it on my side, but only on my side. On its own side it is to my view boundless ; and man's spirit can so stand on the shore of the absolute.

When some great man dies, there is often a class of men who entrench their opinions behind his grave, because they think regard for the dead will protect them. They remind one of the Communists of Paris taking refuge at last in Père la Chaise.

A man who receives the truth of God to give it forth again is like the sea of Galilee, through which the river Jordan flows. He is kept clear and sweet by the passage of the stream. He who absorbs without giving back is like the Dead Sea, which is left stagnant and bitter, because it has no outlet.

There is a second growth sometimes on grain, in abnormal seasons, which blights the good of the harvest ; and there is occasionally a re-appearance of youthful follies in old men which is one of the most painful sights in human nature. It is a happy thing when men come to their graves neither before their time, nor after it, but " in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in, in his season." May not the ancients have been thinking of such an after-growth in old age, when they framed their proverb, " Whom the gods love, die young ?"

Great thoughts and books sometimes disappear for generations, and turn up again unexpectedly, like messages dropped in the sea, and carried to far-off shores. The ocean of time has its hidden currents, as well as that of space ; and a curious history of them might be written from these reappearances.

They help us to believe that no true word or deed is finally lost, and that a time is coming when, in this sense also, the sea shall give up the dead which are in it.

There are few things which prove more strongly our disordered state in this world than the steady downward tendency, both in society and the individual, unless there be a constant counter-struggle. There is an abrasion of the spiritual strength going on, a cooling down of the soul's warmth, a gravitation earthward. Of the soul's world it is also true—" The mountain falling cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of its place." For the waste of external nature, God has provided a gradual counter upheaval, or intervals of convulsive elevation, or both together. And so there are needed in the spiritual world steadfast resistance against declension day by day, and also those seasons of reviving impulse which God sends to churches and generations. The decay of the created, and the counter-working of divine life, are the law of the present world both in its material and spiritual elements, until a higher order enters in the creation of the new heavens and new earth wherein DWELLETH righteousness.

Infinite power embraces the outmost circle of the universe in stars and constellations. Wisdom shines through power in the next circle, in the balance of planetary worlds in our solar system. Goodness comes distinctly to view when our earth is reached, in the constitution of nature, animate and inanimate. Justice appears in the history of the world, in the fate of nations dependent on a moral law. Last of all, mercy addresses the heart of man. Zone within zone, the divine attributes girdle us round, till God himself visits the soul, the gospel tells us how. And when He is admitted, the circle of his presence widens again and fills all things, till the stars tremble to its living pulse. The outmost circle proclaims God is Power ; the inmost responds, God is Love.

The Bible is a transparency, but it can be truly seen only when it is lighted up within—by God's Spirit.

A sign of divinity in the Bible is the way in which it never falls into mysticism while keeping close to the edge of the deepest feeling, and rises at the same time above materialism when it is dealing with the plainest practicalities.

That the world should admire its own heroes, and not God's, is natural enough. It is merely a case of mutual flattery. It praises those who show that they value its praise. It can understand them and appreciate their motive, but not that of the others, unless it were ready for their self-sacrifice.

Not to join the world's flattery of success, when it is unaccompanied by moral worth—not to bow at the shrine of mere wealth, however it may have been gained, or however it may be used—is one scriptural token of a good and brave man:—"In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the Lord." The judgment of the common mind is struck in this:—"Men will praise thee, when thou doest well to thyself."

Some men seem to think they strengthen the barrier against unbelief by increasing the number of things they believe. They turn Romanists out of fear of infidelity, as if a man should think that by filling the bottom of his boat with stones, he keeps the sea farther from him.

Ballast is good, but it is most profitable when made up of sound cargo.

One reason why Christianity has so little success in the world is because professing Christians subordinate it to so many other considerations. Local residence, occupation, friendship, marriage, are settled, and the question of religion goes for little or nothing. It is compromised, and a compromise is close to a surrender. Were it the ruling principle with Christians, it would be on the sure way to the world's throne, though it might be through suffering. "Art thou a King then? He answered, Thou sayest. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth."

Half truths are very attractive to some minds. They admit of forcible statement, from the absence of all attempt at modification, and they appear to possess simplicity and unity. They can be overcome not by the other half-truth, but by the presentation of the whole.

Truth consists not so much in the elimination of error—that is, in *contraction*—as in *comprehension*, in the taking of what is true in error into our truth.

Another way of stating this is, that error is always more or less superficial, and the only effectual way of supplanting it is to go deeper. The mine, as in military matters, is best met by the countermine.

That which is most pure in man is most divine:—"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." That which is most tender in God is most human:—"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him."

These two rays of light meet in Christ. Do they neutralise each other as light beams sometimes do? Does the divine weaken the human? the pure diminish the tender? The reverse. It is sin that hardens and dehumanises us. See, then, with what confidence we may cast ourselves on a sinless Saviour, "holy and yet harmless!"

If we admit the agreement of revelation with conscience to be an evidence of divinity in the Bible, do we thereby make conscience the criterion of what is divine in it? Some say so, and make this the door to rationalism. But it is surely possible to make conscience a witness, without exalting it into a judge.

There are two safeguards against rationalism. First, there are other witnesses. Second, the conscience in the enlightening, purifying process which it undergoes, through contact with the Bible, feels its own incompetency to be a judge. In other words, it becomes aware that sin has darkened it, not so much as to unfit it for the recognition of the Teacher, but enough to unfit it for dictating to Him.

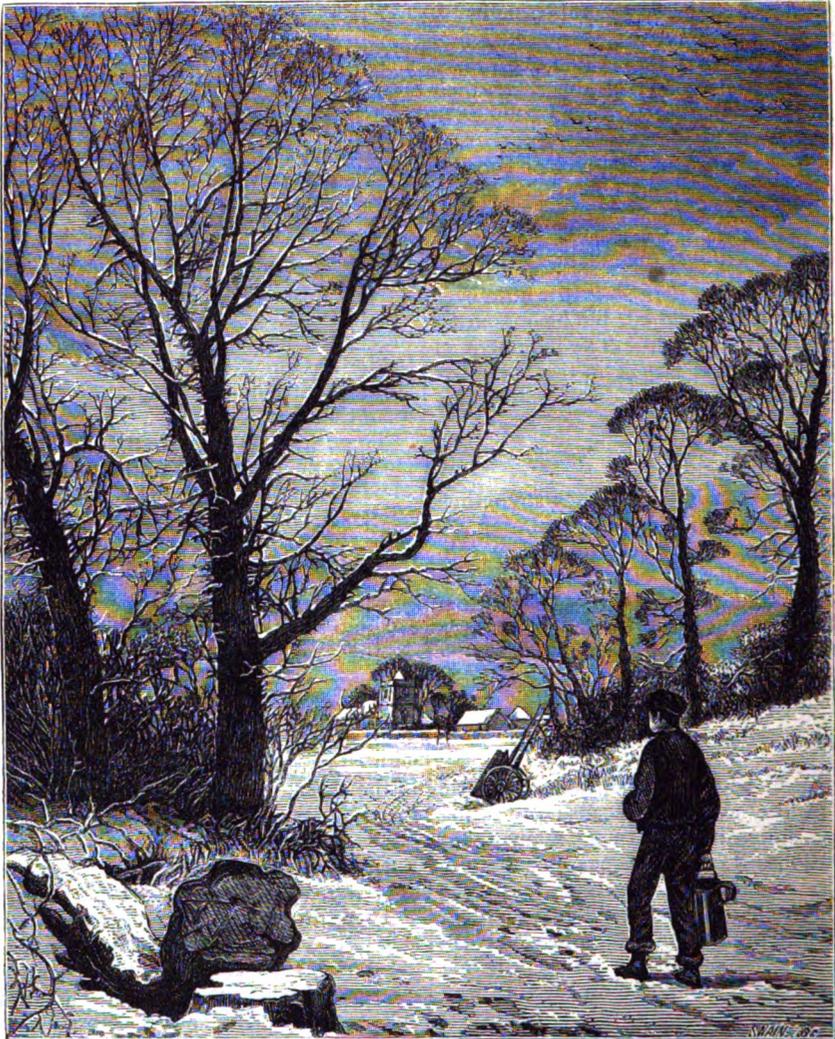
JOHN KER.



FELLOW-SUFFERERS.

ALAS, poor tree,
 Had I thy bravery,
 Or couldst thou weep in concert to my sighing !
 Snow-hid, thy leaves lie dead ;
 I wail, but thou dost spread
 Bare arms of benediction o'er the dying.

Thou their first stay, and last—from bud to leaf ;
 And this thy thanks, poor tree,
 That they all fell from thee,
 Like summer friends when summer days are over :
 That thou dost stand alone,
 With all thy greenness gone,
 For winds to rock, and winter snows to cover.



Lightly the zephyr came, as lightly hied ;
 But these, when first he wooed,
 Forsook their real good,
 Knowing thee faithful and the wind untried.
 Reproach them, they will hear,
 Their graves are very near—
 Close at thy roots thy prodigals abide.
 Ah, not reproach, but rather dirge and prayer !
 They, as they lie and die,
 So low, who late were high,
 Fare worse for loss of thee than thou canst fare ;

The wind that whispered lied,
 Kissed once, and flung aside,
 And scent of death soon filled the autumn air.

Alas, poor tree !
 Thy fate and mine agree :
 All desolate, but we will not despair :
 A thousand leaves left thee,
 An earthly hope left me—
 Yet another Spring may clothe our branches, cold
 and bare.

ALICE HORTON.

THE SYRIAN LEPER.

2 KINGS v.

GOD'S election of Israel as the covenant people was not designed to be private to all other nations. He elevated them above the rest of humanity in order that the blessings which He bestowed upon them might stream down from them and bless the whole world; just as in the economy of nature He raises aloft into the sky a certain portion of a country in the form of mountains, on which the clouds of heaven may be precipitated in snow or rain, and from which streams and rivers may flow down to fertilise the plains and valleys at their feet. Were there no elect nation—no people selected to enjoy exceptional privileges, and to be tried and disciplined by special dispensations of grace—then the knowledge of the living and true God would be hopelessly lost, and one great tide of moral corruption and idolatry would sweep over the human race, and obliterate every trace of true religion; just as in the absence of mountains all the land would be worn down to one uniform level, and one shoreless ocean would tumble round the globe. In the history of Elisha this universal design of God's special dealings with Israel comes out conspicuously to view. We find in him a closer resemblance to the Son of man, both in his personal character and in the nature of his work, than in any other of the prophets and godly men of old. His comprehensive beneficence and generous toleration of other creeds and nationalities, contrast in a very striking manner with the spirit of his age. By the story of Naaman the Syrian leper especially he is brought very closely into contact with our Lord. Not only was the nation to which this man belonged the hereditary enemy of Israel, and given up to the worship of false gods; but their national idol was that very Baal which Ahab, by his disastrous marriage with the Syrian Jezebel, introduced with such terrible consequences into the land of Israel, and which it was the special mission of Elisha's life to overthrow. And yet the prophet overlooked all these circumstances of prejudice, and regarded Naaman on the common and wider ground of his humanity as a suffering fellow-creature, whom it was in his power to relieve. And our Lord brought forward this example of Elisha's unrestricted philanthropy as a reproof to His own bigoted countrymen, who wished to confine the benefit of His miracles within the narrow circle of their

II. N.S.

own district—as a general reproof to all the Jews, who could not bear that the Gentiles should be made partakers with them of the common salvation. “Many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed saving Naaman the Syrian.” The case of the Syrian leper showed that, even under the old covenant, God had purposes of mercy in regard to the alien races.

By the cure of Naaman's leprosy, Elisha anticipated the miracles of our Lord, several of which were wrought upon lepers. Leprosy was the typical or representative disease of Palestine. The ideas usually entertained regarding its infectious or contagious character are erroneous. It is purely a disease of the blood communicated only by hereditary taint. In this light the restrictions imposed upon leprosy by the Mosaic ritual assume an altogether different significance from that which is usually put upon them. They were meant not to prevent the spread of the disease, but to remind the Hebrews that they were God's peculiar people, brought into covenant relation with Him in order that they might be pure as He is pure, and perfect as He is perfect. Leprosy, like every kind of disease, was an outward symbol of sin—a symptom visible in the flesh of the spiritual disease of the soul. But as it would have inflicted endless inconvenience upon society had every illness and disease been regarded as ceremonially unclean, leprosy was selected, owing to its peculiar loathsomeness, its hereditary contamination of the blood, and power of disfigurement, to represent the rest, and to be vicariously burdened with the ceremonial laws applicable to them. Among the Syrians, however, these laws of social isolation in regard to lepers did not exist; and therefore the leprosy of Naaman, although of the most malignant type, requiring in itself no sanitary regulation, did not disqualify him for the performance of his public duties. He was permitted to hold uninterrupted intercourse with the royal household, and to worship with his master in the house of Rimmon. But, in spite of the high position and the freedom of social communion which he enjoyed, the lot of Naaman was truly a pitiable one. His disease was a living death—a poisoning of the springs of his whole being. There is a touch of tender compassion in the

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way in which the Scripture narrative introduces him to our notice. He was the noblest subject in Syria, a victorious general loved by his soldiers, a prime-minister trusted and honoured by his king, the husband of a loving wife, and the head of an attached household. He had all of fame, and wealth, and honour, and love which the world could give him; but—and how suggestive of vanity and vexation of spirit in such a connection is that little word *but*—he was a leper!

But in the dark leaden sky that hung over the life of the Syrian leper, a little spot of blue suddenly opened up in the most unexpected manner. There is a Jewish tradition recorded by Josephus which identifies Naaman with the unknown person who drew his bow at a venture, and smote Ahab with his fatal wound at the battle of Ramoth-gilead; and thus, as the sacred narrative says, "gave deliverance to Syria." If the tradition be genuine, it is probable that it was in this campaign against Israel that the little Hebrew maid, whose story is so briefly but touchingly related in the general narrative, was taken captive. Brought into Naaman's household, and made the slave of his wife, this foreign girl had daily opportunities of seeing the distress caused to the whole family by the leprosy of its head. Forgetting all the wrong that had been done to herself, and all the prejudices of her race and religion, she sympathized deeply with the afflicted leper. She had heard of the cures effected by the prophet of the Lord, and more especially of the raising of the Shunammite's son; and she reflected that he who could restore the dead to life, could also cure her master's leprosy. Full of this idea, she one day said to her mistress while waiting upon her in the course of her ordinary duties, "Would God that my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria, for he would recover him of his leprosy." It would be very interesting to dwell upon all the suggestive features of this little episode, but I draw attention to it solely to show how essential, in the cure of Naaman, was the mediation of this little maid. The Hebrew slave was nothing in the eyes of the great Syrian general; and yet without her aid, he would have died a miserable leper. She made known to him where and how he could be healed. And does not this incident teach us, in a most striking manner, that no human being is independent of another? The highest person may need the help of the lowest. Especially in the matter of our salvation are we taught our mutual dependence upon each other. This is the great lesson which is conveyed to us by

what are called the miracles of intercession in the Gospels; that is, the miracles in which the help of friends was needed to bring the case of the sufferer before the Saviour. A father beseeches Jesus for his son; a master asks a cure for his servant; and neighbours with wonderful perseverance and faith, bring their friend through the roof into the presence of the Redeemer. The case of Naaman the Syrian, guided to the prophet Elisha by the captive Hebrew maid, is the Old Testament counterpart of the case of the man sick of the palsy carried to the feet of Jesus. It is in spiritual as it is in social life—we need the help of our fellows. God has left His work of redemption to be completed, in a sense, by man's ministry of faith and love, as He left the work of creation to receive the finishing touches from man's skill and labour. He who put man in the garden of Eden to *dress* and *keep* it, after He had made all things very good, said to the disciples, "Go ye and preach the gospel to every creature," after He had said of the work of grace on the cross, "It is finished." It is by man that God saves man. We become, as one has expressed it, *sub-saviours*. We lose our hope and strength, and we are refreshed and invigorated by another's prayer. We grope for the wall in our blindness, and another guides us to the True Light. We are in the valley of the shadow of death, and another reaches to us the rod and the staff by which we are comforted, and led out into the green pastures and beside the still waters beyond. We are carried in our spiritual weakness in the arms of a friend's intercession to the feet of Jesus, and the blessing of faith won for us becomes the starting-point of our own personal faith.

The hint which the Hebrew maid threw out was speedily acted upon by her mistress, who grasped eagerly at anything that might afford a prospect of deliverance. It reached Naaman's ears, who immediately repaired to the king and begged his interference. Benhadad imagined Elisha to be one of those diviners or magicians—of whom there were probably numerous examples in his own court—employed by the king of Israel as a worker of prodigies. Under this impression he sent to Joram a proud letter, commanding the king of Israel to place the services of Elisha at the disposal of his prime-minister, so that his leprosy might be cured. Struck with consternation at the imperative tone of the letter, and at the seeming extravagance and unreasonableness of the request, Joram rent his clothes, and called his courtiers to witness how manifestly resolved the king of Syria was to pick a

quarrel with him, and make it the excuse for an aggressive war. Leprosy in Israel was considered to be so peculiarly a Divine judgment, and therefore incurable by any human means, that the hostile interpretation which the king of Israel put upon the message of his brother monarch seemed the only natural one. But had Joram been as well acquainted as he ought to have been with the character and position of Elisha, the message of the Syrian king would have occasioned him less surprise and alarm. He would have seen at once a way of escape out of the difficulty. But it is evident that this was the first intimation which the king of Israel had of the life and labours of the great prophet. Elisha had no honour in his own country and among his own people. His own king seemed to be utterly ignorant of his existence. The mighty works which he had wrought, and whose fame had penetrated even to a captive slave in Syria, were entirely unknown in the high places of his own land. This circumstance shows how thoroughly engrossed in sensual and idolatrous practices were the aristocracy of Israel at this time. On the higher and more cultivated classes the sin of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, had done its evil work. The steady growing corruption had entered every channel of society. Its language, its habits, its worship were steeped in one pervading pollution; and the heroic energy which Elijah and Elisha displayed, and the supernatural works which they performed, had not succeeded, even in the most partial manner, in stemming the fatal tide. No voice was raised for Jehovah; no sign was made that Israel had not utterly forgotten their God. In the midst of this spiritual darkness and deadness, the incident of Naaman's quest for the prophet of the Lord seemed like a solemn rebuke of the national apostasy. From the very centre and cradle of that Baal-worship which had ruined the land came to them, as if for the purpose of shaming them out of their ignorance and hardness of heart, a revelation of the wonderful works which He had been doing in the midst of them for their reformation. Out of the mouth of heathen and enemies God ordained the praise of His glory when the lips of his own people were mute.

When Elisha heard of the king's alarm and perplexity he sent to him a message of mingled reproof and comfort. "Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? Let him come now unto me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel." Naaman accordingly went to the abode of the prophet with great pomp—with a splendid train of chariots, horses, and

camels laden with costly presents—filling the whole street before the prophet's house. This was not the condition in which Elisha wished him to come for a cure. Such pride and pomp were unsuitable for a man who was afflicted with a loathsome disease—peculiarly representative of human guilt and vanity. Such a mode of soliciting help might have been in accordance with the character and working of heathen religions, which cared only for outward homage and disregarded the state of the heart. But the God of Israel must be approached in a very different fashion. He who searcheth the hearts and trieth the reins of the children of men requires humility, contrition, and self-sacrifice. The leper must be brought to the knowledge and confession of his own uncleanness. While in Israel he must be brought under the Levitical laws and restrictions of leprosy. A sense of the true value of the boon he seeks must be awakened in his heart. And most wisely were the means to effect these purposes adopted. They were admirably adapted to correct the mistaken ideas which Naaman entertained regarding the God of Israel and His prophet Elisha, and to impress upon his mind the salutary truth that there was an essential difference between them and the gods and magicians of his own country. Elisha would not admit him into his house—would not even come forth to speak to him. Sitting calmly in his chamber as on a throne raised high above all earthly dignities and powers, he sent out his servant with the simple command that Naaman was to go and wash himself seven times in the waters of the Jordan, assuring him that in this way only would his disease be eradicated.

This was not an arbitrary command—an act of caprice on the part of the prophet, for which anything else would have done as well. The tests of the spiritual realm are as precise and severely rigid as those of the chemical world. There are no chance processes or results. Elisha's injunction had a special appropriateness and a deep religious significance. In the first place, the command to wash in the Jordan implied that as a man in order to bathe, strips himself of his clothes and all the adventitious distinctions of life, and reduces himself to the condition of primitive simplicity, so the proud Syrian was to divest himself of all his pride and dignity, and the distinctions and circumstances upon which he set his heart—to come down from his chariot, to leave behind him his attendants and treasures, to strip himself naked of all that served to separate him from his fellows,

and to humble himself before God as having nothing to boast of, no confidence in the flesh. His disease had shown no deference to his lofty position; it reduced him to the level of the lowest; it showed him that he had really nothing but his human nature. His cure, therefore, must impress this humbling truth still more deeply upon his mind. Not as the proud Syrian general with all the pomp and circumstance of his high position, seated in his chariot, and laden with costly presents, is he to be cured; but as the poor leper stripped of everything, reduced to a naked condition, having nothing but his disease. Then, in the next place, according to the Levitical law, washing with water was an essential element in the purification of a leper. Two birds were chosen; one was killed above a vessel of water taken pure and fresh from the stream, and its blood was allowed to drop into the vessel; the other was washed in this blood-stained water and set free; while the leper himself was sprinkled with the water seven times. Elisha adopted as much of this ritual as was suitable to the case of a heathen like Naaman, preserving the essential feature that he was to be washed in water, clean and fresh from the stream, seven times, to indicate the thoroughness and perfection of the cleansing process.

Elisha's treatment of the haughty Syrian was like the first effect of purifying a stagnant pool, stirring up all the pollution that had lain quietly at the bottom, and bringing it to the surface. Incensed at the apparent neglect and incivility of the prophet of Israel, and bitterly resenting what he considered a slight cast upon the natural glories of his country, he turned away in a fury. "Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus," he said, "better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them and be clean?" What were the paltry streams of Palestine, that were full only in the rainy season, and whose channels in the hot summer became dry and white as roads; what was the Jordan itself, a low-lying ditch of a river with turbid waters, that for half the year did not fill its inmost bed—compared with the clear, swift-flowing rivers that swept down from the snowy Lebanon, full from bank to bank all the year round, watered all the rich plains of Damascus, supplied the wants of a dense population, and made the surrounding country the loveliest and most fertile region in all the East? Besides, the idea of washing in any river for such a purpose is perfectly preposterous. What can water do to cleanse my leprosy? Have I not washed myself a thou-

sand times, and my disease has remained? It is too deep-seated to be removed by such superficial means. The prophet of Israel only mocks my infirmity. Such were the mingled feelings of Naaman when he heard the message of Elisha; and were it not for his servants, who well knew how to deal with the irascible but not ungenerous temper of their master, he would have gone away in an implacable mood, resolved perhaps to wipe out the insult in blood. The servants represented to him that the simplicity of the prescription, so far from being an objection, was a strong recommendation in its favour. "If the prophet had bid thee do some great thing," they said, "wouldest thou not have done it? How much rather then when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean!" Here again we have a beautiful illustration of intercessory faith, and of the help which one human being receives from another in matters the most vital to him. The Hebrew maid, by her faith and devotion, guided her master to the feet of the prophet; the servants of Naaman, by their faith and devotion, carried him farther as it were to the place of cure. Without the Hebrew slave he would never have heard of the means of cure; without his heathen servants he would never have adopted these means. It is not wonderful that seeing such strong faith and pure devotion on the part of these servants, the Great Healer Himself should virtually have said to Naaman as He said to the man sick of the palsy, "Thy sins are forgiven thee, go in peace."

Calmed down by the sensible advice of his servants, the Syrian soldier was induced to put the prescription of the prophet to the test. He went down to the Jordan alone, stripped himself of everything, and as a naked unclean leper dipped himself seven times in its waters; and, wonderful to relate, he found that the words of the prophet came true. The loathsome virus of leprosy was cured; the dry white scaly skin peeled off, and his flesh came again as the flesh of a little child. The Jordan was indeed to him a fountain of youth. The miracle wrought upon him was a miracle of rejuvenescence. You have seen an aged and warped tree, with dry, rough, weather-beaten trunk, and stunted boughs, producing in spring, from a bud in its side, a tender young sapling, perfect in form and colouring, reproducing once more the beautiful ideal which the parent-tree had long outgrown. So was it with Naaman when he washed in the sacred river. A new spring came into his sear and yellow leaf. The scarred and disfigured flesh became metamorphosed into the

soft, brightly-tinted, and roundly-moulded flesh of an infant. And what is every miracle of healing but the coming of the spring-time of the power from on high upon all the blighted and withered work of the curse; but a renewal of youth? Sin had made the body old and worn out; the Divine miracle brings it back to the Edenic state, when it issued fresh and fair from the Creator's hand. Every miracle of healing is a specimen and a prophecy of that new genesis, under which the old sicknesses and diseases shall pass away, and all things shall be made new.

The outward restoration of the body to health and soundness was the symbol of the inward restoration of a benighted soul to the knowledge of the living and true God. "Behold *now*," said Naaman, "I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel." A change as great passed over his religious sentiments as over his corporeal frame. That dipping seven times in the Jordan was a spiritual baptism, in which his old leprous life of sin was washed away from him and carried down by the river into the Dead Sea, and he emerged into a fresh, fair, youthful life of grace. He crossed, in that baptism in the Jordan, the boundary which separated him as an alien from the commonwealth of Israel and a stranger to the covenant of promise, and he became identified with the peculiar people in all their privileges and blessings. He yielded a testimony to the truth, such as neither the king of Israel nor any of his courtiers had ever paid. That expression, "his flesh came again as a little child," connects itself in our minds with the fact that it was the *children* of those who left Egypt who crossed the Jordan and so entered the promised land—a fact which seems to have suggested to our Lord the beautiful and significant precept, "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye cannot enter the kingdom of heaven." As a little child of faith, ignorant and simple-minded, but trustful and susceptible, Naaman entered the kingdom of heaven. But not only as children did the Israelites enter the promised land; they also entered it at the lowest point; for the valley of the Jordan is much lower than any other part of Palestine, and is the deepest depression on the face of the globe, being thirteen hundred feet below the level of the Mediterranean. And this fact, too, found a spiritual interpretation in the cure of the Syrian leper. Through that wonderful baptism in the Jordan, he crossed the boundary between the sad life he formerly led and the new life of faith and joy *at the*

lowest point, stripped of everything—in the poorest condition to which a human being can be reduced.

I will not dwell upon the gratitude and devotion of Naaman—upon Elisha's refusal of the splendid offers of remuneration which were made to him, on the plea which the Apostle of the Gentiles afterwards urged upon his converts, "I seek not yours but you,"—a noble disinterestedness which completed the conquest of the Syrian's faith which the miracle had begun, and convinced him that a religion whose ministers could not only heal the leprosy of others, but conquer the covetousness of their own souls, and tread under foot the world and all its vanities, must indeed be the true one. I will not turn the other side of this beautiful story, and show the complete contrast throughout which the conduct and fate of Gehazi exhibit. The miracle of mercy has an opposite pole in a miracle of judgment. The leprosy removed from a Gentile because of his faith, cleaves to an Israelite because of his heartlessness and sacrilege. This side of the story is as full of significance and instruction as the other. But I must pass from it to notice in conclusion the spiritual application of the cure of the Syrian leper.

The case of Naaman is regarded as typical of the case of the spiritual leper coming to Jesus for the healing of his soul. He hears of the great prophet, the Saviour of Israel, of whom Elisha was but a forerunner. The gospel is preached to him by some servant of the Lord. He is made anxious about his state. But he comes to Jesus as Naaman came to the prophet in all the pride of his worldly position and spiritual sufficiency, loaded with his own good works, to make a present of his good thoughts and feelings and intentions to Jesus, and to be accepted on account of them. He comes as Nicodemus came to Jesus, having whereof to glory in the flesh, being according to human estimation a righteous man. He recognises Christ only as a Divine teacher, and seeks from Him instruction, and not salvation, conscious that he has something yet to learn, but ignorant that he is totally corrupt. He looks upon Christ as one who is only to add something to the law of Moses, instead of owning Him as the living source of grace and truth. He says, like Naaman, "Behold, I thought he will surely come out to me and stand and call upon the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper." But the processes of grace are not supplementary, but radical. Christ says

to him as to Nicodemus, "Except a man be *born* of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." What you need is not an addition to your virtue—some good thing that you must do to complete what you lack yet—but a new birth, a new life altogether. You must go back to the very beginning. You must be born again of water and of the Spirit; and in entering into life the second time all that pertained to your previous existence in the flesh must be entirely and eternally washed away, and a new spiritual, holy life communicated. Your leprosy must be removed and your flesh must come again like the flesh of a little child. You must wash in the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness. You must strip yourself of all your self-righteousness, and simply as a sinner cast yourself upon the mercy of God in Christ. You have nothing to plead but your sinfulness and necessity. I have often thought that it would be no inconsiderable success of their preaching, if ministers could only bring men to believe *that they do not believe*; for thus stripped of all their gaudy garments of self-deception, they might, in the very shame and coldness of their nakedness, be induced to seek the covering of Christ's righteousness.

To all who are in this state I would seek to act the part of the servants of Naaman. I would say to you, If Jesus had bid you do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much rather, when He says to you, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved!" In the unhumiliated pride of your natural heart, you feel insulted by the very simplicity of the terms. The remedy proposed seems to you utterly

inadequate. Christ crucified is to you foolishness. "Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them?" "If I do my best," you say, "shall I not be saved? Why should I despise all my own goodness, and trust only in the merits and righteousness of another to be saved? What efficacy can there be in the blood of One who died eighteen hundred years ago to atone for my guilt and make my peace with God, so that a simple faith in Him avails to secure an interest in His salvation to every humble penitent believer? I cannot receive it!" So you reason; but, notwithstanding, there is only this one way of cure. You have gone to physician after physician; you have tried one remedy after another, and have been nothing bettered, but rather have become worse. Cast now all reasoning aside, and put the simple means of cure to the test. Make the easy experiment at once. See whether the Saviour will do in your case what He has done so often and in such myriads of cases already. "Do not talk to me," said Coleridge, with an emphasis which will sink the deeper the more it is considered, "Do not talk to me of the Evidences of Christianity;—TRY IT." Try this absurd, this obsolete faith, as some would presume to call it; and you will find to your astonishment that in doing the will of God, you will know the doctrine that it is of God. The effect will disappoint all your fears and exceed all your hopes. You will be cured and saved; and by being made thus childlike in soul by a simple faith, all other and after things of the kingdom of heaven will be possible to you.

HUGH MACMILLAN.

HIDDEN IN LIGHT.

WHEN first the sun dispels the cloudy night,
 The glad hills catch the radiance from afar,
 And smile for joy. We say, "How fair they are,
 Tree, rock, and heather-bloom so clear and bright!"
 But when the sun draws near in westerling might,
 Enfolding all in one transcendent blaze
 Of sunset glow, we trace them hot, but gaze
 And wonder at the glorious, holy light.
 Come nearer, Sun of Righteousness! that we,
 Whose swift short hours of day so swiftly run,
 So overflowed with love and light may be,
 Lost in the glory of the nearing Sun,
 That not our light but Thine, may brightly shine,
 New praise to Thee through our poor lives be won!

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL.

OUR DISTRICT.

By A RIVER-SIDE VISITOR.

VI.—OLD FEND-OFF.



AS a mere go-to-meeting, is regarded as "a character" in Our District, it is easy to understand that a *call*-to-meeting would be looked upon as something approaching the eccentric. It was in the latter light that the neighbours of "Old Fend-Off" viewed him—though it is due to them to state that they spoke of what they conceived to be his eccentricity as of an amiable, even a noble, kind, and while they sometimes laughed at, they always respected him. Not to know Old Fend-Off would, in our district, be to argue yourself unknown, and yet it so fell out that I had been a considerable time in the district, and made the acquaintance of many of its more commonplace inhabitants, before I even heard of Old Fend-Off; but at length I did come to hear of him, make his acquaintance, and learn his history.

The Industrial Home for Destitute Boys, in which a haven had been found for Captain Rust,* was mainly supported by local subscriptions; and numbers of the contributors not only gave their money, but also visited it, and by advice and otherwise aided the managers in their work. One of the most valuable of these friends was a master rigger, in a considerable way of business, and one

evening when we were going through the Home together, he asked:

"Can any of your boys do rope work? Mats, and nets, and that kind of thing?"

On inquiry I found that they could not, and answered accordingly.

"Ah, that's a pity," said our friend; "it just occurred to me that if they could do such work I could put a goodish bit in your way."

"In that case we might have them taught," I observed, in a questioning tone.

"Well, I almost think it would be worth your while," was the answer. "Who would you get to teach them?"

"Well, I don't exactly know," I replied; "couldn't you recommend us a person?"

My friend, shrugging his shoulders, replied that he could not; that his own men were union men, and that the union would be horrified at one of its members being employed for such a purpose, that it would cry aloud the trade was being ruined, and "call out" his men. "In fact," he concluded with a laugh, "now I think of it, I would have to give you the work on the quiet, or by the 'kind permission' of the union. However, I would give it to you, and doubt not you'll be able to get some outsider to teach the boys."

"We will try anyway," I said; and on the following day I commenced to make inquiries, applying in the first instance to a friendly old waterman, Bill Scott, by name, who had lived in the district all his life, and had an extensive acquaintance among its inhabitants. Old Bill, as he was familiarly called, did perhaps, the best trade of any man plying at the stairs; but steam ferries, and other modern improvements, had seriously interfered with the waterman's calling since his young days, and now even he had a good deal more time on his hands than he would have wished. During his long waits for fares he was generally to be seen perched on top of a tall make-fast post, and here we found him enjoying a pipe of particularly strong tobacco.

Having explained matters, I asked—

"Can you tell me of any such man?"

"Well, I don't know as how I can, speaking right off," he answered; "but let me think a minute."

His thinking was accompanied by such hard puffing that he was soon enveloped in a cloud of smoke. Presently dispersing it with

* See SUNDAY MAGAZINE for October, p. 54.

his hat, so that we could see each other's faces again, he observed :—

"Well, I know of a feller as could teach the rope work, and as would be glad enough to pick up a trifle that way; but you see, wuss luck for himself, he's been misfortunate in his day, in fact it was in prison he learnt the rope work. I think he's had his lesson, and won't want no more, but I know that there's them as thinks that a man as'll go wrong once will again if he gets a chance; and I suppose you must think of the look of the thing and the 'say so.'"

"Well, yes, both for the 'say so,' and for higher considerations," I answered, "the man, whoever he was, should be of good character. Can't you think of any other?"

"Let me think a minute," he repeated, proceeding to blow another and denser cloud, which, after brief silence, he energetically brushed away, exclaiming as he did so—

"I've got it! Old Fend-Off's your man. You couldn't have a better for the job if you had a man made to order."

He had spoken with evident assurance that I *must* know the man, and was quite taken aback when I asked—

"But who is Old Fend-Off?"

"Ain't you come across him, then?" he questioned, looking at me in surprise.

"No," I answered; "at least not by that name!"

"Well, I don't suppose you've heard of him by any other," said the old waterman. "Of course he has a proper name like other people, but there ain't one in a hundred as could tell you as it was Joe Barber. Everybody calls him Old Fend-Off."

"What is he?" was my next question.

"Ah, that's a bit of a puzzle!" answered the old waterman reflectively; "he's a lot of things. He's Jack of a good many trades, but he *is* master of one. His fends-off are more run upon than any other small maker's, and making them is his leading job—that's why he's called by that name.* But, beside that, he's a regular handy man; he can repair a clock or a sewing machine, frame a pictur', make a table, paper a house, do a bit o' tailoring or shoe-making, and I don't know what beside. And then he's a Methody, and a preacher. None of your high-flying sort as talks over your head, mind you, nor yet one of those as is always making out to be miserable themselves, and wanting every one else to be the same. He smokes his pipe,

* A fend-off is the technical term for the rope-encased oakum-stuffed buffers which are put over the sides of steamers and other craft when there is danger of their being brought too sharply against a pier or another boat.

and he'll laugh at a joke, and he won't turn his eyes up as if he was going to faint, even if he's chaff'd a bit—for one thing, he can generally turn the tables upon any one as does chaff him. He is a ranter, but he *ain't* a canter—he practises as he preaches, which is more than can be said of a good many. He's as kind-hearted an old chap as ever walked; why, his house is a regular menagerie, as you may say."

My friend had spoken with sincere enthusiasm, and I had listened with unfeigned interest until the conclusion of the speech, which certainly struck me as being in the nature of an anti-climax. To have a house like a menagerie was not after all, I thought, the highest proof of kind-heartedness that might have been adduced, and I was conscious of a coldness in my tone as I observed—

"Is he very fond of animals, then?"

"Animals!" exclaimed Bill Scott, pausing in the act of carrying his pipe to his mouth, and looking confused. "Ah—drat it, that's wot comes of being wi'out book-larning. Of course a menagerie *is* for animals, now I think of it. I should have said the other thing; you know, a place for people as hasn't a place of their own, and as are too broke down to be able to make a home for themselves."

"A refuge," we suggested.

"That's it!" he exclaimed; "his house is a regular refuge for the destitute. He's got neither chick nor child of his own, but he's always got a lot of misfortunate beings about him as no one else would harbour. The chap as helps him to stuff the fends-off has been crazy these nine years, and is a lot of trouble to manage. 'Poor Dick,' says he, 'I knew him before his calamity—he was druv off his head by a sudden fright'—as if plenty of those who would make game of his foolish ways, if they weren't afraid of Old Fend-Off, hadn't known him before too. Then there's a younger fellow as helps him, as he's kep' and edicated ever since he was a boy, just because he was by when his mother was drowned; and as to the old woman as he lets call herself his housekeeper, he's a great deal more a nurse to her than she is a housekeeper to him, and it must cost him a little fortin, a paying doctors' bills for her, for she's mor'n half blind and a'most always laid up with the rheumatics."

I felt decidedly interested at hearing this, but knowing that with Bill Scott "old age was garrulous," I made no attempt to draw him out, merely observing—

"Well, from what you say of him, I should think he's just the sort of man we want; where does he live?"

Bill gave the required information, and within the hour I was at Old Fend-Off's place. It was a good-sized, old-fashioned house, abutting on the river-bank, one of a row mostly let out in rooms, to watermen, lightermen, coalheavers, and dock-labourers.

We had knocked for the second time, and were still waiting for some one to answer the door, when a boy who, to judge from his rolled-up trousers and a little basket of coal slung at his back, was just returning from along-shore range, asked—



FIGURE 425.

"Does yer want Old Fend-Off?"

I replied that I did.

"You'll have to go through, then," said the boy; "he works in a shed at the back."

"Ah, but how am I to go through?"

"Easy; look here!" and as he spoke he

advanced, and taking hold of a string that I had not noticed hanging through the door below the handle, pulled up a latch, and let the door swing back.

I could see straight through the passage into the yard, and waiving ceremony, went forward.

On reaching the end of the passage, I could see right into the work-shed, the occupants of which were too busy to notice me. They were five in number, three men and two boys, and I had no hesitation in singling out Old Fend-Off himself. He was a broad-shouldered, deep-chested, ruddy-faced old fellow, with long, iron-grey hair and beard; and, though he was seated, it was easy to see that he was long as well as large or limb—at least a six-foot man. He was plaiting the outer casing of rope round the body of a fend-off, and as he worked was singing in a good bass voice,—

“O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope in years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home.”

At the side of him nearest to us, another man, whom I set down as being the one Bill Scott had spoken of as crazed, was busy ramming down the stuffing into fend-off cases. He was a stout-built man, somewhere between forty and fifty, and had nothing specially striking in his appearance. The third man was sowing up the canvas cases that were already stuffed. He seemed to be about five-and-twenty. The two boys were seated in the corner of the shed “teasing” the oakum for stuffing, or rather they were supposed to be “teasing,” for they were playing at “odds or evens,” a game which consists in the one player trying to guess whether the number of marbles held in the other one’s hand is odd or even. Old Fend-Off happening to lift his head, however, they made a sudden dash at their work, but not before the old man had seen how things were.

“Ah boys!” he exclaimed, “that’s bad. Don’t learn to be eye-servants; an eye-servant is always a bad servant, and will never get on in this world, to say nothing of the next. There’s always One Eye that sees you, remember. Open skulking is bad enough, but eye-service is worse. It ain’t for sake of the bit of work you’re shirking now I’m jawing you; it’s for your own sake: I want to make honest men of you. Don’t you see what mean skunks they must be as’ll only work when their gaffer’s eye is on ’em? There now! there’s no occasion to be breaking your neck over it; work away steadily and be good boys, that’s all that’s wanted.”

Just as he finished speaking I stepped from the shadow of the passage, and the elder of the adult helpers being first to catch sight of me, he plucked the old man by the sleeve, and in a startled tone exclaimed—

“Cap’en, look there!”

Laying down his work, he came forward to meet me with a smile upon his face.

I found that he knew who I was, and I had, therefore, only to explain the object of my visit. Having done so, I asked—

“Would you be willing to undertake it?”

“Well, as far as I see, I think I would,” he answered; “but there’s a many things go to everything; would you mind just stepping inside and talking it over a bit, before I say the word.”

I replied that I would be very happy to do so; whereupon the old man led the way into a cosy little parlour, in the furnishing and ornamentation of which his genius as a “handy” man was conspicuously displayed. The apartment was fitted up neatly, compactly, and with as much ingenious economization of space as a state cabin, of which, indeed, it strongly reminded me.

“Of course,” I observed, by way of commencing the conversation when we were seated—“of course we couldn’t give much pay.”

“Would it be a case of reg’lar hours and must come?” Fend-Off questioned.

“No,” I answered; “we thought the boys might be taught at odd times, as might best suit the convenience of the teacher.”

“Then I’m with you!” he said.

“At such pay as we can give?” I put in.

“Without pay at all, brother,” he answered gravely; “as I can do it in my own time, I see it as Lord’s work. Don’t I know the poor little chaps? Don’t I know that they are as lambs that are being brought within the fold? And shall I sell ’em my bit of spare labour, and yet look upon myself as a worker in the vineyard, however humble? God bless ’em, and prosper the work with ’em, I would think I was robbing ’em if I did.”

“Well,” I said, “we thought it right to make the proposal on a business footing, in the first instance, at any rate.”

“That’s right enough,” he answered; “many would take it as business, and no blame to ’em; it’s accordin’ as the light is given. I preach sometimes, as you may have heard, and I may say for myself that I am a prayerful man in season; but I’m not one of those that look upon preaching and praying as the only Lord’s work. We can serve Him with our hands as well as on our knees.”

To this I assented; and having accepted and sincerely thanked him for his offer of gratuitous service, I observed—

“You belong to the Methodist body, don’t you?”

“To the Primitives,” he answered; “they brought me in, and my call is to them in

many ways. At the same time I'm no wrangler over creeds; Christians may be many flocks, but they're one fold, and one Shepherd's care. Don't let us say that ours is the best sect or anybody else's the worst; let us suppose that each one feels called to his own, and remember that in our Father's house are many mansions."

I said that that was the proper spirit in which to regard the matter; Christians should be united, seeing the enormous amount of work in common that lies waiting to be done.

"Right you are, sir!" he exclaimed. "Pull together is as good an all round motto for Christians as ever it was for a boat's crew. But speaking of work reminds me of your youngsters—when shall I start with them?"

"Whenever it suits you," was my reply.

"Well, let me see; this is Wednesday," he observed, reflecting for a moment; "shall we say next Monday evening at seven?"

I nodded assent, and then he asked—

"How do you think of doing?"

"Well," I said, "the boys who have been longest in the Home are already broken in to certain kinds of work; and our idea was that some five or six boys who had just been admitted should be taught the rope work."

To this Old Fend-Off was quite agreeable, and accordingly entered upon his labour of love—for a labour of love it was to him—on the following Monday evening. A little outhouse, which from that time was dignified by the name of "The Ropery," was set apart for him, and here he assembled the boys, two of whom he immediately recognised. Placing them in line, he opened proceedings by a characteristic address.

"Now look here, boys," he commenced, "you're in luck. You know how you were living before you came here, lurking about long shore living how you could, and where you could, and making a precious hard live of it."

"It worn't our faults, Fend," interrupted one of the boys to whom he had spoken.

"I ain't sayen as how it was," replied the old man, deftly coming down to the boy's style of language; "not," he added, with a slight smile, "but what it might a been, just a little bit, you know. However, take things altogether, I know it was a lot more your misfortunes than your faults; but, all the same, it was you as had to smart, worn't it? Wasn't it you as had to go hungry-bellied, and ragged-backed, and had to sleep in all sorts of holes and corners, and put up with all sorts of knockin' about—wasn't it, eh?"

"I should just think it was," answered the boy; "rather."

"Well, that's just what I was going to say," resumed Old Fend-Off; "you know what hard lines you had of it then, and you see how comfortable you are here. Boys," he added, his manner suddenly becoming solemn, "God has been very good to you, and you should thank Him night and day for bringing you into the hands of your kind friends here. Only think," he went on, after a pause, "how many poor little fellows still have to lead the hard life that you've been taken from. Speaking of that, what has become of Humpy Crockett that used to pal with you?"

He put the question to the boy who had already spoken, and the latter answered—

"Oh, he's been dead nigh this whole year. I were away at the hoppin' at the time. Some people found him in an empty house drefel bad, and took him to the wukhouse, but it warn't no use; he turned his toes up the same night."

"Ah, poor little chap, see there!" exclaimed the old man, "he had no such shelter as this. However," he went on, changing his tone, "that ain't exactly the thing I've come to talk to you about. Your friends here mean to make men of you, if you'll only let 'em. They're a going to put a good trade into your fingers; you've been told-off to be taught the rope work, and I'm the man as has come to put you through your facings, and you may depend that I shall do my best to teach you, if you will only do your best to learn—will you, now?"

"Yes," they answered in chorus.

"That's all right, then," he said, and without further delay he set the boys to work. He was very successful in teaching them his art; nor was that all that he taught them. We had prayers before the boys went to bed, and after having stayed to these several times, he remarked with a serious air—

"You don't teach 'em singing, I see."

"Well, no," I answered; "none of those directly connected with the Home could teach it; and moreover," I added, "we were afraid both subscribers and the public might think it was going a little too far to add music to the things taught at such an establishment."

"Oh, I don't mean teaching 'em accomplishments as they call 'em," he exclaimed; "not piano playing or Sol-Fa-in', or demi-semi-quavering, or anything of that kind. I only mean plain singing by ear, as the saying is; lifting up their voices tunefully in a few simple hymns. To my thinkin' music is a chosen means of grace. I fully believe that

souls can be reached through the ear—and have been. I know some of these boys were quick enough at picking up street songs, and would soon learn songs and hymns of praise, and come to have delight in them. I would teach them if there was no objection."

On consultation I found that others, like myself, were pleased with the idea, and accordingly Old Fend-Off, like the ancient mariner, "had his way." In the course of a few months he had trained the boys into a really tolerable choir, and as he had predicted would be the case, they came to take great delight in their singing. Before long, one of their proudest privileges was to be allowed to sing their hymns before visitors; while in working hours there was generally to be heard in some part of the building the humming of the burden of "A Day's March nearer Home," "Jerusalem the Golden," "I'm a Pilgrim," or some other of the hymns their old friend had taught them. That he was their true and loving friend the boys speedily came to recognise. He told them stories, he built a model ship for them to rig, he made them a set of cricketing implements, and fitted up a large swing for them. He was as kind with them as any man could be, but withal firm when occasion required; and while in a becoming way he made himself a companion, he never forgot that he was also a mentor to them. Altogether, both by moral influence and material service, he proved himself a benefactor to the Home and its inmates.

During these months I saw a good deal of him, and his out-door preaching being a frequent subject of incidental mention, I came to have a rather strong curiosity to see him in his character of parson. At length I determined to gratify this feeling, and one Sunday evening set out for the spot at which his open-air gatherings were held. It was a piece of waste land just outside a large foundry, and a mound of slag from the works served him for platform. When I arrived, he and a few members of "the connection" had already taken their stand upon the mound, and were faced by perhaps as strange a looking congregation as was ever gathered together. A number of fish-hawkers' and costermongers' "shallows" were drawn up in lines, and occupied as seats by their respective proprietors and their friends, who had evidently come prepared to listen at their ease, as many of the men were in their shirt-sleeves, and most of them were smoking, while one or two parties had bottles of drink with them. Behind the "shallows" the stand-

ing portion of the congregation was ranged in close order; and behind them again were the stalls of sundry vendors of penny ices, ginger-beer, and fruit, who were on the spot with a view to "pushing trade." Rough labourers, and still rougher loafers, made up the bulk of the assembly, and had probably never before been inside a place of worship. Unpromising congregation as they looked, there was still something promising in the mere fact of their being gathered together as a congregation. I gathered that, generally speaking, they were there simply with a view to fill up a "nothing-doing hour;" and that the strong point of Old Fend-Off's preaching was—in their estimation—its anecdotal character. The general sentiment upon this point was pretty well summed up in the remarks which I heard a middle-aged lighterman making to a companion, who, like myself, appeared to be a stranger to these gatherings.

"I come pretty nigh every Sunday," he said, "and in fact I should miss it now; I've got to think of it as a kind of treat. Old Fend-Off gives it you plain, and he always brings in a story or two pat, and that's the draw to most of us. He knows his way about; he knows fast enough that a bit of a yarn will hold us together, and he makes 'em hit his nails on the head, and drive 'em home."

At this point the lighterman's talk was brought to a close by the commencement of the service. One of the group on the mound gave out the hymn with the burthen—

"I do believe, I do believe,
That Jesus died for me;
That on the cross He shed his blood
That I might happy be;"

and it was pleasing to find that a considerable number so joined in the singing as to show they were familiar with the hymn.

Another member of the connection offered up a prayer; and then Old Fend-Off gave out as his text, the words from the fourteenth chapter of Proverbs:—"Fools make a mock at sin." Sinners generally thought themselves very clever people, he said; but as a matter of fact those who made a mock of sin, who, because sin seemed for the time to prosper with them, spoke lightly of it, were really fools, as a little thoughtful consideration of the matter would show. "Be sure your sins will find you out," he went on, was a proverb with a great deal more truth in it than the sinners who hugged themselves in their supposed cleverness seemed to imagine. Of course *all* sin would be found out at last, and have to be answered for, but independent of that—though that ought to be sufficient for all who were not

fools—most sin was found out and in some way punished even in this world. He had no doubt that every one within reach of his voice had had experience of that. "At any rate, I have. I remember, for instance—"

As the last words left his lips, there arose a buzz of expectation; then came a swaying movement towards the mound, followed by a silence of eager attention.

"I remember, when I was in the marines," he resumed, "the regiment I belonged to was sent to Jamaica. Well, there was a great many drunkards among us—and I'm sorry to say that I was one of them—and as soon as we were settled on the island, we began drinking and rioting about. A Christian missionary on the island, who was a great advocate for teetotalism, hearing of our goings on, and thinking, I suppose, that we stood quite as much in need of a missionary as did the blacks, came to the barracks, and in a kindly way pressed us to sign the pledge, saying that he had just received a box of cards and medals from England with a view to establishing a temperance society; and that he would like to have us as the first members of it. We thought we would show our cleverness by 'taking a rise out of him,' and agreed among ourselves that we would all pretend to be teetotalers, and so clean him out of the cards and medals—and we did. The next day, behold, he met some of us on the drink again, and of course reproached us, but we only laughed at him; only made a mock at sin. However, those laugh best who laugh last; and, sharp as we thought ourselves, and simple as we thought the missionary, the last laugh in the business was at our expense. A few days later, one of the gang happened to show his medal to a nigger, and the darkie innocently enough turns up the whites of his eyes, and cries out, 'O golly, what fine big new dollar!' This was a fine hint for us. Like the blackguards we were, we took to persuading the poor ignorant blacks that they ~~were~~ fine new dollars, and worth more than a dollar at Kingstown. By means of this yarn we sold them the medals at a dollar a piece, and spent the money in drink. After a while, the niggers began to find out how they had been swindled, and some of them came to the particular men that had cheated them, only to get laughed at or be ill-used. But one morning a crowd of the blacks came to the barracks crying out about it, and one of the officers hearing them, had them in to explain; and of course they told him how bad 'buckkra' man soldier had sold them fine big dollar, no good, no

changee at Kingstown, no buy nothing. Well, the officer was a just man. He asked how many had been swindled in that way, and found that there were forty. Next he paraded the regiment, and asked the blacks each to point out the man who had sold them a medal, which they did. Being children of the father of lies, we denied hard and fast that we were the men.

"Very well, our officer said we would see, and he sent for the missionary, who, when he came, picked us out as the blacks had done, and showed the list of our names. This was enough for the officer. 'I'll soon settle this,' he said. 'All you whose names are down here produce your medals, if you can. Every one who can't must pay a dollar to one of these negroes here.' And to this he stuck; and the money was stopped out of our pay. The niggers and every one else had the laugh of us, and our officer, a man whose good opinion we all liked to have, was brought to think meanly of us; in short, our sins found us out."

I have told this one of Old Fend-Off's anecdotes, as illustrating not merely *his* style of preaching, but a style of preaching that "goes down," with such a class as he was addressing, better perhaps than any other style. He recounted the story dramatically, and was listened to with the greatest attention; and though there was at parts of it some slight laughter, he, to use the point of the lighterman's simile, drove home his nail in all seriousness, arguing from his story that the *wisest* as well as the happiest man was the sincere and humble Christian.

While listening to Old Fend-Off I had kept well in the background and escaped his observation; but being with him later in the week, I mentioned to him that I had been there, and, after a little preliminary conversation, asked in a friendly way—

"Do you think now that your preaching really has any good effect upon such characters as were listening to you?"

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform,"

he quoted, by way of answer.

"Yes," I said; "what seemed strange means of grace were often successful: but do you, as a matter of fact, know that any of the rough characters of the neighbourhood who listened to your preaching, have thereby been brought to live a better—a religious—life?"

"Thank the Lord, who made me his humble instrument," he exclaimed, reverentially, "I do. Without taxing my memory, I can think of at least half a dozen souls who have been made happy in the Saviour's love,

through hearing the word as it was given to me to speak it. I speak in all humbleness, sir, but I know how to 'fetch' these rough people—as they would put it themselves—better than a better man. The Lord, sir, sends the special means of salvation; He did with me, and I was a worse, a more hardened, and seemingly more hopeless case than any of those you saw listening to me. When I think of myself as I am, and as I was, I cannot but look upon myself as a miracle of God's goodness."

"And what were the special means by which you were brought to your better life?" we asked, becoming interested.

"Well, it wasn't preaching in my own case," he answered, "it was practice; it was a noble act done in a Christian spirit. It's a longish yarn, but I think it's worth hearing; and I'll tell you, if you don't mind."

I said that I should be very pleased to hear his story; and without further preliminary Old Fend-Off began to tell it.

"I'm not London bred," he commenced. "I was born and brought up in the Black Country, and when a young fellow worked there as a miner. They're a rough lot there even now, and they were rougher in my young days, and I was one of the roughest of the rough. I was given up to gambling, and to dog-fighting, man-fighting, and poaching; while drinking and swearing were my daily habits—notably swearing. So much was the latter the case, that to distinguish me from another miner named Joe, who was a Methodist and a local preacher, our mates called me Swearing and him Christian Joe; and he was a Christian, and a brave one. He wasn't content with not sinning himself, he reproved sin when he heard or saw it, and that was no light thing to do among such a set as us miners. Many a time when he had checked me in my vile swearing I've turned to knock him down; but he always used to meet me with a look that somehow or other made me feel ashamed of myself."

"And his example and influence at length made a *second* Christian Joe of you?" I put in, as the old man paused for a moment.

"You'll hear," he resumed. "After a while I got mixed up in a poaching affair in which a keeper was wounded. To escape being arrested I made my way up to London, and in a drunken fit I enlisted into a regiment of marines. I was soon afterwards sent abroad, and was out of England for three years. When I did come back I was tired soldiering, and the poaching business having blown over, I wrote to some of my old com-

panions; and as they were generous after their fashion, and earning big wages, they raised a subscription and bought me off, and I went down to my native place again. Trade was rather slack at the time, and I could not get a job directly, but I could get plenty of drink; there were scores ready to treat me. Well, in the dinner hour of the fourth day after my return, I was coming out of a public-house blustering and swearing, when who should I meet but Christian Joe. Hearing how I was going on, he spoke to me in his old style about my swearing; and this time, the drink and the devil being strong in me, I *did* hit him. The blow staggered him, but the instant he recovered himself he looked me straight in the eyes, and said, in a quiet, sorrowful sort of way, 'Brother, I'm afraid you've come back a worse man than you went. I did *not* think you would have struck me; you know I would not strike again, and you know, too, that I speak to you for your own good. However, I freely forgive you, and I shall not cease to raise my voice against your besetting sin, or to hope that I may live to see the day when you will have put that sin away from you, and be ready to raise *your* voice in reproof when you hear the name of God taken in vain.'"

"You said rightly that he was a *brave* Christian," I put in, as Old Fend-Off once more came to a brief pause.

"He was," Fend-Off assented, "but those standing round didn't see it in that light. If he had struck me back they would have sided with him, but they thought that, Christian or not Christian, he ought to have hit again, and they set down his not doing it to cowardice. As to myself, I felt ashamed of the blow the moment I had struck it, but I wasn't man enough to say so; I only went back to the public-house and tried to drink down the feeling of shame. This was what I was doing when there came into the house a reckless sort of fellow, who was in a small way of business as a shaft sinker. Whether he had come specially after me, or seeing me there had put the idea into his head, I never knew; but he struck up a conversation with me, and got telling me that he had a job he just wanted to finish; that the men he had had working for him had turned out milk-sops, and gone away, saying that they were afraid the shaft was going to give way, though it was as safe as any shaft could be. If he had only one good man to help him he could finish it in two or three days, and could afford to give a sovereign a day for that time—did I care about the job?"

“Yes, I would take it,’ I said; and we shook hands on the bargain, and went straight away to the shaft—and down it. When I’d been at work an hour I began to get sober, and then, looking up, I could see why the other men had left the job. A good many yards towards the bottom was loose, nasty-looking stuff, and all the way up the bratticing was bulging out in a style that meant danger. I pointed this out to the other, but he only pooh-pooh’d it. However, I insisted upon going up a long ladder that we had down with us, to drive in a cross-beam at a spot that looked particularly shaky; but I had scarcely climbed to the point, when with a sudden crash the earth below it fell in, burying him, and jamming me in, with just my head and shoulders free. From where the shaft had fallen in up to the top the earth was overhanging, and was liable to fall in at any moment, and every second I expected it would come crushing down upon me. In my agony I roared out, and I suppose made somebody hear me, for presently I saw some one peep over the edge of the shaft, and directly afterwards I could tell by the sounds that a crowd had assembled near. I was wedged in with some of the broken bratticing, and I knew what a risky job it would be to attempt to rescue me; as it was a hundred to one that the pulling and shaking necessary to release me would bring the overhanging earth down. I had just one shadow of a hope. I was the friend of all the dare-devils in the neighbourhood, and I thought that hearing it was one of their own set that was in such desperate strait, one or other of them would run the risk. Several men crept to the edge of the shaft and looked down, and the look seemed to be enough, for nothing came of it. I had given up my last faint hope, when I became aware from a sudden bustling and shouting that something was going to be attempted. In about a minute I could make out a skip being put over the side and a man stepping into it. My heart went out towards him whoever he might be; and though when I had tried to pray for myself I couldn’t, I did manage to *think* a prayer for him. Those who were letting down the skip knew what they were about, and lowered very slowly, so that it was some seconds before I could make out who it was that was risking his life for me; but at length, when he was within a few yards of me, I knew the face—and it was Christian Joe’s.

“Be of good cheer, brother,’ he said, shaking the rope for them to stop lowering

when he had got on a level with me—‘Be of good cheer! if it’s the Lord’s will, all may be well yet.’

“He had got a saw with him, and as he spoke he commenced sawing for dear life at the piece of timber that I was wedged in by. As he worked, the loose earth came rattling down upon us, and I whispered to him, ‘I’m afraid we shall neither of us ever be got out alive.’ ‘Well, it is in the Lord’s hand, brother,’ he answered cheerily; ‘but lest we should not, let us each ask with our hearts that He will take us to himself.’

“Half a minute later he had cut me free and I stepped in. The signal was given for winding up; and though we got some bruises from falling earth, we were drawn clear a second before the general fall-in came.”

“Well, Joe certainly deserved his title of Christian,” I observed, when Fend-Off had concluded this thrilling portion of his story.

“He did,” said the old man, with an emphatic toss of the head, “and that wasn’t all he did for me. I had been badly crushed, and he took me to his home, and he and his sister kept me and nursed me through a month’s illness; and, what was more, they made a Christian of me. To make short the rest of my story, I fell in love with the sister, and she promised to be my wife at the end of two years if, during that period, I held firm to my resolve to live a Christian life. I did remain firm, thank the Lord, and we were married; but she was only spared to me for a year. Feeling unsettled when she was gone, I came up to London, and, joining a steamship as fireman, followed the sea for some years. Afterwards I was one of a light-ship’s company, and it was there I learned the rope-work. Then—my brother-in-law being dead—I settled on shore here, and started in my present way of business; and coming to feel the call, took to doing whatever of Lord’s work was brought to my hand. And remembering what I was before I was brought in,” he concluded, “I would consider myself ungrateful for all the mercy and goodness that has been shown to me, if I doubted that even the worst of the people I try to speak to were beyond the reach of salvation; or gave up the hope that in some stray instance my humble efforts might be the appointed means.”

Strong in his simple faith Old Fend-Off preached and taught on; and his example has a Christianizing influence upon many in the neighbourhood, who would otherwise stand little chance of being brought under any ordinary form of Christian influence.

NEW AND OLD.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PATSY'S FIRST GLIMPSE OF HEAVEN."



NEW little feet
 Patter on the floor ;
 New little faces
 Peep through the door ;—
 New little souls
 Have entered into life ;
 New little voices
 Speak in love or strife ;—
 New little fingers
 Tightly clasp our own ;
 New little tendrils
 Round our hearts have grown.

Still the old voices
 Echo in one ear,
 And the old faces
 Hallowed are and dear ;
 Still the old friends
 Who have passed away,
 Live in our affection—
 Love has no decay ;

And the old words,
 Spoken long ago,
 Keep the heart tender,
 Make the tears flow.

Thus New and Old
 Mingle in one,
 Each has its blessing ;
 And when life is done,
 Old faces, old friends
 Will meet us again—
 Treasures long buried
 We shall regain—
 All that is lovely,
 All that is true,
 Will live on for ever,
 The Old and the New.

THE EDITORS' ROOM.

L.—NOTES AND COMMENTS.

QUIET WORK.

IT is strange how much of warlike noise and commotion there is about those movements in the religious world that come most under public observation. The warlike imagery of the Apocalypse has been wonderfully verified during these eighteen hundred years. It is worthy of remark, by the way, that the prevalence of such imagery in that book is a proof of its inspiration. A man like St. John, bred a fisherman, working quietly for his Master all his life at the outskirts of the Roman empire, and at whose death the followers of Christ were a poor persecuted sect, could never have thought that the Christian faith would for ages have a career appropriately symbolized, in certain of its aspects, by trumpets, thunders, bloodshed, earthquakes, and volcanoes. Yet so it has been, whenever light and darkness have come into collision, and so it is. And the thought is pressed upon our mind when, on glancing at the more prominent proceedings in the religious world at home, we see how predominant the element of conflict is everywhere. At one place the battle rages round the Athanasian creed; at another it is about the place of religion in education. At a third the strife is concerning men alleged to have made shipwreck of the faith; at a fourth the ultramontanist is pressing forward, and the Protestant is indignantly driving him back. We cannot make up our mind to open our monthly chat with our readers by dwelling on these things. We must take something more directly refreshing and improving. In the Apocalypse there are quiet as well as warlike scenes. There are still waters and green pastures as well as battle-fields soaked with blood. And so, amid all our religious din, there are, thank God, many quiet corners where men and women whose souls have been filled with Christ and his love are making the wilderness rejoice and blossom as the rose.

Here, for example, in Edinburgh, a Christian lady from England, forsaking the ease of a drawing-room life, has undertaken the charge of the nursing operations in the Infirmary, and others like-minded are aiding in the work. May God help them and all such in their noble toil! How much of this is due to the example of Miss Nightingale and Miss Jones it would be difficult to say. But theirs has been a fruitful example, both at home and in other countries. We have before us an American religious journal, containing, among other interesting matter, a communication from Nathan Allen, M.D., entitled, "Christ in the Workhouse." A few months ago, this gentleman was paying a visit to the great workhouse in the east of Liverpool. He does not seem to have heard of Agnes Jones. After passing through wards and corridors, marking with great pleasure the beautiful texts of Scripture that were everywhere to be seen for the instruction and conso-

II. N.S.

lation of the poor and needy, he became curious to learn through what means so unusually ample a testimony for Christ came to be borne in the institution. While attending worship in the chapel on the Sunday, the problem was solved. At the side of the pulpit, he saw a marble statue of a woman with a most angelic countenance, and on its base he read the inscription, "In Memory of Agnes Elizabeth Jones, daughter of Colonel Jones, of Fahan, Ireland, who, under the auspices of the Liverpool select vestry, first instituted the system of trained nursing among the sick poor of a workhouse. In this service she lost her life. Her only desire for herself was that at the resurrection, her Lord might say, 'She hath done what she could.' Born November 10th, 1822. Died February 19th, 1868." On the other side, Dr. Allen read the words of Miss Nightingale: "She came to her Lord, offering to Him for his poor and sick, no sad and disappointed spirit, but the firstfruits of her heart, in days when she was full of health and cheerfulness. She brought the world's sense and practical ability to good works, and God's faith, hope, and charity to the world's work, earnestly seeking the Saviour's spirit in following the blessed steps of his most holy life. She died at her post among the poor and sick while yet in the flower of her age. And thus she lived the life and died the death of the children of God, who are the children of the resurrection."

On this side, the name of Agnes Jones is a household word; but it is spirit-stirring to find it wafted across the Atlantic, and through such notices as this, and more fully through her Memoir, which has been reprinted there, beginning a new campaign, a new crusade, we may say, on behalf of Christ, and his sick and suffering members. Happy they who, like Samson, do more in their death than they have done in their life; whose names become symbols of the highest Christian devotedness, and as they are wafted from country to country, and from home to home, carry to this heart and the other a trumpet-like summons, "Go thou and do likewise!" And happy the country that, amid all its ecclesiastical contentions, has such names to look to, as visible proofs that the spirit of Christ is the spirit of love. And blessed it is to think that other ladies are catching up the spirit and following the example, and that, among those in easy circumstances, nursing the poor for Christ's sake is becoming more and more common.

THE ATHANASIAN CREED.

It is the surprising, we are told, that happens. And most persons, we doubt not, will feel that the reaction that has taken place in favour of the Athanasian Creed is remarkable. When Lord Shaftesbury and his lay-memorialists craved no more than that the reading of it in church services might not be compulsory, it seemed as if so moderate a proposal could have little active opposition. And yet the opposition is most

intense, and when a public meeting is called in London to give expression to that opposition, it is found that a single hall is not enough to contain all that desire to be present. And, strange to say, as Dean Stanley and Mr. Ryle were on the same platform in opposition to the compulsory use of the creed, Canon Kingsley and Canon Liddon are on the same platform in support of it. The one, Canon Kingsley, expresses by letter his sense of the great evil that would be done alike to the theology and the metaphysics of England should the Creed be disused; the other, Canon Liddon, expresses himself in still stronger terms. The three Creeds, he says, are more sacred than any part of the Prayer-Book; they approach in authority to the very Scriptures themselves; they are the very heart of the Church of England. Any tampering with them would be a tampering with the most vital thing in the Church. He spoke with admiration of the late Bishop of Salisbury, who had told him that if any such tampering took place, he would resign his see. To him it appeared that to meddle with this Creed would virtually be to declare that they were no longer concerned to maintain the honour of the Lord Jesus Christ as God. He read a letter from Dr. Pusey to the same effect, and joined with him in thankfulness that the dark cloud that had hung over them a year ago might now, he trusted, be regarded as dispelled.

TWO PHASES OF ENGLISH LOYALTY.

We have lately had two very opposite expressions of English national feeling, or rather of feeling in England—one from Archbishop Manning, head of the English branch of the Roman Catholics, the other from the Poet Laureate. The transition from the one to the other is like the transition from harshest discord to the softest melody. At Sheffield the Archbishop did not scruple to repeat the offensive utterance that he was first a Catholic and next an Englishman. And as if to justify it, he presumed that most men would say that they were first Christians, then Englishmen. As if our supreme subjection to the Eternal Son of God was to be placed on the same level with subjection to an Italian priest, calling himself his vicar! Let the Ultramontanists of England succeed in their aim, it is not difficult to tell who will be the real sovereign of England. It is as contrasting with this fiery ecclesiastical spirit that the gentle tone of the Poet Laureate is so full of music. In an address to the Queen closing the new issue of his Idyls, he pours out the warm love of his heart to her who has been so "loyal to the royal in herself and loyal to her land." The signs of the times are not without their uncomfortable portents, but his trust is

"that heaven
Will blow the tempest in the distance back
From thine and ours: for some are scared who mark
Or wisely, or unwisely, signs of storm,
Waverings of every soul with every wind,
And wordy truckings to the transient hour,
And fierce or careless looseners of the faith,
And softness breeding scorn of simple life,
Or cowardice, the child of lust for gold,
Or labour with a groan and not a voice,
Or art with poisonous honey stol'n from France."

Not such are the breathings of Archbishop Manning. Nothing will do but Ultramontanism. "The Christian world was created by Christianity. Christianity was the Church; the Pope was the head of the Church; the Papacy was Ultramontanism, and Ultramontanism, therefore, had brought about the advancement made up to the sixteenth century." Ultramontanism was the great power that would yet govern and bless the world. The decree of infallibility had been received by every priest and bishop, except the handful of Alt-Catholics in France and Germany. The Church of Rome is the despoiled but rightful owner of the highest influence and authority on the globe. It is evidently the purpose of Dr. Manning to accustom the ears of the English people to this thought. The time seems to be regarded as having come for talking contemptuously of the Church of England, and of every other power or authority that might be a rival to that of Rome. Bishop Vaughan, in his late utterances at Manchester, spoke in the same strain. Evidently the little horn with the eyes as the eyes of a man, is framing its mouth to speak great things. That such a tone cannot but rouse the intense antagonism of the great bulk of the English people cannot be doubted. Yet we do not suppose that Dr. Manning regards that indignation as the most serious obstacle that his schemes may have to encounter. An intelligent acquaintance with the Bible, and familiarity with its saving truths; a hearty appreciation of the way of salvation for sinners through faith in a crucified Redeemer; a cordial interest in the spiritual kingdom of Christ, and a sincere readiness to promote it by prayer, by service, by gifts and sacrifice, and, if need be, sufferings—such a spirit on the part of the great mass of the people would be the true safeguard of our Protestantism, and the one invincible opponent whom neither force nor fraud would be able to conquer.

THE EDUCATION QUESTION.

There does not appear to be much likelihood of our education question getting soon into smooth water. From the Nonconformist section of the people there are loud complaints that the denominational schools are not national schools, and the demand for a change is all the more earnest that the question was at first believed to be settled on a broader basis. It is one of the most serious evils that arise from the divided state of the Christian Church that it is so difficult to provide for the teaching of religion, except in connection with a denominational system. The cry for combined secular and separate religious instruction would never have become so loud and so strong had it not been for the number of religious denominations, and the views that have thus arisen as to the teaching of religion. In the coming conflict of parties, considerable anxiety may well be entertained as to the interests of religious instruction. Whatever happens, we trust that a place will be secured for the Bible in our schools; this homage is due to the book of books; and little good in the highest sense can be looked for from a system that should expressly refuse

to make use of the best instrument of education, to say the very least, the world has ever known.

DR. WALLACE AND MR. KNIGHT.

The ecclesiastical firmament in Scotland has been considerably agitated by the cases of Dr. Wallace and Mr. Knight. The unexpected appointment of Dr. Wallace to the Chair of Church History in the University of Edinburgh has brought up the rumours of unsoundness in the faith which have been floating about for a considerable time past. The very peculiar way which Dr. Wallace takes to propagate rationalistic views makes it difficult to proceed against him in the way of formal prosecution. It is not his custom to say whether the views be his own, but rather to give them forth as the views of others, but with such an obvious leaning as to make the inference easy what his own opinion is concerning the old orthodoxy. Thus, in a paper on the "Tendencies of Religious Thought in Scotland," published three years ago in a volume of Essays already forgotten by the public, it is announced that religious thought is "moving away from an external authority toward self-reliance; from an objective towards a subjective standard of truth." "There is much sympathy with what is called the modern or liberal school of theology" in the intelligent, but only the intelligent, circles of Scotland. Men in these circles believe statements in the Scriptures, "not simply because they find them in the Bible, but inasmuch as for themselves they perceive them to be true." The "cultured sense of right and truth," and not the authority of the Bible, is declared to be the standard in these intelligent circles. They believe only "what commends itself to their innate sense of truth, fitness, beauty, or usefulness." Even the Free Church, he affirms, has shown that she can be guided "by the principle of common sense, as against being hampered by the mere letter of Scripture." What ordinary mortal, in reading all this, could fail to suppose that it was Dr. Wallace's own sentiments that it expresses? But, on a closer inspection, it turns out that Dr. Wallace is only recording historically what are the views of the intelligent class, and as he does not expressly claim to belong to that class, they cannot be brought home to him as his own. Moreover, as he has again signed the Westminster Confession of Faith, and declared it to be the confession of his own faith, he has probably placed himself in an attitude of safety.

The case of Mr. Knight is materially different. Mr. Knight has ever maintained the character of a devout believer, but has been disposed to give a prominence to the philosophical mode of dealing with divine truth that threatens to land him in very perilous positions. In a recent article on Prayer, with a view to prove to our men of science that there is a true sphere for prayer as a real force in the universe, he lays it down that for any matter which is directly dependent on physical causation, prayer is quite inapplicable, and that its proper sphere is only in the region of the moral and spiritual forces. We

may lawfully pray for wisdom, for holiness, and for strength to battle with sin, because these matters lie in the region of the spiritual forces, where God is free to act according to circumstances; but we may not pray for rain, or for calm weather, or for protection or deliverance from disease, because such things lie in the region of physical causation, where everything is regulated by fixed and unalterable laws. The Duke of Argyll has answered Mr. Knight, in a short, pithy, and very able paper, turning his flank very thoroughly, and meeting all his principal positions. It is more than doubtful whether Mr. Knight's concession would be accepted as sufficient even by the class whom he desires to conciliate. Certainly the more materialistic portion of them would loudly challenge the broad distinction he makes between the natural and the moral world, and would not allow that what we call the moral world is less under law than the physical. And as for devout believers, Mr. Knight's view can never be contemplated without giving a shock to their Christian instincts as well as their scriptural belief. It is the venerable Guizot, we think, that in one of his volumes entitled "Meditations on the Christian Faith," maintains that belief in prayer is an intuition of the human spirit. And it is certain that devout minds will not admit the distinction which Mr. Knight attempts to draw, and never will believe, and never ought to believe, that in modifying or adjusting the forces that operate in the physical world, the great Creator has less in his power than is seen to belong to his creature man. If the spirit of man has a certain power to modify and control the forces of nature, and bend them to his purposes, how can we ever be persuaded to believe that a similar, nay, an infinitely higher power of the same sort does not belong to the infinite God?

PROGRESS OF COLPORTAGE.

Since last October, when special attention was directed to the subject of Colportage in this Magazine, another annual report has been issued by the Society that superintends this department of usefulness in Scotland. This Society, we are glad to find, continues to advance. The number of its agents is again greater than in any previous year. And not only is its number greater in Scotland, but the effort to plant the colporteur in England has been renewed. More blue bonnets have gone over the border; and of these, two are at work in Bedfordshire, and one at Aldershott. The directors express the greatest anxiety that English friends would take this matter into their own hands, and would extend an agency which has been so useful in Scotland, and which seems to be equally capable of becoming a blessing in England. In so far, they say, as they have tried the plan, there has been the greatest encouragement to continue and multiply the agency. Their labours and sales have been attended with great success. A travelling agent has been secured to endeavour to promote the cause in England. It does seem strange that it is not taken up more enthusiastically, and we can account for this only on the supposition that the

real nature of the agency is not understood, and its missionary character not taken into account. It is certain that the efforts made to circulate a frivolous and sensational literature among the masses of the people are very great. We lately made some inquiries in a large town in Scotland as to the effect of the larger earnings of the working people in increasing the ordinary sale of wholesome and solid literature. We regret to say that the answer was very discouraging. All goes to show the necessity of judicious effort to stimulate a wholesome appetite for reading, and to feed it when it has been called into existence; nor do we know of any subsidiary agency better fitted for this purpose than that of the colporteur. And we repeat what was said before, that the ultimate effect of this movement cannot be otherwise than to give a powerful impulse to the ordinary book trade.

II.—GLANCES AT WHAT IS DOING ABROAD.

QUIET WORK IN PARIS.

Belleville is a suburb of Paris, inhabited chiefly by Communists. A devoted Christian lady, Mdlle. de Broen, has been doing a good work in the district, providing employment for the women, and using her opportunities of intercourse to speak to them of the love of God and the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. The poor women who frequent her meetings are wives and mothers of Communists, who are either dead, banished, or imprisoned. The desolation and destitution the women were plunged into when the Communist cause collapsed, and their relatives were separated from them, may be imagined.

"We were going to Belleville and La Villette," says Mdlle. de Broen, "to distribute books and Gospels, and found that the misery was indeed overwhelming; women separated from their husbands or sons by death or imprisonment, often unmerited, refused to believe that there was a God in heaven. Forsaken by the priests and sisters of mercy, they were left to cherish their feelings of hatred and revenge against their richer brethren, and of unbelief in God. . . . About four hundred have attended my meetings; with few exceptions, all Roman Catholics. Drawn together in the first place for the sake of the trifling remuneration for work in a sewing class, they have been brought under the wonder-working power of the gospel, hitherto almost unknown among them. The countenances, which at first were hard, sullen, and even fierce, have been so softened by Christian influence that they are hardly to be recognised."

"In addition to the sewing classes, mission meetings are held twice a week, the one at La Villette being attended by nearly two hundred men, women, and boys; night schools twice a week for men and boys, and also for women and girls, which are well attended. One woman sixty-five years old learned to read and write in six months."

One of the women brought her husband to Mdlle. de Broen, newly released from prison, entreating her to convert him. "He is a very good husband," she said, "but he will be still better if he loves Jesus." It turned out that the man had been an unbeliever;

the priests had driven him away. Then he had turned spiritualist, but had got no peace. But when he heard of the blessed work of the ladies, his faith revived so far that he felt that they believed; and his anxiety was to share their faith and help in their work. What a reward are such things for loving and patient labour, and what an encouragement to be "steadfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord!"

THE BIBLE IN FRANCE.

The report of M. Monod, the agent in France for the British and Foreign Bible Society, presents us with some interesting particulars—little bright specks of green amid the surrounding desert of infidelity and worldliness. Colportage in France, he admits, is difficult work, and some of the old agents have had to be parted with as not being in all respects equal to the work. In Paris it is particularly difficult; the police forbid sales in thoroughfares; private houses are guarded by porters, and shops are protected by the *genius loci*. To be a colporteur in such circumstances requires no common measure of earnestness, tact, and love of the work. Sometimes the colporteur gets help unexpectedly: at Meux, where there are a good many Protestants, a woman took him under her protection, and introduced him to a number of tradesmen, saying, "You Huguenots, here is a Huguenot—you must buy his book!" A man said to him, "This is a good book; the Prussians took the copy I had, and I am very pleased to have you to replace it." At another place, the Bible is at a great discount: a man is making a fortune by exhibiting a girl in one of whose eyes is to be seen a picture of Notre Dame de Lourdes. (The girl has a false eye of glass, and the picture is painted thereon!) At another place a man wishes a Bible, but he has no money; suddenly he remembers that he has a hen; he runs and sells it, and with the money buys a Bible—reminding one of the parable of the treasure in the field. In another district, an old man, when offered the Bible, glanced over it, and then called his children, and said with great emotion, "Children, here is at last the book of which you hear me constantly speaking, and from which are taken all the stories I tell you."

In some parts of France, we are told that whole villages are thirsting for the gospel; but there, as in other places, the great difficulty is to find suitable agents. Who can doubt that if a sufficient supply of men of the right stamp, spirit-stirred and spirit-stirring, could be obtained, not only for France, but for other countries equally destitute, there would result, with God's blessing, a glorious change? Everything points to the need of prayer to the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers into his harvest.

BOHEMIA—AMERICAN MISSION.

The American Board of Foreign Missions having resolved to establish missions in the papal countries of Europe, the city of Prague in Bohemia has been selected as the first, though possibly not the permanent scene of their operations, and three mission-

aries have been sent thither. This movement has been begun in cordial co-operation with the Protestant missionaries and pastors already in the field, and with the warm desire to strengthen the hands of all good men engaged in the work of evangelisation. The land of Huss, as our readers know, has lately exhibited a real desire for the gospel. The light kindled by the holy martyrs, Huss and Jerome, has begun once more to burn. Here and there evangelical stations have been formed, and evangelical agencies started. At the Free Church College in Edinburgh, several godly Bohemian students have been preparing for the ministry, and some are now engaged in the active work of the gospel. There is ample room for the new labourers that have entered the field, and if their work is carried on in the same spirit as that of their brethren in Asia Minor, and with similar results, there will be good reason to hail their advent to Bohemia as one of the greatest blessings that could have been bestowed on the land.

III.—OUR LETTER DRAWER.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

SPIRITUALISM AND ITS PRETENSIONS.

I need not tell you that on this side of the Atlantic we have had not a little to do with spiritualism, about which, I perceive, that you have lately been having some discussion in your journals. We have had men professing to be converted from blank atheism by spirit rappings, but we have not often found that their conversion proved a turning "from darkness to light, nor from the power of Satan unto God." The more sober-minded part of our community are disposed to regard spiritualism as sheer imposture and delusion, cleverly grafted on some singular mesmeric or magnetic phenomena, which are certainly fitted to bewilder ordinary minds. We have indeed had some remarkable instances of respectable men giving themselves up to it, or to something like it. Dr. Prime, of the *New York Observer*, in a recent communication to that paper, narrates the case of the late Professor Bush, at one time a well-known and learned professor in a Presbyterian college. Dr. Bush's conversion, however, was not properly to spiritualism, but to Swedenborgianism. He believed Swedenborg to have had a divine mission, and he believed in that intercourse with the spiritual world which Swedenborg professed. With Swedenborg he held that angels are the spirits of departed men, and that it is impious to believe in an order of created beings higher than man, seeing that man was made in the image of God, and anything higher than that cannot be conceived. Dr. Bush professed to be able by passing his hand over a piece of writing to tell the character of the man who wrote it. He maintained that certain emanations from the man hovered even about what he had written, and that one *en rapport* with him could through these declare his character. He thought that in the mesmeric or trance state the ordinary properties of the body were suspended, so far as the spirit was concerned, and that the spirit acted in the same manner

as if it were disembodied. It need not be said that by these vagaries, Dr. Bush lost caste in the community. He died at Rochester, an apostle of the Swedenborgian faith.

In the same letter, Dr. Prime gives an account of various interviews which he has had with other assertors of spiritualistic views. Conspicuous among these were the famous Fox ladies from Rochester. They were such dexterous manipulators that they could bring the spirits into conversation, not merely with believers, or persons of mesmeric susceptibility, but with any one, for the small charge of a dollar. Dr. Prime spent an evening with one of them, but out of some fifty experiments that were performed, not a single one was satisfactory, and he left convinced that the whole affair was a piece of imposture and delusion. He sums up by admitting that there are some facts at present inexplicable, as there are also in the feats of jugglers. Also, that there are as yet mysteries about magnetism, and that the influence of mind on mind is an obscure subject. "Since the world was made," he adds, "the soul of no dead man has made signs to a live one of what was going on in the world of spirits, and apart from what we know of the spirit-world in the book of Revelation, the veil is unbroken, and beyond it all is mystery."

PROFESSOR AGASSIZ ON THE DEVELOPMENT SPECULATION.

Let me call your attention, further, to an important address of Professor Agassiz at a late meeting of the National Academy of Science. The name of Agassiz has been so long conspicuous in the ranks of science that great weight is inevitably attached to his judgment on any scientific question. It has been attempted indeed to pull him down from his eminence, as the same thing has been attempted in the case of other men who have stood firm to their faith in the Creator. "The longer I live," said Agassiz, "I feel more and more the danger of stretching inferences from a few observations to a wide field. I see that the younger generation among naturalists are at this moment falling into the mistake of making assertions and presenting views as scientific principles which are not even based on real observations. The manner in which the evolution theory in zoology is treated would lead those who are not special zoologists to suppose that observations have been made from which it can be inferred that there is in nature such a thing as change among organized beings actually taking place. There is no such thing on record." He went on to say that it was utterly intolerant to proclaim men as deficient in science because they would not give in to theories based on mere assertion. Yet that was what was done now. There was no evidence whatever of evolution, there was no evidence of a tendency to evolution; the whole theory rested on certain resemblances. Darwin had done much in scientific research, but he had been woefully injured by his adherents. He had had doctrines fattered on him which existed only in their imagination. In his several writings Professor Agassiz has often expressed himself to

the same effect; holding, indeed, that instead of creation having gone on by a continuous law of evolution, breaks have repeatedly occurred, showing the interposition of a designing and intelligent Creator.

THE FULTON STREET PRAYER-MEETINGS.

The daily prayer-meeting still goes on, and the spirit of faith and hope prevails at the meeting as much as ever. Faith in the efficacy of prayer, indeed, has ever been the mainspring of its operations, and the records of answers to believing prayer multiply week by week and day by day. If any one were to enter the meeting in doubt as to whether prayer could have any effect in heaven, he might possibly not be convinced himself of this truth, but he would be obliged to feel that other men are profoundly convinced of it. The number of requests for prayer, amounting sometimes to fifty or sixty in a day, show how extensive is the trust in its efficacy. And the remarkable records of answers given is a further proof of the reality of the work. At a recent meeting in Chicago, for instance, a young man stood up, holding a slip of paper in his hand. "This is a telegram," he said, "from Philadelphia; it says, 'Uncle Jack is dying, come on immediately.'" Uncle Jack was a rich worldly man in Philadelphia, whom his young friend had been urging to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; and now, when he was dying, he could think of no one likely to be a comfort to him but the young man whose faithful counsel he had been far from relishing. He telegraphed that he could not go to Philadelphia, but if Uncle Jack would believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, as sure as there was a God in heaven he would be saved. He came to the meeting to get their prayers for a blessing on the message. In the afternoon he had another telegram from Philadelphia:—"You need not come. Uncle Jack is very happy in believing on Jesus." For some time past there has been unusual earnestness at many meetings.

IV.—JOTTINGS FROM THE MISSION FIELD.

THE WANT OF THE TIME.

When missions and missionaries are assailed as they have lately been, the instinct of fair play and the demands of truth require that they be vindicated from bitter calumnies. Yet it must be owned that there is something in the representations that are often made of the comparative feebleness and uselessness of some members of the band. Mission life undoubtedly demands something very unusual in the way of qualification. A half-hearted consecration is specially unsuitable in one who goes to win the heathen by his life as much as to convert them by his words. A left-handed look-out for worldly comfort and consideration, betraying itself in many a little matter easily detected by the native eye, is not likely to have much good effect in inclining the heathen to Christianity. As Dr. Parker, of London, remarked the other day, we need valiant men. And we feel very much disposed to act the part of the King of Israel:—"When Saul saw any strong man, or any valiant man, he took him to him." Dr. Parker refers, and with justice, to

the obstacles often put by fathers and mothers in the way of their sons going out to the mission-field. His words are worthy of being pondered:—

"Truly, in view of this family aspect of the case, we may, first of all, pray that fathers and mothers may be made 'valiant.' They are by no means to be forgotten in these prayers. They may have a great battle to fight with themselves in secret, when they know that God is saying to them: 'Take your son—your only son—your only son Isaac whom you love, and set him apart for the service of the Cross,'—a form of message, however, which, by the very lingering of its emphasis, shows that the whole case has been measured, and that not one drop of the life-offering shall be wasted in the dust. O Thou, who didst not spare Thine only begotten Son, but didst freely give Him up for us all, take this matter into Thine own hands, that it may suffer nothing from our roughness, and by the voice of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, speak to fathers and mothers as Thou only canst speak; mercifully give them such extent and clearness of out-look as shall enable them to see that, in the long run, love renews itself by sacrifice, and that, though weeping may endure for a night, joy will come in the morning!"

To young men he says with equal power:—

"Others are going abroad for secular purposes; servants of the State brave the sea; speculators and adventurers break through every difficulty, that they may seek their fortunes in lands far away; navigators, geographers, merchants, leave home and friends behind, that they may realise the purpose of their hearts: if they do all this to obtain a corruptible crown, will you not emulate their enthusiasm, when a crown incorruptible is set before you? Endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ; fight the good fight of faith; endure afflictions; do the work of evangelists; and when the Chief Shepherd shall appear ye shall receive a crown of glory."

ON THE SHORE OF LAKE SUPERIOR.

There is always a special interest in the reception of the gospel by simple races, like the American Indians. The mixture of childlike simplicity with manly decision, which is often found in such a case, is not often to be met with in more sophisticated races. The speeches of their chiefs and others at missionary meetings and the like have generally a considerable combination of simplicity and shrewdness. A Wesleyan meeting of this kind took place some time ago on the north shore of Lake Superior, presided over by Chief John Waiskey. The chief referred to his early recollections of the first visits of the Black Coats, as he called the missionaries, when he and his father's family were steeped in heathenism. When his parents were baptized, he hesitated for a while, till the minister offered him a little book, and as he wanted the book he consented. What was it? A volume of Ojebwa hymns. "Oh," said the chief, "that precious little book led me to Christ! Oh, that book! the greatest blessing that the Missionary Society ever gave to the Ojebwa Eneshanabeg." Another chief, bearing the genuine name of Pe-au-pe-dau-sonne, next spoke. He said he was perhaps the oldest man present at that missionary meeting, and he expected that his sun would soon go down, but it would shine brighter in heaven.

He was one of the first converted to Christianity in those parts, when John Sunday and others first came with the Word of God. He had been sometimes long years without seeing a missionary, but he always tried to keep that religion which made him so happy to-day. Last winter the priest tried to get him to turn Papist, but he said, "No." He had seen Methodists live and die well; *he had never seen Catholics live very well or die very well, nor be very happy.* The Methodist people were his people, and their religion his, and he wanted to be with them in heaven. He thanked God for missionaries.

It is pretty well known that the American Government has lately adopted a more conciliatory course towards the various tribes of Indians who have often been so troublesome in the new settlements. On the 15th of last January, a meeting was held between the board charged with the business and representatives of the various Christian Churches which carry on missions among the Indians. The representatives of Congregational, Catholic, Quaker, Methodist, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Baptist, and Reformed Churches were present, and with hardly a dissenting voice, expressed themselves favourable to the policy of the government, and hopeful of the advance of the Indian, both in civilisation and in Christianity. The only decidedly remonstrant voice was that of the Roman Catholic representative, who complained somewhat dictatorially, that he and his brethren were not allowed to manage the affairs of the Indians in the place where they had their mission. It would be a happy day both for the Indian and the United States if peace reigned unbroken between them, and the word of God had free course and was glorified.

THE GOSPEL IN MEXICO.

Dr. Riley, of the Episcopal Church, is at present on a visit to the United States, collecting funds for the advancement of the work of the gospel in Mexico, where he usually labours. The story of the gospel in Mexico has been formerly alluded to in these columns, but some facts are mentioned by Dr. Riley probably new to most of our readers:—

"A few years ago a priest was converted in Mexico, and commenced preaching Christ; but this ray of hope was extinguished and crushed by poverty. Then I went there, and immediately thousands came to listen: the private rooms in which we met were crowded; our chapel was overflowing. We obtained the grant of an old church, but it needed painting and other repairs to make it tenable; we needed funds, but none were forthcoming, though we had appealed to you, rolling in luxury. At length a poor brother in the faith, a painter, took the contract at a nominal price, and having nearly completed the work, fell from the scaffolding under the dome with such force as to break through the flooring beneath. When I visited his crushed body in his bare home of poverty, he told me that finding the terms of the contract would barely pay for the paint, he had restricted himself to so small an amount of food, that the dizziness of hunger caused his fall. He died, after a painful operation, saying, 'Jesus is more precious than ever.'

"We got into the church, and the dedication sermon was preached by Manuel Aguas, formerly a

leading priest of the Romish Church. He fell in with one of our tracts; that led him first to the Bible, and then to Jesus, in whom he found peace and joy unspeakable, and he gladly gave up his brilliant position and prospects to cast in his lot with our penury and distress. His conversion was to Mexico what that of St. Paul was to the early Church, and he was doing a work in which it seems as if no other man could ever be his successor. We were inundated by petitions, which we could not grant, to send out labourers, and establish service in villages and towns all over Mexico; another large church was placed at our disposal, but it needed flooring, seats, and windows, and he urged me to come to America and to try and obtain a little help to keep us from perishing.

"I came. I shall never forget his parting look of anguish till I meet his recognition of rapture above. He undertook to do my work as well as his own, preaching *twelve* times a week—you know the rest of the story. At his last service he was assisted in and out of the pulpit; and in three days Magnus Aguas, the apostle of Mexico, died rejoicing in the 'most precious blood of Christ,' but crushed by want, privation, and overwork."

The loss caused by the death of Manuel Aguas to the rising Evangelical Church of Mexico cannot be over-estimated. It is one of those mysterious events which baffle all our efforts to understand them; our comfort is, that if God has work to be done there, He will not fail to provide the instruments; having laid the foundation of the temple, the headstone will be brought forth one day with shoutings of "Grace, grace unto it."

V.—OUR LIBRARY TABLE.

Notes of Thought, by the late Charles Buxton, M.P., is not, in the strictest sense, a religious book, but it bears to the more spiritual region a relation somewhat similar to that which the Book of Ecclesiastes bears to the Epistles of St. Paul. It is a series of observations on men and things as they are looked at by an earnest, thoughtful, religious man. From the biographical sketch of Mr. Davies we get a brief glimpse of the personal and social life of Mr. Buxton. He was the youngest son of the late Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton, a name so memorable in connection with the struggle for the abolition of West India slavery. Brought up under the auspices of such a father, and of a mother of a very noble and Christian character, Hannah Gurney; enjoying all the advantages of education, wealth, and social position; happily married and prosperous in all the relations of life, it might truly be said of him that the lines had fallen to him in pleasant places. In many respects his character was most attractive. His heart was essentially diffusive, finding his chief enjoyment in sharing his blessings with others. He did not like his house to stand empty in summer, if any poor clergyman or other overworked man could have the use of it. He died suddenly at Lochearnhead, before he had completed the age of fifty.

Of the *Thoughts*, which, strung together as mere paragraphs, nearly seven hundred in number, form a substantial volume, we shall merely say that

they indicate a mind of a deeply reflective kind, always seeking out the roots of things, but seeking out the roots with a view to the fruits—the aim being constantly practical. We take samples almost at random.

Sin seen in Christianity.—"One radical distinction between Christianity and all other religions, is this. All others tell a heap of tales about gods and goddesses, and demand certain ceremonies to be performed. Christianity flies at the throat of *sin*. She throws her whole force into the endeavours to make man good instead of evil. Christianity is intensely practical. She has no trait more striking than her common sense."

The Cause of Misery.—"This is a question worthy of deep thought—whether the misery of large masses of the lower orders, in almost every country, is an inevitable and necessary, and so to speak, natural evil, or whether it is the handiwork of man, and is caused by the stupidities of his government. For my part, I feel no question that it is not to nature, but to man's thwarting her, that we owe these masses of misery. But for war, taxation, protection, every man might have so easily lived at his ease that, though here and there a family might have been poor, there would have been no morasses of poverty. Depend on it, *Nature never strikes the first blow.*"

In the *Memorials of the Life and Ministry of the Rev. W. B. Mackenzie, M.A., late Vicar of St. James's, Holloway, by the Rev. G. Calthrop, M.A.*, will be found the record of one of those laborious, earnest lives which in the end produce a wonderful measure of fruit, but are not marked by any special brilliancy. Mr. Mackenzie spent his life in a district of Holloway that at first was to him an absolute desert. When he went to it, there was no congregation, and hardly any church-going people. He set to work, however, with the utmost assiduity, labouring diligently from house to house, although at first with so little success, that after some time he records it as a remarkable encouragement that in two houses his visits had been received with something like a smile. His preaching at first was not popular, yet at the end of eight years he had gained such a hold of the district that his church had to be enlarged to hold two thousand people. His sermons (of which this volume is chiefly made up) are very plain, show little or no originality in opening up Scripture, and hardly an attempt at illustration. But they are substantial and careful, scriptural and real. Their effect must have been due mainly to the earnestness of the preacher. On the whole, we conceive this memorial to be eminently fitted to encourage clergymen of fervent spirit, laborious, persevering, regular habits of working, and deep dependence on the blessing of God.

The Authorship and Historical Character of the Fourth Gospel, considered in reference to the Contents of the Gospel itself: a critical Essay by William Sanday, M.A., Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford.—This volume bears on the much controverted question whether or not the fourth Gospel was written by St. John. The author devotes himself to an examina-

tion of the internal evidence alone. He examines every verse and line with this view, and draws out proofs without number that the Gospel could not have been written in the second century, but must have been the production of a Jew, a contemporary, an eye-witness—no other, in short, than St. John.

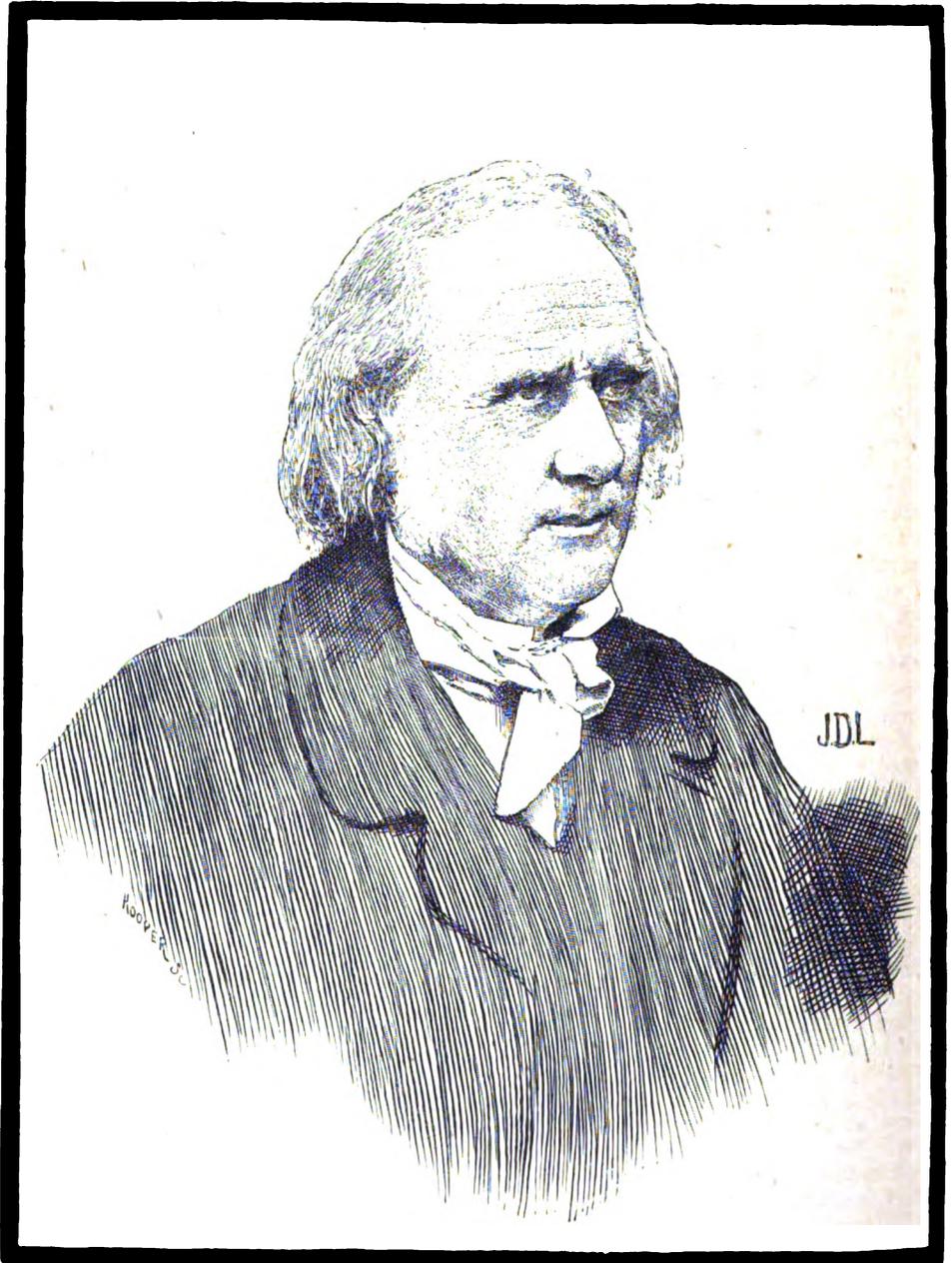
Synoptical Lectures on the Books of Holy Scripture. Second Series. Isaiah—Acts. By the Rev. Donald Fraser, D.D., is an interesting sample of a form of pulpit instruction which might be far more common than it is at present. This is the second volume of a series of pulpit discourses, the object of each of which is to present a summary view of the contents, scope, and spirit of a whole book of the Bible. They form what we may call popular introductions to the books of Scripture. They bear the same relation to the pulpit that the introductions of the German professors bear to the theological class. What we like most is the earnest effort to make the people acquainted with the scope and drift of the different books, and to prepare them by this means for a more intelligent and devout perusal of them, and application of their lessons to themselves.

Sunday Echoes in Weekday Hours.—A tale illustrative of Scripture characters, by Mrs. Carey Brock. The object of the writer is to bring in each leading incident of Scripture history to illustrate some point which acquires a practical meaning and importance in the life of the boy and girl who are the supposed heroes of the tale. This is done in an interesting way, and the young reader can hardly fail to perceive a new meaning and significancy in many passages which he might otherwise have passed over.

VI.—OUR MEMORIAL RECORD.

Death has been busy among conspicuous men; Lushington, Sedgwick, Lytton, have been carried to their long home; and on one of them a distinguished scholar has preached a funeral sermon which makes him out to have been a saint without specifying anything distinctively Christian. Among the recently departed who have at least given to the world proofs of a different order of their Christianity, the names of Henry Venn and Baptist Wriothsley Noel demand a special niche. Mr. Venn, connected by name and by family with one of the pioneers of the evangelical revival, who knew what it was to struggle against the stream, was chiefly known to the church catholic as Secretary of the Church Missionary Society, but won the affection of his friends by many private virtues. Mr. Noel was long a living representative of all that is pure in character, mild in temper, steadfast in principle, and earnest in pastoral work. In leaving the Church of England about twenty years ago, while the purity of his character could not fail to command more honour than ever, he was subjected to that diminution of prestige which takes place when, by an apparently sudden jerk, a public man changes his orbit. But a man like Mr. Noel is one of the best gifts of Christ to any church which may enjoy the privilege of his ministrations.





THOMAS GUTHRIE, D.D.

IN MEMORIAM—THOMAS GUTHRIE, D.D.

By WILLIAM HANNA, D.D.

A STRIKING and stately figure, a beaming and benignant presence, has passed away, darkening a wide circle by its departure. In the busy and now crowded work-rooms of Christian beneficence, a power that had been working sweetly in harmonious concert with all the diverse instrumentality around, has been withdrawn, and the absence will long be felt. No Scottish clergyman of our times has won a larger admiration and love from his fellow-men; none has lived for greater good than Dr. Guthrie. Some, the idols of sect or party, have been unknown and unhonoured, or misjudged and depreciated, beyond the narrow limits that they filled with their fame. He was known and honoured by the members of all sects and parties among us. Some, of great repute in their own land, have had so much of national peculiarities or national prejudices about them, that the applause which greeted their presence at home fell off or dwindled away as they crossed the border. He was as well-known and as fully appreciated in England as in Scotland; was as popular in London as in Edinburgh. He was stopped lately on his way to America. Had he reached that country, an ovation like to that given to Dickens, but of a deeper and more lasting kind, had followed him throughout the United States. This winter, had life and strength been prolonged, he would have been ministering side by side with the Rev. Dr. Ker at Rome. With all the strangers there gathered from all quarters, he would have been as great a favourite as he ever was in his own city of the north. We question if His Holiness himself could have resisted that benignant smile, or the College of Cardinals kept a trowning front in face of the battery of his broad, good-humoured laughter. What was it about this great and good man whose loss we all now mourn, which drew to him such universal and such deep regard?

It will fall to his biographer to tell us all about him that we desire to know: of his birth at Brechin in 1803 of an ancient Scandinavian stock, which numbered a still popular writer and a martyr of unflinching courage among its earlier members; of his being licensed to preach by the Presbytery of Brechin in 1825, and of the long delay before any appointment in the Church came to him, in course of which he acted for a time as a bank clerk, and walked the hospitals for a winter in

Paris; of his settlement in 1830 as minister of the parish of Arbirlot, and of the pains he took there to make full proof of the ministry, especially of the care bestowed upon the composition of his sermons; of his transference in 1837 to the Collegiate Church of Old Greyfriars, Edinburgh, and of that wonderful career as a pulpit orator which then began, and which continued not only with an unabated but with a growing popularity for nearly thirty years; of the part he took in the Voluntary Controversy, the Ten Years' Conflict, and the setting up of the Free Church; of the great project that he devised for building a manse for every minister of the Free Church, his travelling in 1845-6 over the length and breadth of Scotland in furtherance thereof, delivering on its behalf some of his most telling speeches, and gathering in upwards of £100,000; of the publication of the first "Plea for Ragged Schools," and of all the philanthropic labours that followed, which mainly have contributed to give him the place he holds in the regards of his countrymen; of his retirement from the active duties of the ministry in 1864; his travels in other lands, particularly his visit to the Waldensian Valleys, followed up by his manifold pleadings for the Vaudois ministry all over England; his editorship, during the closing years of his life, of the SUNDAY MAGAZINE; and of his peaceful departure from this life at St. Leonard's—in the land, indeed, of the stranger, but in presence of nearly the whole of that numerous, attached, prosperous, and happy household over which the "shadow feared by man" had never passed but once before. A biography which, besides all the interests of domestic and social life (the latter in his case so wide and varied), has such materials supplied for it, will be anxiously awaited. Meanwhile, a word or two in the way of personal recollections may be permitted.

It was the happy privilege of the writer of these lines, counted by him among the greatest he has enjoyed, of being for fifteen years Dr. Guthrie's colleague in the ministry of Free St. John's, Edinburgh. To one coming from a remote country parish, ten years residence in which had moulded tastes originally congenial with its quiet and seclusion into something like a fixed habit of retreat, the position was a trying one, to occupy such a pulpit every Sunday, side by side with such

a preacher. But never can I forget the kindness and tenderness, the constant and delicate consideration with which Dr. Guthrie ever tried to lessen its difficulties and to soften its trials. Brother could not have treated brother with more affectionate regard. Those happy years of colleagueship with him gave me the opportunity of hearing Dr. Guthrie preach more frequently than has fallen to the lot of any other clergyman. I often spoke to him after the service of anything in the discourse by which I had been particularly struck, and with that frank cordiality so eminently characteristic of him, he told me of the time, and place, and mode of the composition of his sermons; exhibiting at times the manuscript, showing me the changes and additions made in the course of their preparation, and the abstract upon a single sheet of paper which he had before him in the pulpit to aid him in their delivery. No discourses ever delivered from the pulpit had more the appearance of extempore addresses. None were ever more carefully thought over, more completely written out beforehand, or more accurately committed to memory. If ever there was any one who might have trusted to the spur of the moment for the words to be employed, it was he. No readier speaker ever stepped upon a platform; but such was his deep sense of the sacredness of the pulpit, and the importance of weighing well every word that should proceed from it, that he never trusted to a passing impulse to mould even a single phrase. Yet in the manuscript there were often phrases, sentences, illustrations, that one on hearing them could scarcely believe to have been other than the suggestion of the moment, linking themselves as apparently they did with something that was then immediately before the speaker's eye. The explanation of this lay in the power (possessed in any considerable degree by but few, possessed by him in perfect measure,) of writing as if a large audience were around him, writing as if speaking, realising the presence of a crowd before him, and having that presence as a continual stimulus to thought and constant moulder of expression. The difference in fact that there almost invariably is between written and spoken address, was by his vivid imagination and quick sympathies reduced to a minimum, if not wholly obliterated. Herein lay one secret of his great power as a preacher.

Another lay in the peculiar character of the imagery and illustrations of which he made such copious use. It has been re-

marked by all who have passed a critical judgment of any value upon his attributes as a preacher, that his chief, if not exclusive, instrument of power was illustration. In listening to him scenes and images passed in almost unbroken succession before the eye, always apposite, often singularly picturesque and graphic, frequently most tenderly pathetic. But it was neither their number nor their variety which explained the fact that they were all and so universally effective. It was the common character they possessed of being perfectly plain and simple, drawn from quarters with which all were familiar; few of them from books, none of them from "the depths of the inner consciousness," supplied by ingenious mental analysis; almost all of them taken from sights of nature or incidents of human life:—the sea, the storm, the shipwreck, the beacon-light, the life-boat, the family wrapped in sleep, the midnight conflagration, the child at the window above, a parent's arms held up below, and the child told to leap and trust. There was much of true poetry in the series of images so presented; but it was poetry of a kind that needed no interpreter, required no effort either to understand or appreciate, which appealed directly to the eye and heart of our common humanity, of which all kinds and classes of people, and that almost equally, saw the beauty and felt the power. This showed itself unmistakably in the singular—we might even say—the wholly unique character of the afternoon audiences of Free St. John's. Of almost all other popular preachers it has been true, if they have occupied the same pulpit continuously for ten or twenty years, that the crowds which they at first attracted have at last diminished, and that the fixed congregation which remained took its distinct hue and form from that of the ministry which had permanently attached them to itself; the latter indeed a thing realised in the case of every city clergyman of any considerable pulpit power. But neither of the two things was true of Dr. Guthrie; the crowds continued undiminished to the last. A few years after he came to Edinburgh the prediction was a common one, that the fountain of imagery upon which he drew so largely and was so dependent, was sure, ere long, to fail, and his popularity to fade away. He lived to prove that his own peculiar vein was one too deep to be exhausted, too fertile to become barren—one that could be constantly replenished; and that bountifully repaid the hand of the cultivator. It was as little true

that you could stop or dry up the spring of story-telling in Dickens or in Scott as you could that of his own form and kind of illustration in Dr. Guthrie. Not even the icy fingers of death could do it. How touching so near the close to see him hold up the mirror to the features which those fingers were fashioning for the tomb, saying that he was doing as the sailor did who climbed to the mast-head to try if he could see land! How touching as sight began to fail, and things look dim, confused around, to hear him compare it to the "land birds lighting on the mast presaging to the weary mariner the nearness of his desired haven!" It was the ruling faculty strong in death. It was to the unfailingness of that faculty that he owed his sustained popularity as a preacher.

I believe that there is not on record another instance of a popularity continued without sign or token of diminution for the length of an entire generation. Nor is there upon record the account of any such *kinds* of crowds as those which constituted continuously, for years and years, Dr. Guthrie's audiences in Free St. John's. Every afternoon crowds gather round the church, long before the hour of meeting. Soon as the doors are opened, they break impetuously in, soon filling every pew, and blocking up all the passages, till standing room for one man more is not to be found in all the area of the building. Look round while all are settling themselves as best they can; you have before you as mixed and motley a collection of human beings as ever assembled within a church. Peers and peasants, citizens and strangers, millionaires and mechanics, the judge from the bench, the carter from the roadside, the high-born dame, the serving maid of low degree—all for once close together. But in the crowd there is always one conspicuous figure. Looking only at the rough, red, slaggy hair, or at the chequed plaid flung over the broad shoulders across the manly breast from which it seldom in any circumstances is withdrawn, you may think that it is some shepherd from the distant hills who has wandered in from his sheiling among the mountains to hear the great city preacher. But look again. The massy head, the broad projecting brow, the lips so firmly closed, the keen grey eye, and, above all, the look of intelligent and searching scrutiny cast around—all tell of something higher than shepherd life. It is Hugh Miller, the greatest of living Scotchmen, never to be missed in this congregation,

of which he was not only a member but an office-bearer. How often as I sat opposite him, Sunday after Sunday, have I gazed upon his mysterious countenance; the head inclined always to one side, bent half way down; the eyes askance, fixed generally upon the floor, but occasionally lifted up, scanning curiously the uplifted faces of the crowd; and ever and anon, as the preacher warmed into some glow of high emotion or spread out some new picture, turning up to and concentrating upon him for a moment or two such a look as could come from no other eyes than his! How little, as I gazed upon him there, for the last time, did I dream that so soon thereafter I would be looking down upon that face as it lay back upon the pillow, serene in the calm majesty of death! Would that he had survived. What a picture should we then have had of those afternoons in St. John's, and of his own loved minister and friend!

I remember Dr. Guthrie once telling me in the vestry-room that he was greatly perplexed about Hugh Miller. The harassing work of Editorship of the *Witness* newspaper—more than enough for any man—was being carried on by him along with literary and scientific labours of the most arduous kind. The two were interfering with one another, the whole burden of them telling seriously upon his health and spirits. A lucrative situation in a public office had just been offered to him, which he was hesitating to accept. Dr. Guthrie, who, doubtless, had a large share in getting him the offer, was greatly concerned about this, not only from the desire that Mr. Miller might be relieved from all mere literary drudgery, and left free to follow his own chosen paths, but from a kindly care for his family now growing up around him—an ample provision for whom it seemed so unreasonable to reject. That we might bring our united influences to bear upon him to prevent this, Dr. Guthrie suggested that the three of us should breakfast together in my house to talk the matter over, and should go afterwards to the agent of the Marquis of Breadalbane (by whom the offer had been made), who was fully informed as to the nature of the duties which occupancy of the office imposed. At the breakfast-table Hugh Miller could not be got to speak much about the matter. We proceeded to the agent's office. His explanation was clear and full, and, as it seemed to us, perfectly satisfactory. No other responsibility was to be incurred than what is laid upon all public functionaries. While we, by our questions, were bringing

out this explanation, Miller sat silent with head inclined and down-cast look, as usual. He asked but the single question—"Would I be responsible for all the public moneys that passed in the course of the year through that office?" "Of course," was the reply. He said nothing more, and we fondly hoped that he would accept. The interview over, we passed out of the hall door, and stood together upon the pavement of Fettes Row. "Well," said Dr. Guthrie, "you are going to take it." Miller gathered himself up, and stood erect. "I find," he said, "that lately my memory has been failing. I cannot trust it as once I could, and no power on earth will ever induce me to take on me a responsibility which I am doubtful of my capacity to discharge." We poured all kind of arguments and remonstrances in upon him. He stood as the rock stands among the billows, utterly unmoved. As the two men, he and Dr. Guthrie, stood fronting one another upon that pavement, which was most to be admired, the overflowings of brotherly kindness in the one, the steadiness, nay, sternness of principle, in the other? Miller, we may be all quick to say, was wrong, but was there another man in Scotland who, in such circumstances, would have rejected such an offer upon such a ground?

There was but one part or sphere of our mutual ministry as to which Dr. Guthrie and I were not of the same mind. We never sat together upon the platform of a congregational soirée without his saying that the only thing he knew of on which he and his colleague differed was in the liking for soirées—he liked—I shrunk from them. The truth is, that I had neither the taste nor the talent for those quick successions—blending so closely the serious with the comic by which such assemblies are often, if not ordinarily, characterized. But no wonder that he liked them, for the platform was to him still more, perhaps, even than the pulpit, the instrument of power for good—the theatre for the fullest and most effective exercise of all his various gifts. Among these the sense of humour—the power of evoking hearty merriment—was dominant, and he sought and found free room for its exercise upon the platform in the crowded weekday meetings of all kinds. Few clergymen of churches in which large "liberty of prophesying" in the pulpit is permitted, and who were as great humorists as Rowland Hill or Dr. Guthrie, have been able to restrain their natural propensity so far that a rippling and suppressed smile has not been seen occasionally stealing over the faces

of their congregations. But so completely did Dr. Guthrie hold this faculty in check that I never saw even the shadow of a smile pass over the congregation of Free St. John's. All the freer did he feel himself at other times and in other places to indulge his bent—to give ample scope and verge to the exercise of that high "prerogative of man," the faculty of laughter. Mrs. Piozzi tells us that Dr. Johnson used to say that "a man's understanding might always be justly measured by his mirth. And his own," she adds, "was never contemptible. He would laugh as heartily and freely as I ever yet saw any man, and his laugh was irresistible." Davies, indeed, tells us he had a laugh like a rhinoceros, whatever that may be; and Boswell says of it that it seemed to him in their midnight walkings to resound from Temple Bar to Fleet-ditch. Mr. Forster in referring to this adds, "Some of the most famous living writers with whom I am acquainted are as famous for the loud laugh as for the well-stored mind."* And who that ever heard it can forget the loud, broad, genial, unrestrained, and most infectious laugh of Dr. Guthrie. Yet it was not a laughter that dulled or deadened any one of the deeper or finer susceptibilities—natural or spiritual—human or divine. "With his eyes in flood with laughter"—how quick were tears—"the pure messengers sent from his heart" to come and fill them with a flood of grief. Tell him when at his topmost point of ringing merriment some simple tale of woe, and see how instantly it acts, "stopping the career of laughter with a sigh"—so marvellously flexible the emotional element that smiles and sighs and tears and laughter would chase each other across that April heart of his as the shadows and the sunbeams chase one another across the lawn.

Linking itself with his love of humour, was his desire for sympathy, his fondness for society. The greatest martyrdom to which you could have doomed him to would have been to make him live alone, or see none but the members of the same half-dozen households. Let him witness a scene of sorrow, or listen to a stroke of humour, he could not rest till he had taken some one into his confidence and made him the sharer of his sorrow or his joy. A deep retreat was opened to him at the remote extremity of a far-off lonely Highland Loch, where he might have tasted to the full the sweets of solitude; but he would always have friends or acquaintances with him there. He was a great fisher; but

* "Life and Times of Goldsmith," vol. ii. pp. 251, 256.

even the "lonely office of the rod" he liked best to discharge when some one was looking on. Meant for mankind, to mankind he gave up all that there was in him of power to profit or to please. Freely he had received, freely he gave; getting as he gave, giving as he got. For he often said that the world was very much as you made it; men to you very much what you were first to them. Smile on them, and they would smile; frown on them, and they would frown; turn you away from them, and they would turn away from you. With heart and hand open as day to every sentiment and deed of kindness, he went abroad among his fellow-men, and open, hearty, and joyous the greeting that everywhere he got. His bright smile, his cheery laugh, his varied information, his store of anecdotes, his readiness and felicity of phrase, his broad and genial human-kindness, his conversational gifts, made him a great and general favourite in society—as welcome in the salons of the noble as in the dwellings of the poor.

The fine and full blending of all the humanities—the strength especially of the sympathetic element—inclined him to and pre-eminently fitted him for those philanthropic labours to which so many of the later years of his life were devoted. The controversies of earlier years over, his contribution to the secure establishment of the Free Church made, he was at liberty to look around and see to what, as a minister of Christ and a citizen of Edinburgh, he should put a hand, whose power in moving others he had now tested. It had been long apparent to him that the one great opprobrium which lay upon the Christianity of our country was the debased and degraded condition of such large masses of our city populations—the ignorance, the drunkenness, the debauchery, the crime, the godlessness—simmering and seething, boiling up and running over within those half-lighted, half-heated, defiled and uncleansed dwellings, in which thousands upon thousands of our fellow-creatures are living and dying within arms' reach, yet comparatively uncared for.

Upon this reproachful and revolting spectacle he looked, not so much to condemn, as to pity and to sympathize. He knew and felt how much of the sinning and suffering was due to early training, to the force of example, the power of moulding circumstances, the absence of all encouragement to truth and temperance, thrift and piety, the presence of all kinds of temptations to all kinds of sin. It was neither in the spirit of the censor that

he desired to speak, nor in the spirit of the lictor that he desired to punish, nor in the spirit of the patron that he desired to help. It was comparatively easy to condemn or to punish, or even pecuniarily and otherwise to aid. The one thing wanted was to get, if possible, at the root of the evil, and dry up at the fountain head the sources from which all this evil flowed. If, as all experience proves, it is the character of a community that determines their condition, to work upon their motives, principles, and habits—upon all in fact by which character is formed, was the thing most needed. No other method of doing so appearing to him half so hopeful as those Territorial Churches by whose multiplied and concentrated agencies the lessons of the Gospel of Jesus Christ are brought home to every heart, and pressed upon every individual conscience and heart. He sought to turn his own parish church, when he got it uncollegiated, into a Mission Church of this character; and when, through no fault of his, that project fell through, he took vigorous and effective part in the establishment of the Mission Church in the Pleasance, which his congregation originated, and by which, for many years, it was sustained. Seeing in the one habit of drunkenness the pregnant spring of far more than half the existing wretchedness and crime, he headed for a time the temperance movement, and to the last was ready to aid every feasible effort for the mitigation of this monster evil. But his long experience taught him that by far the most hopeful field of labour was the education and Christian training of the young. It must be left to others now to tell how it was that within this field he chose for himself a limited space, and erected an enclosure, and gathered into it the wandering Arabs of our streets, and published his "Plea for Ragged Schools," and built his own Ragged School upon the Mound, and wrote for it, and begged for it, delivering those annual orations which thrilled the hearts of thousands, till he raised it into the condition of one of the most important and permanent institutions of the city, and lived to see hundreds of outcast children who otherwise had been doomed to wretchedness and vice, turned at least into well doing, creditable citizens, many of them, let us hope, into Christian men and women.

The object, however, of these hurried lines is neither to describe Dr. Guthrie's philanthropic labours, nor to delineate his character as a religious man and a Christian minister. The one could not be done without access to

sources of information from which I am for the time far removed. The other is not for a hand so enfeebled as mine has lately been. Precluded from following his remains to the grave, and from speaking of him from the pulpit we once shared together, I have sought imperfectly to discharge a great debt of gratitude, and to joining those who are laying their tributes upon his tomb—by reviving and recording a few memories of past intercourse, and attempting to trace one or two of the more prominent features of his character as a man; those especially which served to give him such a wide, deep hold upon the hearts

of others, those which helped to make him one of whom it might well be said—

“The elements were so mixed in him
That Nature might stand up and say—
This was a man.”

And Grace, too, might stand up and say—
And this man was a Christian—taught of the cross of Jesus—imbued and animated throughout by the Spirit of Him “who came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.”

WILLIAM HANNA.

TORQUAY, *March 1st, 1873.*

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF DR. GUTHRIE.

OUR readers, we are sure, must regret deeply that Dr. Hanna's state of health and absence from Edinburgh have prevented him from extending the tender tribute which he has paid to his late colleague in the preceding paper. It is mainly as a supplement to Dr. Hanna's recollections that I proceed to state briefly, in chronological order, the leading occurrences of his life.

The name of Guthrie, like that of Argyll, is a consecrated name in Scotland. In the same week in which the Marquis of Argyll was beheaded (May and June, 1661), James Guthrie, one of the most eminent and godly ministers of the Church of Scotland, who had been convicted of high treason, though most unjustly, was hanged in Edinburgh. He met his death with singular composure, commending Christ with all his heart to the people, and appropriating the *Nunc dimittis* of Simeon as his closing prayer. According to the barbarous custom of the times, his head, separated from the body, was fastened to the gate of the “Nether Bow,” where it remained for a long time; and a story was current that on one occasion, as the King's Commissioner was passing through the gate, some drops of blood from the martyr's head fell upon his carriage, which could by no means be wiped out.* Whether Dr. Guthrie was or was not a descendant of James Guthrie the martyr, he was, at all events, of the same stock; and as he often referred with a glow of triumph to the martyr and his noble self-sacrifice, it may well be believed that he drew some inspiration from his ex-

ample in the consecration of his own life to Christ.

A branch of the Guthries has been connected with the town of Brechin, in Forfarshire, ever since these martyr-times. Strictly, we ought to call Brechin a city, for it was the seat of a bishopric and of a cathedral church, founded by David I.; but it never grew to such dimensions as to make the more pretentious title sound very natural. In an antiquarian point of view, it is memorable for a round tower of solid masonry, still standing close by the cathedral, built in times too remote for record—a structure not uncommon in Ireland, but of which only two now exist in Scotland. The father of Dr. Guthrie was a merchant and banker in Brechin, and like several other members of the family, was chosen to fill the office of chief magistrate. Thomas Guthrie was born on 12th July, 1803, and was one of the youngest members of a large family. From Brechin he was sent to the University of Edinburgh; but at an age far too young to enable him to attain any distinction as a student. From an early period of his life he had resolved to study for the ministry of the Church of Scotland, and after completing the usual course he was duly licensed as a preacher of the Gospel by the Presbytery of Brechin, in 1825.

Dr. Guthrie was one of that long list of eminent Christian men who have owed to a godly mother their first impressions of Christian truth. “With my mother's milk,” he said, in a speech in the General Assembly of the Free Church in 1863, “I drank in an abhorrence of patronage, and it was at her

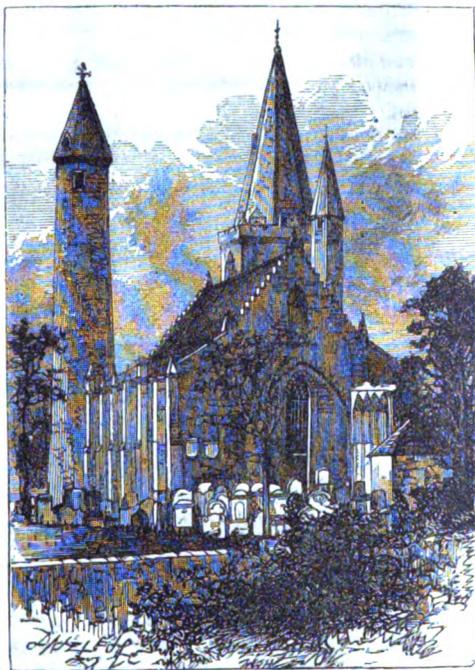
* Wodrow's “Sufferings of the Church of Scotland,” vol. i. p. 196.

knees that I first learned to pray, that I learned to form a reverence for the Bible as the inspired Word of God; that I learned to hold the sanctity of the Sabbath; that I learned the peculiarities of the Scottish religion; that I learned my regard for the principles of civil and religious liberty, which have made me ever hate oppression and resist the oppressor."

How deeply and fondly he cherished the memory of this excellent woman, who may well take rank with the Anthonys, the Nonnas, the Mærinas, and the Monicas of the early church, was shown on one of the last days of his life, when deeming that he drew nigh to the better land, he spoke with delight of the prospect of seeing his mother, as well as an infant child, the only member of his own family that preceded him, whom he fancied running to meet and welcome him at the golden gate. In one of his contributions to this Magazine Dr. Guthrie recorded the deep impression made on him by the character of another relative, a godly farmer, who had reached the age of eighty years, at the time of his recollection: "His appearance was at all times venerable, but at the table, when seated beside his aged partner, bowed down and blind with years,—also a devout Christian, though of stern mould, who fasted one whole day each week, nor ever told husband or children why,—his manner when he asked the blessing rose into the sublime. Uncovering his aged head, taking off the broad bonnet, which, the fashion of his early days, he wore to the last, he turned his face upward with an expression of deep solemnity. There was a moment's silence, as if he was gathering up all his mind to enter the presence of the Heavenly Majesty. And when the blessing came forth in slow, and measured, and trembling accents, what a contrast it afforded to the mumbled, curt, hurried 'For what we are to receive, the Lord make us thankful,' we often hear. The words were few and well chosen, but there was that in the old man's voice, face, and manner which communicated feelings of solemnity even to thoughtless childhood, the venerable worshipper looking like one who stood before the throne, and saw the august Being whom he addressed."

On being licensed as a preacher, Mr. Guthrie appeared for the first time in the pulpit of the parish or cathedral church of Brechin. One who heard him on that occasion has informed me that his manner then gave no indication of that eminence as a preacher which he was afterwards to attain.

His text was from the words, "Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head-stone of the corner? This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes." The delivery is said to have been somewhat rough; but neither then, nor on any future occasion in his life (except a few times experimentally when he was in ill health), did he read his discourse. In another respect, his first sermon was a fit representation of all that followed—it set forth the true foundation of the sinner's acceptance, and probably consisted of the pith and substance of the gospel message.



Brechin Cathedral and Tower.

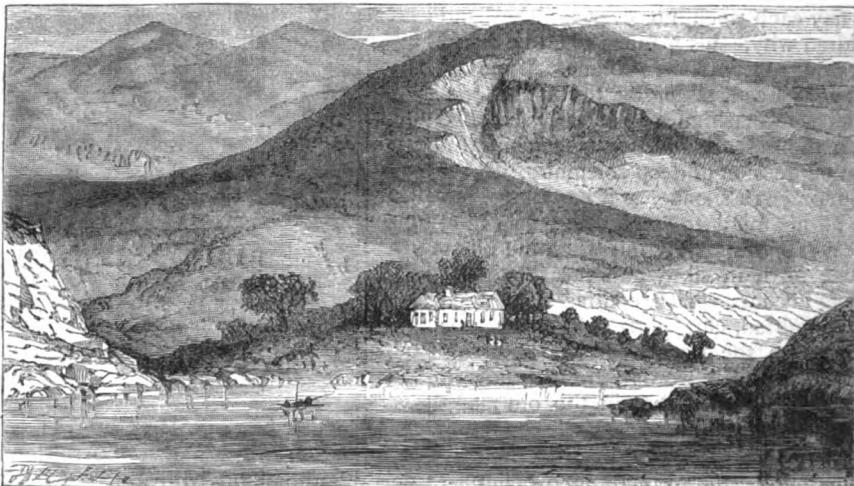
At length, in 1830, Mr. Guthrie received a presentation to the parish of Arbirlot, in the neighbourhood of Arbroath. "Arbirlot," to use his own description in this magazine, "hung on a slope that gently declined to the sandy shores of the German Ocean. There was wood enough to ornament the landscape, but not to intercept the fresh breezes, that curling and cresting the waves, blew landward from the sea, or swept down seaward from heights loaded with the fragrance of mown hay, or blooming beanfields, or moors golden with the flowers of the gorse." It was

a purely agricultural parish, with a population of about a thousand, so well educated that but one grown-up person could not read, so regular in religious duty that but one person did not attend church, and so free from intemperance that the one public-house depended chiefly for its customers on the neighbouring town. "The moral aspects

were much in harmony with the physical, of a scene where the fields yielded abundant harvests, and the air, loaded with the fragrant perfume of flowers, sung to the song of larks and woodland birds, and long lines of breakers gleamed and boomed upon the shore, and ships with white sails flecked the blue ocean, and the Bell Rock tower stood on its rim to



Brechin and the Castle.



Dr. Guthrie's Summer Cottage at Lochlee.

shoot cheerful beams athwart the gloom of night, a type of that church which, our guide to the desired haven, is founded on a rock, and fearless of the rage of storms."

These seven years of Mr. Guthrie's incumbency of Arbirlot were memorable in the history of the parish. A new parish church was erected, and a new manse for the minister; but better

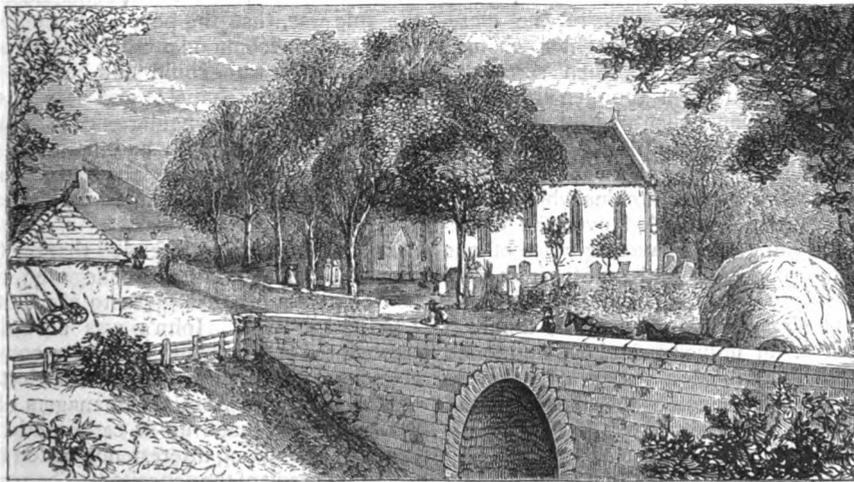
than these, new life began to stir in the hearts of the people. To this day there lingers in the parish the tradition of a Bible class which the minister conducted after service on Sundays. His activity in organizing Sunday-schools is also remembered, as well as his assiduity in all his pastoral duties, and his interest in all that concerned the temporal as

well as the spiritual welfare of the people. And here Mr. Guthrie began to study in earnest the art of preaching. Observing the tendency of some of the people to drowsiness, he resolved that whatever else he might do, he would compel them to attend. For this purpose he taught himself to look them right in the face, and go through them, as it were,

with his eyes. Watching to see what parts of his sermons were most interesting to them, he discovered that it was his illustrations, and he determined to cultivate that department most assiduously. In the Bible class already referred to, he went over the sermon just delivered, and found readily what parts of it were understood and remembered, and



Arbirlot Manse.



Arbirlot Church.

what parts were not, skilfully guiding himself in future by the experience he thus gained.

The fame of Mr. Guthrie as a preacher was now fast spreading. Even to Edinburgh the news had gone that a broad-speaking Forfarshire man, in a Forfarshire parish, was doing great wonders among the people, and a vacancy having taken place in the collegiate

charge of Old Greyfriars, some persons were beginning to wonder whether he was the suitable man. The late Mr. Murray Dunlop had gone down to Arbirlot, and now helped to spread the fame of Mr. Guthrie in Edinburgh. A sufficient number of names in his favour was obtained in the congregation, to place his name in a short list from

which the Town Council were to select. It turned out, however, that he refused to come to preach in the church—a great discouragement to his friends. His chief opponent was the Rev. Mr. Clark, who was afterwards appointed to St. Andrew's Church—the brother-in-law of the late Lord Rutherford, who became one of Mr. Guthrie's most admiring hearers. The election of Mr. Guthrie by the Council was secured by a small majority, and in due time, in 1837, he was translated from Arbriot to the church and parish of Old Greyfriars.

We have again only to turn to the pages of this Magazine to get Dr. Guthrie's own description of his new sphere of labour. He tells how one gloomy day, in the fall of the year, he stood on the South Bridge, looking down on the foul crowded closes that stretch like ribs down into the Cowgate. "The streets were a puddle; the heavy air, loaded with smoke, was thick and murky; right below lay the narrow street of dingy tenements, whose toppling chimneys and patched and battered roofs were apt emblems of the fortunes of most of its tenants. Of these, some were lying over the sills of windows, innocent of glass, or stuffed with old hats and dirty rags; others, coarse-looking women, with squalid children in their arms, or at their feet, stood in groups at the close-mouths, here with empty laughter, chaffing any passing acquaintance, then screaming each other down in a drunken brawl, or standing sullen and silent, with hunger and ill-usage in their saddened looks. A brewer's cart, threatening to crush beneath its ponderous wheels the ragged urchins who had no other play-ground, rumbled over the causeway,—drowning the quavering voice of one whose drooping head and scanty dress were ill in harmony with song, but not drowning the shrill pipe of an Irish girl who thumped the back of an unlucky donkey, and cried her herrings at three a penny. So looked the parish I had come to cultivate; and while contrasting the scene below with pleasant recollections of a parish I had just left—its singing larks, daisied pastures, hedges of hoary thorn, fragrant beanfields, and smiling gardens, decent peasants, stalwart lads and blooming lasses, and the grand blue sea rolling its lines of snowy breakers on the shore,—my rather sad and sombre ruminations were suddenly checked. A hand was laid on my shoulder. I turned round, to find Dr. Chalmers at my elbow. . . . Contemplating the scene for a little in silence, all at once, with his broad Luther-like face

glowing with enthusiasm, he waved his arm to exclaim, 'A beautiful field, sir; a very fine field of operation.'"

In this "very fine field," Mr. Guthrie set nobly and most assiduously to work, and for several years his parochial labours in these dingy and repulsive tenements were unceasing. The earnestness of his work in the Cowgate was the more remarkable that the Greyfriars' church was already crowded with admiring hearers, comprising many of the *élite* of the new town of Edinburgh. The third Sunday on which he preached, the passages were crowded, and so they continued to be, whenever he officiated, to his very last appearance in the pulpit. But his heart lay with the poor. To elevate them from their degradation was constantly his aim; and as Greyfriars was a collegiate charge and his services in its pulpit were needed but once a day, he opened the old and venerable Magdalene chapel in the Cowgate, and preached there to the poorest of the poor. It is only the want of space that prevents us from quoting his description of this ancient sanctuary, where John Knox and his coadjutors held their first general assembly, and which has passed through so many changes of fortune, and been put to such a variety of uses in its day. In the Magdalene chapel the rule was, that the people of the district were to be accommodated with seats before the strangers, who could not be kept from flocking to the chapel; and it was often remembered as a singular sight—rows of gentleman in broadcloth and ladies in silk, standing patiently, while labourers in fustian and women in limp and faded cotton passed along to occupy the seats.

It had always been intended that the Greyfriars' Church should be uncollegiated, and a new church and parish given to Mr. Guthrie. The parish of St. John's was accordingly erected, the church being built, to a considerable degree, through the help of a donation of about £1,700 from the managers of the Savings' Bank, made up of certain odd halfpence in calculating interest, not added to the sum at the credit of the depositors. The arrangement of the seats in St. John's showed how thoroughly Dr. Guthrie was devoted to the interests of the poor. The area of the building was to be allocated to the parishioners, and the ladies and gentlemen were to be accommodated in the pews in the galleries, for which, but only for which, a considerable seat-rent was exacted. The arrangement was a fine moral testimony to the value of the souls of the poor, conceived in the spirit of

St. James, and was particularly valuable at a time when it was desired to show that the Established Church was the church of the poor as well as of the rich. The experiment, however, was short-lived. Hardly had Mr. Guthrie taken possession of St. John's when the shadow of the impending disruption of the Church of Scotland began to fall. In the controversy that preceded that event he took a most lively interest. His sympathy for the people, and his regard for their souls, roused his opposition to the high-handed exercise of patronage which was attempting to intrude unacceptable ministers on congregations unanimously opposed to them. Not less was he distressed at the attempt of the civil courts to interfere, as he believed, with the freedom of the Church, and to prevent her from giving effect in spiritual matters to what she believed to be her Master's will.

No doubt, as he afterwards remarked, there were faults on both sides. "They gave us hard knocks sometimes, and we gave back hard words, when, I believe, we should have held our tongues." For the rights of the people and the freedom of the Church, no man was more strenuous than Mr. Guthrie. He went to Strathbogie and preached there in defiance of an interdict from the Court of Session, when as he knew, if complaint were made, he must be sent to prison for the offence. At the great public meetings that preceded the disruption, no voice was more eloquent than his, and no heart more brave, in urging his brethren and the people to be steadfast to their principles. Much though he had valued the advantages of an establishment, he valued far higher the rights of the people and the freedom of the Church. In May, 1843, when the legislature had given their ultimatum, he was in the very van of the new movement. Already his heart was stirred to its depths by the sufferings of some of the country ministers, and we can conceive the idea of the manse scheme fitting vaguely across his mind as he poured out his feelings in regard to a case that had been reported:—

"There is a parish in Scotland where there is a minister who has a sister, a brother, and a venerable mother under his roof. That mother was a minister's daughter, that mother was a minister's sister, that mother was a minister's wife, and now she is a minister's widow. And, sir, that man of God, that man of holiness, must carry away his venerable mother, with the grey hairs of age upon her head, who never knew a home on earth but a manse, he must drive her away because not

even a Highland sheiling can be got to lay her head in, he must send her away seventy long miles from the scene of his own labours. Will not Scotland cry shame on the man who compels him to do this?"

Notwithstanding the vehemence of his feeling on this occasion, roused as it was by the thought of a brother's suffering, his heart was already fondly cherishing those catholic yearnings after unity, or at least co-operation among all good men, which, throughout his life, were among his most characteristic feelings. Referring to the voluntary controversy, in connection with the seventeenth chapter of St. John, which had been read at the beginning of the meeting, he said:—

"What is first and foremost in that prayer? What is mentioned once, twice, thrice, four, and even five times,—'that they all may be one, as we are one.' I will never rest contented, I will never cease to pray and work till that end is achieved; and as I do so, I will bury in oblivion the memory of former controversies. Yes, sir, O that the day were come when I might meet with my brethren over the grave of all former controversies, that we might shake hands and join hearts, and be one in Christ Jesus; one regiment, bearing the same colours, and going forth like an army mighty for battle, against one common and tremendous foe!"

In 1845, two years after the disruption, the Free Church Assembly set itself very earnestly to procure the erection of manse throughout the whole Church, for the accommodation of the country ministers. The management of this very extensive undertaking was committed to Mr. Guthrie. The object was to erect some five or six hundred houses, many of them in very poor localities—Highland glens and islands—where such an undertaking would have utterly baffled the congregations. It was resolved to grapple with the scheme by means of two funds,—a general fund for the whole Church, and a local fund for each congregation. The general fund was fixed at £100,000; and, considering that the people during the last two years had been raising fund after fund, for all manner of purposes,—church-building, sustentation, missions, schools, colleges, and what not,—it needed no ordinary boldness even to name a fresh appeal for such an amount. Never did warrior gird on his armour with more alacrity and purpose-like energy than Mr. Guthrie prepared for this great undertaking. The year 1845-6 was devoted to it; for twelve months he was separated from his flock and his family; he travelled over the

country from Maidenkirk to John o' Groat's, held public meetings night after night, preached on Sundays, called on all who were likely to advance the scheme, demonstrated its necessity, and painted in glowing terms the blessings it would confer; and while doing this, he was at the same time counselling and encouraging the ministers and people, many of whom were considerably disheartened by the difficulties they had to encounter. Through God's blessing on his labours, he was able to assure the General Assembly of 1846 that the amount subscribed largely exceeded the proposed £100,000, being no less than £116,370 14s. 1d. But this magnificent result was not achieved without a legacy of evil; the strain had been too great even for the physical strength of Mr. Guthrie; symptoms of heart disease began to show themselves; two years after, an acute attack was experienced; in fact, the disease was contracted which, though kept under for many years, at last laid him low; not, indeed, till he had touched the term of threescore years and ten, but at the same time sooner by several years than a frame so unusually powerful might otherwise have been expected to succumb.

For some time after the disruption, Mr. Guthrie's congregation met in the Methodist Chapel; but by-and-by, St. John's Free Church was built and opened, and Dr. Guthrie's popularity as a preacher became greater than ever.

Of his pulpit oratory Dr. Hanna has given so vivid a description as to leave no room for further remark. It may be well, however, to call attention once again to the great blessing from above that often attended his sermons. There is no room here for details; but there is ample reason to believe that many an arrow, shot at a venture, stuck fast in the heart of some hearer. Unbelievers and indifferent men and women were sometimes arrested by the truth; persons of the upper class, who had been given to mere frivolity, became earnest in the work of faith and labour of love; and many young men received either their first impressions, or such an impulse in the ways of godliness, as turned them into devoted servants of the Lord. When Dr. Hanna, as colleague-pastor of St. John's, organized a new congregation in the Pleasance some years afterwards, on the principles so powerfully advocated by his father-in-law, Dr. Chalmers, it must have been a great gratification to both the pastors that the first minister was a young man who had received spiritual benefit from Dr. Guthrie's

ministry—one who has proved a most laborious and highly successful minister of the gospel.

I have been told that the only occasion on which Dr. Guthrie was ever seriously opposed by the elders of his congregation was in a proposal which he submitted to them to turn to account in a particular way a large unoccupied schoolroom under his church. The idea of a ragged school had taken possession of his mind, and his first thought was that in this schoolroom such a school should be opened in connection with the congregation. I do not know what the difficulties were which drew forth the opposition of the elders, but the result was one in which the whole Christian world must rejoice; that instead of a comparatively obscure congregational school, he was led to institute one on a more catholic basis, and to appeal to the whole Christian community for the means of carrying it on. The effect of this change of plan was indeed very wonderful. A standard was unfurled, under which many good men, who had parted company in their church connection, were enabled to meet; a great platform of Christian co-operation was brought into prominence, and the ecclesiastical atmosphere was manifestly sweetened. On Dr. Guthrie himself the effect was great. Henceforward, whilst quite loyal to his own Church, he became more a catholic man—the common property, as it were, of the whole evangelical community.

No one will need to be told how it was that a man of Mr. Guthrie's heart, who could never look with out pain on the suffering of another, familiar as he was with the Cowgate and its wretched closes, should have caught at the idea of schools where ragged, starving children should have a dinner as well as a lesson. In his "Plea for Ragged Schools," which afterwards became so celebrated, Dr. Guthrie vividly pictures in the Grassmarket the class that it was designed to benefit.

"On a summer day, when in the blessed sunshine and warm air, misery itself will sing; dashing in and out of these closes, careering over the open ground, engaged in their rude games, arrayed in flying drapery, here a leg out and there an arm, are crowds of children; their thin faces tell how ill they are fed, their fearful oaths tell how ill they are reared; and yet the merry laugh and hearty shout, and screams of delight, as some unfortunate urchin at leap-frog measures his length along the ground, also tell that God made childhood to be happy, and that in the buoyancy of youth, even misery will forget itself.

"We get hold of one of these boys. Poor fellow! it is a bitter day, he has neither shoes nor stockings; his naked feet are red, swollen, cracked, ulcerated with the cold; a thin, thread-worm jacket, with its gaping rents, is all that protects his breast; beneath

his shaggy head of hair he shows a face sharp with want, yet sharp also with intelligence beyond his years. This poor fellow has learned already to be self-supporting. He has studied the arts—he is a master of imposture, lying, begging, stealing; and small blame to him, but much to those who have neglected him, he had otherwise pined and perished. So soon as you have satisfied him that you are not connected with the police, you ask him, 'Where is your father?' Now, hear his story; and there are hundreds could tell a similar tale. 'Where is your father?' 'He is dead, sir.' 'Where is your mother?' 'Dead too.' 'Where do you stay?' 'Sister and I and my little brother stay with Granny.' 'What is she?' 'She is a widow woman.' 'What does she do?' 'Sells sticks, sir.' 'And can she keep you all?' 'No.' 'Then how do you live?' 'Go about and get bits of bread, sell matches, and sometimes get a trifle from the carriers for running an errand.' 'Do you go to school?' 'No, never was at school; attended sometimes a Sabbath school, but hadn't been there for a long time.' 'Do you go to church?' 'Never was in a church.' 'Do you know who made you?' 'Yes, God made me.' 'Do you say your prayers?' 'Yes, mother taught me a prayer before she died; and I say it to Granny afore I lie down.' 'Have you a bed?' 'Some straw, sir.'

More than five-and-twenty years have made us so familiar with this sad phase of life that it is difficult to realise the impression when, like the first traveller's account of some unexplored country, these sketches were given to the public. Of the "Plea," edition followed edition almost as fast as the press could throw them off, and that mighty tide of sympathy and support set in on behalf of the Ragged School which has hardly ebbed during all the interval. The proposal in the "Plea" was to establish schools in which the children should be fed as well as taught, but for the most part allowed to return at night to the houses of their parents. The education to be given was emphatically declared to include instruction in the gospel, and the whole "Plea" was constructed on the principle that no power short of the grace and love of God, as there revealed and applied, could suffice to reclaim these miserable outcasts. But this proved the rock of offence to some. In their great liberality they thought that the miserable waifs, whose condition in nine cases out of ten was due to the profligacy of their parents, ought as a sacred duty to be brought up in the religion of these parents. It was somehow quite right to teach them to discard the morals of their parents, and the habits of their parents, and the example and lessons of their parents in stealing, in idling, in drinking, and all kinds of debauchery. But the religion of their parents—that was a different thing—that was to be held in inviolable honour. Dr. Guthrie and his friends maintained that when they undertook the

training of these poor waifs they assumed toward them the duty and responsibility of parents, and were bound to teach them as they would teach their own children—to teach them what they believed to be the saving truth of God. The case came to a battle. Trumpets called to arms, in the shape of requisitions to the Lord Provost to call a meeting, and have the matter discussed. A meeting was accordingly summoned, and on the 2nd July, 1847, the duel came off in the Music Hall. The encounter began by the late Lord Murray setting forth the objections of his friends and himself to the principle of the school in religious training. Mr. Guthrie met the charge in one of his most powerful and telling speeches.

"What is my position?" he asked, "in regard to these outcast children? I deny the right of the priesthood—I deny it before God or man—I deny the right of any man, be he parson, or priest, or clerk, or whatever he choose, to stand between a perishing sinner and God's saving word. Mark how I stand. I say that the responsibility for the religious upbringing of the child lies upon the parents; and if there be no parents, or none to act a parent's part—if the parent be a worthless, profligate, wicked, cruel, monstrous mother—on whom does the responsibility next lie? I join issue with the Catholic here. He says that it lies with the priest; I say it lies with the good Samaritan who acts the parent's part. . . . Let me put a case. A ship has stranded on the stormy shore. I strip, and plunging headlong into the billows, buffet them with this strong arm till I reach the wreck. From the rigging where he hangs, I seize and save a boy; I bear him to the shore; and through the crowd who watched my rising and falling head, and blessed me with their prayers, I take him home. What happens now? Forth steps a Roman Catholic priest, and, forsooth, because yon ship contained its Irish emigrants, claims the child—the half-drowned boy that clings to his preserver's side; he would spoil me of my orphan and rear him up in what I deem dangerous errors. I have two answers to this demand. My first is, I saved the boy. The hand that plucked him from the wreck is the hand that shall lead him in the way to heaven. My second is, to point him to the wreck, and to the roaring sea. I bid him strip and plunge like me, and save those that still perish there."

If it were possible to speak in a Christian sense of "the proudest moment of one's life," I believe that in Dr. Guthrie's case

such a moment must have been when, on a show of hands being taken at the close of this meeting, a whole forest was held up for his motion, and five only for that of Lord Murray. It was a signal thing to have carried a vast assembly so thoroughly, and drawn from them an all but unanimous testimony in favour of Bible instruction as an integral part of the training of this new school. Nor do I suppose that his satisfaction was diminished when his opponents set up another school, to be conducted on the principle of combined secular and separate religious instruction. For he had frankly recognised their right to do so if they chose to plunge into the sea and bear to shore in their own arms some of those that were yet clinging to the wreck; and he believed that, *in certain circumstances*, combined secular and separate religious training was the only method of instruction that could be followed. What for his own part he never could acquiesce in was, that when he had been virtually constrained to adopt a neglected child, and to do him a parent's part, he should be prevented from trying to train him in the knowledge of that blessed salvation which it was his first duty and most anxious wish and prayer to impart to his own children at home.

I believe that the success of his ragged school and of many similar schools was one of the great joys of his life, and one of the things that contributed mainly to make that life so radiant and happy. Everything about ragged school movements charmed him. To read the statistics of the jail, and find how juvenile commitments had dwindled; to survey the streets and see how comparatively free they were of young beggars and wandering *gamins*; to follow the history of some boy or girl to Canada or Australia, and learn how well they were doing; to get letters from them, quaint and queer, but full of gratitude and sound principle; to hear the story of a death-bed, of the "bairns' hymns" the little sufferer sang, and the hope in Jesus that brightened the departing spirit; to receive calls from well-to-do people, and have cheques for fifty or a hundred pounds for the ragged school placed in his hands; to get letters from maid-servants, or from soldiers or sailors, enclosing the tiny money order that sent a month's pay or half-year's wage for the support of a destitute child—such occurrences were like streams from Lebanon, or cold waters to a thirsty soul. The ragged school was indeed "a very fine field of operation"—it was a thing of beauty, and a joy for ever.

But ragged schools did not exhaust his affection. There was not a social movement, contemplating the good of the people, that did not awaken his interest, and as opportunity was offered, enlist his support. In his first Plea, there occurs a quotation from "the Antiquary"—one of his favourite story books, that seems to me to reveal a great deal of his mind—a great deal of what he thought about the temptations incident to the hard life of the working classes, and the extreme desirableness, in a Christian as well as a common point of view, of the elevation of their temporal condition. The laird and Maggie are haggling about a fish bargain. "I'll gie them," says Maggie, "and—and—and—half a dozen partans to mak the sauce, for three shillings and a dram." "Half-a-crown, and a dram, Maggie," replies the laird. "Aweel, your Honour maun hae't your ain gait, nae doot; but a dram's worth siller now,—the distilleries is no working." "And I hope they'll never work again in my time," said Oldbuck. "Aye, aye, it's easy for your Honour, and the like o' you gentle folks, to say sae, that hae stouth and routh, and fire and finding, and meat and clait, and sit dry and cannie by the fireside; but an' ye wanted fire, and meat, and dry claise, and were deein' o' cauld, and had a sair heart,—whilk is warst ava!—wi' jist tippence in your pouch,—wadna' ye be glad to buy a dram wi't, to be ealdin' and claise, and a supper and heart's ease into the bargain, till the morn's morning?"

Well did Dr. Guthrie know the truth of this; and from the depths of his heart he desired success to every scheme of social improvement that, by modifying the hardships of a life of labour, tended to diminish the disastrous temptations of "the dram."

A serious illness in 1848 led to his receiving the invaluable aid of Dr. Hanna as colleague-pastor of St. John's. In 1849 the University of Edinburgh conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Divinity, the single distinction that was ever attached to his name.

It was not till 1855, when he had passed his fiftieth year, that he came out as the author of a book. We have no space to speak of him as an author, and can only state that "The Gospel in Ezekiel," dedicated to Dr. Hanna, appeared in that year, and that the sale in this country has exceeded 40,000 copies. "Christ and the Inheritance of the Saints," dedicated to his friend Lord Panmure, now Earl! of Dalhousie, appeared in 1853. The list of his publications includes nearly twenty volumes, and of those "Out

of Harness," and "The Parables read in the Light of the Present Day," appeared in GOOD WORDS; and "Our Father's Business," "Studies of Character from the Old Testament" (two series), "The Angels' Song," "Sundays on the Continent," and "Saving Knowledge," were mainly collections of contributions to the SUNDAY MAGAZINE.

In 1864 a renewed attack of illness obliged him to retire wholly from the active duties of his charge. The interdict of the doctors debaring him from pulpit and platform for the remainder of his days, was as hard to bear as the interdict of the Court of Session against his opening his lips in Strathbogie, and seemed like a sentence of imprisonment for life. The spirit was still willing for work, though the flesh was weak. The fire burned in his soul with unabated intensity, and struggled for utterance, as it does in all born orators and in all men whose lips have been touched with the live coal from off the altar. But he was enabled to discipline himself into submission, wondering to what use his Master might design to put the last years of his life.

It was at this very time that the proprietors of the SUNDAY MAGAZINE communicated with him on the subject of their projected journal, and offered him the post of editor. The proposal was a somewhat startling one, and at first he shrunk from it. He was unfamiliar with the duties of editorship, and not in much strength to grapple with them. But when he learned that all possible aid would be given him in the details of editorship, and that many like-minded men were willing to co-operate with him in the undertaking, he accepted the offer. Having been one of those who, to a certain extent—a limited extent—aided him from the beginning, I gladly embrace the opportunity of bearing testimony to the singular generosity and confidence with which he treated me. In the general management of the Magazine there were two features of his character which were always apparent—his manifold philanthropy and his catholic spirit. It was a delight to him to see on the cover of the Magazine the names of the good men of so many denominations,—a symbol, as it were, of that united church of the future to which he looked forward so ardently. His own papers, like everything he said and did, were thoroughly based on evangelical doctrine, though generally with more in them of the human and the catholic than in most evangelical writings. It may interest our readers to know that his last piece of work was to prepare for the

press a paper, "The Lepers' Lesson," which will appear in the next number of this Magazine. During his last days he selected from his manuscripts a number of sermons designed for publication in these pages.

The last letter I received from him expressed his satisfaction that some difficulties in the way of my continuing to help him had been removed. We shall want the invaluable benefit of his counsel, his influence, his prayers, and of that singularly cheering spirit that, by a kind of magic spell, made one forgetful alike of labours and anxieties. But in other respects the magazine will be conducted as it has been during the last seven months. And in the sermons which he selected for its pages at St. Leonard's, with his dying hand, he, being dead, will yet speak to its readers. It may be mentioned that, taking a hint from the recent book of Sir Henry Holland, he had been engaged for some time in preparing an autobiography, which he had brought down to 1843. This will be published, along with a continuation of his life by two of his sons, to whom he bequeathed the charge of his manuscripts.

Our space is nearly exhausted, and what remains must be given to his last days. For a year his health had been very much broken; and in October he had an attack which had all the appearance of proving fatal. Contrary to expectation, he rallied, though he never gained such strength as to give a fair assurance of recovery. Our readers know of his journey to St. Leonard's, in the hope of prolonging his days, and the fatal attack which almost immediately ensued. The week between the 16th and 24th February was one of great suffering and great struggle. With literal truth he might have said, "I die daily." It was a fight all the week, between a strong frame and a strong disease. He never murmured, but he felt the struggle intensely. At an earlier period of his illness he referred with something like envy to the death of his martyr-kinsman, James Guthrie, and said how much more desirable it would be to have life ended by a single blow than by an almost endless succession of pains and struggles. Later, he said that he had wished for a translation like that of Chalmers or that of Andrew Thomson; but it appeared that it had been ordered otherwise. On his death-bed the expressions of affection for his family and friends, and of his trust and hope in the Saviour were exceedingly touching and beautiful. That striking poetical faculty which had given

such beauty to his oratory in life, lent its charm to some of his sayings in death. Calling for a mirror that he might look whether his features showed any sign of the approaching change, he said he was like a sailor going aloft to look out for signs of land. One day, his sight being somewhat confused, he said it was like the land-birds lighting on the mast that pre-sage to the weary mariner the nearness of the desired haven. Referring to the kindness of a Highland girl who had nursed him in his sickness, he said, "Affection is very sweet; and it is all one from whatever quarter it comes—whether from this Highland lassie or from a peeress—just as to a thirsty man cold water is equally grateful from a spring on the hillside or from a richly ornamented fountain." "Death," he said on another occasion, "is mining away here, slowly but surely, in the dark." His affection could not be suppressed, even in the lowest stage of exhaustion. To most persons when dying a child in the room would be somewhat of a trouble; but the sight of a little grandchild of four years was to him full of interest. "Put her up," he said the moment he saw her; and when, having been lifted up to the bed, she crept up to him and kissed him, he nodded to her and whispered, "My bonnie lamb." During his illness he was often soothed by hymn and psalm-singing, and of none was he more fond than children's hymns. "Give me a bairns' hymn," he would say to his children, and when they sung "Jesus, tender Shepherd, hear me," or "There is a happy land," his spirit was refreshed. He often thanked God that he had not left his preparation to a dying hour,

and spoke of the unutterable folly of those who do so. To those absent he sent loving messages, saying to one of them, "Stand up for Christ in all circumstances." The peace and confidence of his deathbed completed and crowned that testimony to the saving power of Jesus, which in his words and his works alike had been borne by his life. At length early on the morning of Monday the 24th February, the long-desired haven came in sight. The Highland servant who supported him in her arms, observed the signal. "The wrinkles," she said, "are smoothing away." At twenty minutes past two the breathing ceased. He entered the house not made with hands.

The funeral in Edinburgh, in the classic ground of the Grange Cemetery, amid a concourse of some thirty thousand spectators, was a marvellous testimony of the regard in which he was held.

Dr. Guthrie, when he went to Arbirlot, married Anne, daughter of the Rev. James Burns of Brechin, the cousin of William Burns the missionary, and kinswoman of many other well-known ministers. We are restrained by the wish not to be obtrusive; but many know well what a blessing she was to her husband and children; with what completeness of devotion she gave herself to care for him, especially when sickness had set its mark on him; and what a rich reward she enjoyed—unspeakably precious to think of, even in her bereavement—in the warm love of her husband, and the sight of a large and almost unbroken family of ten, all full of the desire to do honour to their father's name, and to walk in his steps.

W. G. BLAIKIE.

SONNET—DR. GUTHRIE'S FUNERAL.

THE city weeps: with slow and solemn show
 The dark-plumed pomp sails through the crowded way,
 And walls and roofs are topped with thick display
 Of waiting eyes that watch the wending woe.
 What man was here, to whose last fateful march
 The marshalled throng its long-drawn convoy brings,
 Like some great conqueror's, when victory swings
 Her vans, o'er flower-spread path, and wreathèd arch?
 No conqueror's kind was here, nor conqueror's kin,
 But a strong-breasted, fervid-hearted man,
 Who from dark dens redeemed, and haunts of sin,
 The city waifs, the loose unfathered clan,
 With prouder triumph than when wondering Rome
 Went forth, all eyes, to bring great Cæsar home.

JOHN STUART BLACKIE.

CROOKED PLACES:

A Story of Struggles and Hopes.

BY EDWARD GARRETT, AUTHOR OF "OCCUPATIONS OF A RETIRED LIFE," ETC.

PART III.—MILLCENT'S ROMANCE, AND WHAT IT WAS MADE OF.

CHAPTER VII.—DARKNESS AND DAWN.



DAVID
M A X-
W E L L
kneeled
by the
side of
his bed
with the
horrible
local
news-
paper
in his
hand.
He was
guided
by the
same in-
stincts
which
led the
old Ju-

dean monarch up to the Temple of the Lord to spread out Rabshakeh's letter before the mercy-seat. There is a bitterness which cannot be uttered even in a prayer. We can only show it to God.

There he kneeled, nameless, and with a new shadow resting even on the name that he bore from custom. There lay the local *Mercury*, with its cruel readiness to make capital out of a shameful story about the dead, which could serve no purpose, except to pain the survivors. There could be no mistake as to who was referred to in its paragraph, though dashes were liberally employed, and X, Y, and Z, the only initials used. The phrases of "recently deceased medical man," "questionable popularity," "peculiar domestic arrangements," gave it an individuality which nobody who knew anything about Blenheim House could fail to recognise. Nor could David dare to doubt the particular instance of sin—sin, revolting and futile—which the newspaper reported. The revelation shed a flood of light over Phoebe's mystifications,—and over the friendly doctor's disinclination to any professional connection with himself.

II. N.S.

We must all look at trouble somewhere. The only question is, where? Shall it be in the glare of our own passions? Or in the cold hard light of the world's opinion? Or in the softened glory of God's presence? Or in the last light does not hide any hard facts which the others could reveal. It does not even veil their ugliness. Hideous things look more hideous in the sunshine than in gaslight or candlelight. But the sunshine has a promise in it. It says, "I will dry up this stagnant pool." "I will clothe this yawning chasm with sweet flowers and soft mosses." "I will bring beauty out of burning: I will bring life out of death." So it is with the glory of God's presence.

As David kneeled there, sin and sorrow and shame, empty present and darkened future, passed before him, and showed themselves exactly what they were. God's proper gifts are sight, not blindness, memory, not forgetfulness, clear comprehension, not dull credulity. Because David drew near to God, he only saw more plainly all the happiness that might have been, and all the misery that was, and must be. For God himself knows, better than any of us, what our lives have lost. And what a comfort it is to know that He knows!

Kneeling there, too, he remembered the text which lay hidden in the secret drawer of the old bureau, "Delight thyself in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desire of thy heart."

And for a moment a mist closed about his soul.

Only for a moment. And then it cleared gradually. You and I, reader, who perhaps have but one sorrow in a life of happiness, may be left to walk in that mist for years, having only faith and not sight, concerning the brightness above it. God leaves us there, to let us learn that there is something in every sorrow, which no other mere blessing can heal.

But those who have no comfort, God comforts utterly. "When father and mother forsake us, then the Lord taketh us up."

David suddenly felt like one who stands on a mountain overlooking a fierce struggle in a dark valley below. Sin, and sorrow, and shame, empty present and darkened

future were there, but they lay below him. There were also beautiful things among them, love and joy, and domestic comfort and worldly prosperity, but they, too, lay below him. They were not the very life of the soul. It might have them all, and yet be dumb and dead in misery. The very life of the soul was something above all these. They might come up to it. It could not go down to them. They could not live well nor long without it. It had them all, and more too, in God himself.

And David felt that as he had gone up himself, he had carried God's promise with him. "Delight thyself in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desires of thy heart." The true desire of his heart now, and henceforward, would be something between God and himself,—something that no earthly chance or change could touch. They might go and come over it, like clouds floating across a mountain, but it would remain the same for ever.

Now, he knew what the Psalmist meant when he said, "Those that trust in thee, Lord, thou shalt hide in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man: thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues."

Oh, it is in the paths of special sorrow and shame, that the bleeding footprints of the Saviour show the plainest, and we can best plant our own steps therein. And it seemed to David as if he heard a brotherly voice—

"I bore all this and far worse for thee: canst thou not bear this for me? No, thou canst not without me, but I will be with thee, to make thy bearing easy. My cross was made of this cross of thine, and of every other cross that has ever fallen to any man. And there was none to help me to bear mine, for when they compelled Simon of Cyrene, he could only take it from my back, not from my heart. But I will be with thee to bear both thee and thy cross."

That is how God deals with his foundlings; that is how He deals with all of us, if we only break through all barriers of earthly comforts and throw ourselves straight upon his heart. And oh, what tender mercy and loving-kindness there is in such dealing with his foundlings! For unless He was kind to them first, they would repel other kindness. To their sore hearts sympathy would come like a blow, and help like an insult. But He says, "You see I can comfort you, because I am your Father and your Brother, and because these are your brothers too, it is well for them if they can give comfort, and

well for you if you can take it from them. All the good things of my royal table are thine already, but let thy brothers hand them to thee. Take them so, gladly and thankfully and patiently. If thy brethren's touch seem sometimes rough, bethink thee it may rather be thy great weakness."

Still kneeling there, with the storm within him hushed, and a great calm in his heart and eyes, David heard Phoebe beginning to go to and fro below, and to make an over-ostentatious rattling of dishes. He would fain have stayed where he was a little longer. He needed no food but the spiritual refreshment he was enjoying. But he thought that he had left Phoebe rather abruptly, and that she would be worrying about him, and that it was unkind to waste her housewifely labours by letting the dinner cool untasted. So he rose; he folded up the newspaper and put it away. He would not burn it, that seemed like helpless spite against an enemy he could not destroy. And then he went down-stairs. He had a curious feeling as if he had parted from somebody—one of those partings where a sacred solemnity enwraps the sorrow as with a robe of consecration. And it was so. He had parted from self. He had given it wholly to God.

Though Phoebe saw he was pale, she saw also that he was calm and cheerful. In a far different sense to what she meant, "he had on his front."

"There's a letter just come for you," she said. "A boy brought it. It's on the parlour table. I don't know who it's from."

David felt the half-recoil of a recently wounded heart, but was reassured in a moment. Whatever happened, all was in God's hands.

The handwriting was quite strange to him, which was no wonder, for it was Christian Harvey's. George had been intending to obey her counsel, and visit Blenheim House that very morning, but had awoke with a severe cold, which would probably confine him at home for some days. In the course of the morning he and Christian had seen the ugly paragraph in the *Hackney Mercury*, and had conferred together thereon. Visiting David being out of the question, Christian proposed that they should invite him.

"It is a breach of all etiquette," George had said.

"My dear," said Christian, laughing, "let etiquette, as the school-books say of temper, be your servant and not your master. Would you stand on this etiquette if David Maxwell were your brother?"

"But then he would be sure to understand and not to take offence," George answered.

"I think that now," pleaded his wife, "I see your argument, and it would be right in many cases. But I do believe from all I heard of David Maxwell whilst I lived in uncle Devon's vicarage, and from all I have noticed of him since, that he is a true Christian, and quite ready to believe the same of other people, if he can only find the least reason. Therefore he will not suspect me of telling a lie, when I write the truth, that you are unable to leave the house, and he will credit us with the kindly intention of drawing him a little out of his loneliness. I feel sure he will, George, because if he declined the invitation, I feel that I myself shall believe the excuse he gives, and shall not fancy that he has taken a tiff."

"Is that womanly logic?" George asked playfully. "Whether it is or not, there is something in it, Chrissy. So take your own way, and write the note yourself, for you have a wonderful knack of conveying your own kind heart between the lines of the commonest compliment. You have a genius for writing notes, Chrissy."

"I do wonder whether he will come," George remarked, presently, as his wife sat down to her desk.

"I am sure he will," she said.

There was an under-note of meaning in her voice which made George look up, and observe—

"Why, you inconsistent woman! You said just now, that you would quite believe any reason he gave for staying away."

"So I should," said Christian oracularly; "for it would be a very good reason that would keep him away from us."

"Why from us particularly, in the name of wonder?" George asked.

"Because you are Millicent Harvey's brother," his wife answered succinctly, and looked at her husband, who looked back at her. Their own courting days were not so very long past; and George Harvey understood at once.

Somehow he exclaimed, "Poor fellow!" It was not in reference to David's circumstances; for George Harvey did not know very much about them. The details that Milly had heard from Fergus Laurie she had kept to herself. George quite supposed that David would be thrown chiefly on his own resources; but it never struck him that the revelation of that day's *Mercury* would be almost fatal to his medical pursuits, and so set him back once more at the very begin-

ning of life. But even so, one with George Harvey's past was not very likely to despair of anybody's future. Still, George's first exclamation was, "Poor fellow!" Then he asked, "How do you know about it, wife?"

"By my wisdom," she replied, with a smile that was half sad. "I can't help knowing."

"And does my Chrissy think she will try her skill at a little match-making?" George asked rather gravely.

"No," said Christian quickly, looking up from her letter: "in this particular instance, I almost wish I did. Milly does not care for David Maxwell."

"Not now," said George, rather archly; "but these things grow. I don't think it is doing you justice to say that I fell in love with you the first evening we met at the vicarage. But I may admit that I was deeply impressed. Yet of course you did not care in the least for me till a long time afterwards."

Christian's colour deepened, and she gave just the least little pout. "That has nothing to do with the present instance, sir," she said loftily. "For at any rate I cared for nobody else."

"That implies that Milly does," said George.

His wife gave him another quick look. "I know it," she answered.

"Who is it?" George asked with keen, brotherly interest.

"I shall not tell," replied his wife, laughing.

"Secrets!" said George. "Chrissy, I am ashamed of you. You should hear nothing that you cannot tell your husband."

"I have heard nothing, and seen nothing, except what your majesty's self has also seen and heard," Christian replied. "Yet I know, notwithstanding. I can feel when there's love in the air, just as I can when there's thunder! But I never frighten people by prophesying storms, only just get them to take their waterproofs as a precaution against a possible shower! And so, I just watch the poor things who are getting into love, and help them where I can, without frightening them by telling them what a terrible bit of their life they are coming to!"

"Do you mean to say you know before they know themselves?" George asked.

"Oh, dear, yes—long before," said Christian. "The parties concerned always seem the very last to find it out. Dear Milly does not know in the least!"

"If I may ask so much," George went on, "I should like to inquire if the mysterious somebody is also in love?"

"Well, yes, in his own way," Christian admitted, half reluctantly.

"That is all you can say for him," said George; "and do you think he knows of Milly's liking?"

Christian paused half a moment. "A great deal better than she does herself," she said energetically.

"It is clear to me that if you had your own way, you would depose this favourite and substitute David Maxwell," observed George.

"Yes, I should," said Christian. "But then I have no right even to wish for my own way!"

"You must find it wonderfully interesting to be in secret sympathy with all these matters, Chrissy," George remarked.

Christian shook her head thoughtfully. "It is and it isn't," she answered. "It may be always interesting, but sometimes it is sad too. It is pleasant enough when, in all apparent innocence, one can contrive to convey a little counsel or comfort. But it is dreadfully painful when one daren't say what one knows, and yet see help is needed that can't be given without doing so. But one can always pray, George, and that is really the safest interference in love affairs, at any rate, till all is over, and people want cheering or keeping up to their own best selves."

"I suppose my mother felt that," said George, "for though I know what a deep interest she must have taken in our marriages, it was wonderful how she never gave any advice. In my sister Hatty's love affair, before she married Webber, Milly and I were very ready with our dogmas, but mother was only especially silent and sympathetic, till, as you say, it was all over, by Hatty's own act, and then she made no secret of her approbation."

"Ah!" said Christian, "I have always admired Hatty so much for the courage with which she did what she felt was the right and just thing both for herself and her lover. For it takes a great deal of courage to do it, George. The world does not help one. It either believes that the heroine of a broken match was 'jilted,' or it insinuates that if it be possible the breaking was her own act, then she is no true woman, but a false and fickle coquette. As if the mistake of a foolish engagement could be cured by carrying it on to a foolish marriage! Why, when the love is gone, it is the very kindest thing left to do, to remove the vow which is not yet irrevocable."

"I believe it is," said George thought-

fully. "I remember that Hatty's final refusal seemed to stir up that young Westbrook into a new manliness. I should not have thought it was in him to write such a sensible, sorrowful letter as he wrote to Hatty before he went away. I wonder what has become of him?"

"And now," observed Christian, as she sealed up her letter, "as we are to have a visitor to supper, it is time that I retired to the kitchen to superintend the pudding."

This therefore was the letter which half-an-hour after, David stood reading in his dreary parlour:—

"DEAR MR. MAXWELL,—My husband has been intending to call on you for some days, but delayed, fearing lest he should intrude too soon. Just as he had resolved to procrastinate no more, he finds himself confined to the house by a severe cold. Under these circumstances, we take the freedom of asking if you will give up this evening to us here? We shall be quite alone, and supper will be ready at nine. We both trust you will excuse the great informality of this invitation, and with the assurance of our deepest sympathy,

"I remain, yours faithfully,

"CHRISTIAN HARVEY."

"Phoebe," said David, as she came in to remove the dinner dishes, "I shall be out this evening. I am invited to Mr. George Harvey's."

"I'm glad to hear on't, Mr. David," returned Phoebe sincerely. "Dearie me," she added to herself, as she went down the passage, "he isn't invited out so often but that it's real wonderful it should be this evening. Those Harveys 'll have seen the *Mercury*. Well, one can do with an enemy, if one's friends closes round 'em. Them Harveys are the right sort of people."

CHAPTER VIII.—OTHER FOLK'S TROUBLES.

THERE was nothing special to relate about David's visit to Mr. and Mrs. George Harvey. Indeed, its charm lay in the absence of anything special. It was an evening "at home," in the true sense of the word. There were just two candles lighted, as there would be when George and Christian were alone. And though Christian sat unemployed during the first hour's conversation, she had a little work-basket at hand directly George brought forward the chess-board. Then, though the supper-table was graced with a pudding, all of its arrangements were of that easy, simple

sort which assure a guest that he is neither troublesome nor expensive. It is fitting to make elaborate festival in honour of the friend who can be expected but seldom: the best compliment to the near neighbour who may become the familiar visitor, is to admit him at once to the private style of home. Then the little servant was summoned to family prayer and dismissed to bed, and David felt that the evening which had been such a pleasure to himself had been no hindrance or burden to anybody else.

There was not much "clever" talk. Both George and Christian knew of better mental exercise than metaphysical gymnastics. They preferred to think less about thinking than about the common world around them, and found that upon the whole, this training gave them an immense advantage in the metaphysical gymnasium, whenever they chose to trifle there awhile, just as athletes are made by climbing genuine mountains, not by trudging useless tread-mills. Neither of them were at all averse to such "rounds" as they had taken with Fergus and Milly at the Lauries' tea-party, but they and their opponents set a far different value on them. With George and Christian they were scarcely a means to an end; just a pause in the business of life, to count up the items. With Milly, they were a delight, a holiday, something to which she felt as a child feels to household work while it is still "play," before it has set duties of dusting rooms and bed-making. With Fergus, they were the end. To have grand ideas and to associate with those who had, and to live a life that might be filled with such an atmosphere, was the form into which his ambitions were gradually shaping themselves. He never reflected that even a marble palace, with all its beauty, is not a desirable residence, unless its foundations are sound and right!

The group in George Harvey's parlour talked about very much the same subjects as were probably being discussed in the labourers' cottages just behind their house. They talked of the good works that were going forward in the parish, of the recent proceedings in parliament, of chess tactics, of the quality of the muslin that Christian was embroidering. But it was the talk of cultivated people. A pedant cannot hide his vulgarity in his learning, and thought and refinement will come forward even in chat about dusters and darning-needles, just as a beautiful woman remains beautiful in the homeliest garments.

Even with the shadow of death new upon him, and the still more recent horror of the weekly paper, David was far less silent than he had been at the Lauries. He quite wondered at himself. But the mute of one circle is frequently the wit of another, and the characters that we get are often the reflection of those who give them!

But after they had read the evening lesson, and sung Ken's beautiful Evening Hymn, and kneeled together round the family altar, and the servant was gone, and the curious hush of a completed day closed over the little household, a kind of silence fell upon the three, in which they seemed to draw nearer to each other than in the conversation which had gone before. They spoke in low voices of the chapter which had just been read, and then they sat and gazed into the fire. And they all knew what was in each other's thoughts, and David felt a comfort in the knowledge. It was like the grasp of a friendly hand on a dark and dangerous road. And when he rose to go, he could not depart without letting them see the gratitude with which his heart was overflowing.

"It was so good of you,"—it was Christian he addressed (perhaps it was easier to look into her face, because her eyes were not so like Milly's, as George's were),—"It was so good of you to invite me here to-night. I know why you did it, Mrs. Harvey."

"It was so good of you to come!" Christian answered, with straightforward kindness. "And it has been such a pleasure to us to have you! And I don't think you will be any the worse for it."

David turned away for a moment to regain his voice. George laid his hand kindly on his shoulder. "Come in and see us as often as you can," he said. "I think I shall like to talk over old times with you. I can't do that with many new acquaintances, and I can't make friends without it."

And David was only able to grasp their hands, and rush out into the night. He had said in his heart that morning, "God, though thou slay me, yet will I trust in thee:" and this was God's slaying.

When he regained Blenheim House, he found somebody waiting for him.

"Mr. Laurie's been sitting here a long while," Phœbe said. "I told him I did not think you'd be very late, and so he said he'd stay. No, Master David, he's not in the surgery. He went towards the dining-room, and I thought he might as well, so I stuck a bit of fire in the grate, and giv him the newspaper to amuse hisself with."

Fergus was seated in the easy-chair, with his feet on the fender. It might be but the effect of the great dingy room, or the big black chair, but somehow he looked particularly small and delicate. He jumped up, and responded rather heartily to David's shake of the hand. It was not a habit of his, and David thought the extra warmth was a special sign of friendly sympathy. This young man was David's nearest friend, and David's heart felt so warm and open that he could lay candid claim on his fellow-feeling.

"I suppose you've seen the *Mercury* to-day, Fergus?" he said. It was a relic and proof of their old boyish intimacy that they always called each other by their Christian names.

"Yes; no. I never read the *Mercury*—it is not worth the trouble. Oh, I know what you mean, though. I did not see it. But Robina told me. It won't matter, David. Don't let it hurt you, and then it won't."

It was all true; and now that far other treatment had warmed and opened David's heart, he could accept its truth, and feel the better for it, just as the carefully nursed convalescent grows strong enough to bear and benefit in a strong sea-breeze.

It braced him to say frankly, "But I think it will make it hard for me to be a doctor. I must try something else."

"Well," said Fergus, almost impatiently, "you've only got yourself to take care of, and I don't pity any man who can't do that."

"No," David answered, and passing from his own difficulties, went on; "and so you are going to set up for yourself, Fergus? Miss Harvey let me into the secret, because she thought I would be sure to know it. She told me to tell you this."

"She has told me all about it herself," said Fergus. "I called upon her this evening, before I came here."

And he had been there yesterday too, David knew. Two consecutive evenings—well, well!

"Yes," Fergus observed, "I am determined to make a plunge for myself. I can't go on any more in the old humdrum, stupid way. I've been out of my element for a long time. I had no scope, and I must have some."

"I don't doubt you'll get it, Fergus," said David; "I think you will do admirably. You're so clever and persevering."

"If I only had the start!" Fergus ejaculated, almost bitterly; "but it is awfully hard to be kept down in slavery for want of a little paltry money. You see I've nothing of my own to turn over, David. I've never been able to

save anything. I might, if I had not had duties to perform toward others."

David kept silence, almost wishing for the first time that his father had left him some small legacy, which he might put into Fergus's hands, the loan to be regarded as a small recognition of the profit and pleasure he had derived from Fergus's friendship.

"I could do a great deal with so little," Fergus proceeded, "for the business is one where most of the profits are so quick that one may safely take credit for everything but a very small outlay."

"You think you could get credit if you fairly stated your case?" said David. "I suppose the dealers are kindly inclined to give a young beginner a start."

"Kindly!" echoed Fergus, with scorn: "they know it's the best thing they can do. It is for their own interest. They secure a customer who perhaps would not come to them if he had his money in his hand at the time. It is everybody's interest to serve a beginner, because it is the only chance of binding him to themselves. By-and-by his good-will is not to be bought at any price. But of course, it is, as you say, very kind of them."

"Have you made any arrangements with anybody yet?" David asked, being sincerely interested.

"I can't ask those who have dealings with the old firm," Fergus answered. "It would be no use, they would not do it."

"Why not?" David inquired.

"Because they would think I was planning an opposition. Of course, it is not. I shall do good to myself without harming the old firm. I believe in competition. I have a right to sell a little cheaper than them, if I choose to work harder for smaller profits."

"I suppose so—yes," David assented, with a voice more dubious than his words.

"Still, as I say, there might be an adverse feeling in that quarter," Fergus went on, "and therefore I would rather begin on a new field altogether. Who do you think I have been talking it over with to-day, David?"

David would not attempt to guess.

"With Webber, the stationer, Millicent Harvey's brother-in-law," Fergus stated with a suppressed sense of triumph. "You see some of his dealers deal also in the class of paper which I require—paper for decorative purposes—it is that branch of our business that I shall keep to chiefly—at any rate, at first. I went to him and explained what I thought of doing, and how I was situated, and asked if he would mind speaking for me

to the dealers. I put it in this way: I asked him if he would mind trusting me a little himself, and he said no. Then I said would he just mention me to the dealers, and say as much for me to them. And he said that was a small thing to do to serve an industrious young man, and he was only sorry that he could not be sure it would have more influence. But I know Webber has weight. He is not a large customer, but he pays as he goes. He might make a splendid thing even of that little business of his if he had more spirit, and launched out a little. But Webber has settled down in a rut, and just jogs on. Yet he's a good fellow in his way. He quite took to me. I daresay he felt I might bring a little new blood into his own commercial transactions. He asked me to dine with them. So I did."

"Then you saw Mrs. Webber?" David asked.

Fergus gave one of his expressive sounds of dislike. He had a whole vocabulary of these.

"There's a narrow, commonplace woman for you," he said. "I don't believe she thinks of anything but her needlework and cookery. And she's so afraid of losing the penny she has, that I don't believe she'd open her hand to grasp a diamond that was held towards her. I know she was worrying herself in wonder over what business was passing between Webber and me. That's the kind of woman to keep a man down, David."

"If she is what you describe her, she must be very different to her sister," said David, who had never met Hatty Webber.

"So she is: indeed not a pleasant woman to have in one's family at all, in my opinion. I don't think she likes me. I fancy Webber does. Well, if he serves me, perhaps he'll find the benefit does not end there."

There was a pause. Then David observed—

"So I understand Miss Millicent is engaged to work for you."

"Yes. It will be better for her. They don't treat her in the right spirit, and she can't find it pleasant to work for them. In fact, she has powers above the work which they have for her. You know, David, I have a great ideal of business life, and it has been growing upon me very much lately. I think a firm and all its assistants should work together harmoniously—each for each other, as well as for himself. Does it not only seem right, David, that each man in a concern, down to the porter, should be so respected for his share in it, that he should be drawn

up from feeling that his sole interest therein is how much wages he can get for how little work?"

"Certainly, that is most desirable," said David, "that is the teaching of the gospel itself—the abolition of mere eye-service, the working as 'unto God and not unto man.'"

"But how is it to be done?" Fergus went on. "While we are dealing with 'human nature,' we must appeal to ordinary human instincts, not to extraordinary spiritual aspirations. To give an instance: I happened to hint to Miss Millicent, that I should like her to do her very best, because so much would depend upon the beauty and originality of the first designs issued by a new house. And under that stimulant, doubtless, she really has excelled herself! That is what I mean. I think every one should have an actuality set before him, beyond his mere cash receipt."

"But every man has that already," said David. "Because it is his duty to God and man to do his best."

Fergus gave an impatient gesture.

"Granted," he answered; "but may not duty be taught by making it interest as well? If a man cannot climb a hill by his unaided strength, is it a sin to give him a stick to help him up? That is what I purpose to do. To make the interest of all whom I employ identical with my own, so that my workers will not be getting their ordinary wages the week before I am bankrupt, and getting no more than their ordinary wages when I become a millionaire. To give each an interest in our prosperity and adversity proportionate to his position therein, and to recognise other duties between us than the hard coarse tie of so much work done so much money paid."

"It is a grand idea," said David. "It is something like Robert Owen's theories. And yet they did not work well."

"I have read his works," Fergus answered, "and I think I can account for his failures. He carried them outside the beaten track, and put them in practice in ways that can only be exceptional. My scheme would be to keep them in the beaten track, and apply them to necessary conditions of life. Not to found communities, sure to attract the dreaming and unsettled. But to start a practical business, in no outward respect to differ from its neighbours on either hand."

"It struck me," said David, "that Mr. Owen had tried to get Christianity without Christ."

"Well," said Fergus, unheeding this re-

mark, "to this dream I devote my life. Not to money-making, though if its fulfilment brings money, well and good. I think I know how to use it. Do you know, David, it is far harder to be kept from this dream of mine for want of a little money, than it would be if it was purely an ambition for myself!"

"I can believe it, Fergus," said David, quite tenderly, with his hand on his friend's shoulder. We can often sympathize with feelings presented to us by another, though they would never have entered our own hearts, whether because above or below them. David himself would have trusted God to find capital for His own work; nay, would have doubted his own call to it, till God gave a leading by clearing the way. Certainly, any undue longing of his own, David would have checked as the sign of a self-seeking, at variance with God's will. But in Fergus, it looked like nothing but the ardent zeal of impatient benevolence.

"There will be a way found for you, Fergus," he said gently, with a reverend reticence.

"Yes, I don't doubt it; as fast as one is disappointed in one chance, another rises, if one keeps one's eyes open," said Fergus. He had almost thought that David himself, in the dismemberment of his home, might have a little money at his own disposal. But it seemed not so. For Fergus felt sure David would have volunteered it if he had. "Why should he not?" Fergus would have argued. "It would be sure to be a good investment, and, besides, people should risk something for friendship."

So Fergus went home, to think out new schemes. And David went to bed. And that night prayer with him meant thanksgiving for God's goodness to himself and petition for help for "his dear friend struggling with difficulties."

CHAPTER IX.—A NEW FIRM.

THE next day, the dead surgeon's next kinsman came to Blenheim House.

He sat closeted in the surgery with David for more than two hours, while Phœbe went about her kitchen, dumbly agitated, hoping that nothing was happening to "worrit" her darling further.

This country cousin, a Maxwell, only comes into this history at this point. But his character colours it, as any character may colour whole histories that it touches but once.

He was a just man, who sought to give everybody full measure, and then a little

over, in case there was any mistake in the pressing down. He kept a mill and a great corn-chandler's shop, and most of the poor people in his native town dealt with him, because he served them more liberally than anybody else. But he never gave any alms.

He had not seen Mr. Maxwell more than once or twice, and had as little regard as respect for him. He was not a rich man, though well-to-do, and most of his property was of that business-like kind which would be sure to suffer in transmission to his family of five daughters. It was a pleasant prospect to contemplate funded property worth already nearly three hundred a-year, and which could be set wholly aside to accumulate for his girls. It was none the less pleasant for being a great surprise, for though he was fully aware of the unhappy circumstances of Mr. Maxwell's household, he had always concluded that there would be a will to bestow the rights which the law withheld. Had there been any such will, he would not have looked too closely into it, nor raised any point that the lawyers could pass over. But as there was none, as his uncle had not thought fit to take the trouble of protecting those whom he might have felt their kindred were likely to regard as natural enemies, this kinsman felt quite ready to have his rights, and determined to be sure that he had them all. He would himself see the certificate of the surgeon's tardy marriage, and being forced to accept it, did so with a grunt, and felt as if Mrs. Maxwell had wronged himself, and the woman that had gone before her, and that woman's child. Very likely his note to David had been kinder for that feeling. We are the friends of those who have a common enemy.

"Your father must have known that he had put that woman in a position to benefit by his property," he said, "and therefore it becomes doubly shameful that he made no provision for you."

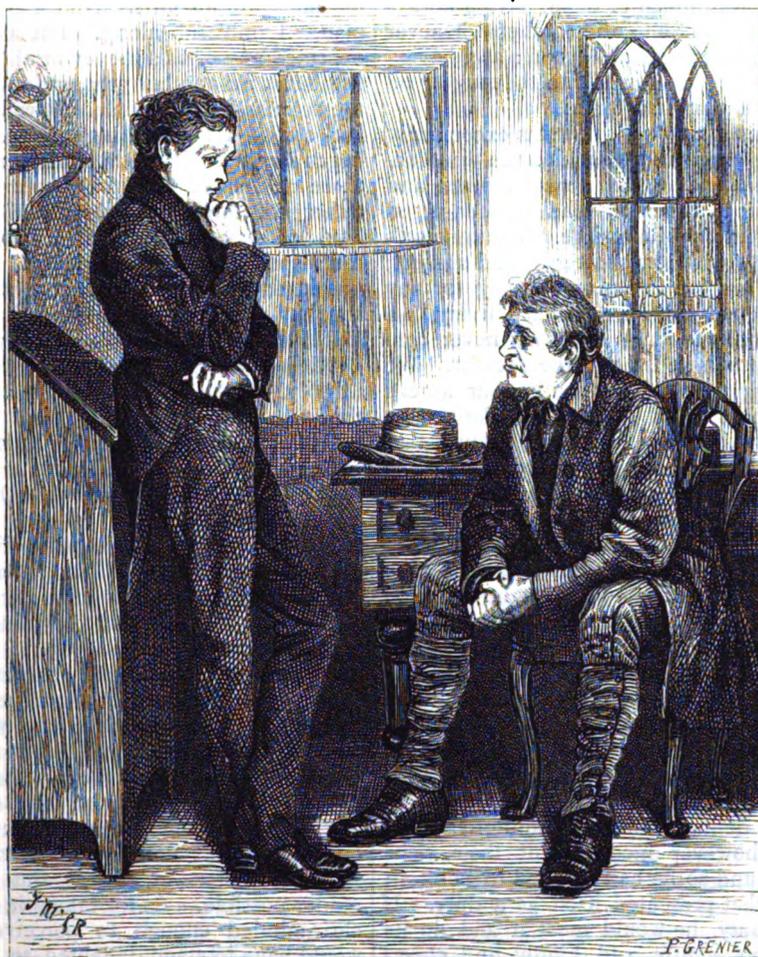
"It does not signify," David answered quietly. "I am now in no worse position than many lawfully-born children whose parents have no money to leave them."

"No, I know you are not," said the other; "but it seems so hard that you should be outside the law, and she within it, though she has no more moral right. More moral right! A thousand times less! I must speak plainly to you, young man. There is no help for it. And you must set the pain at the door of those who do the deeds, not at theirs who have to name them afterwards. You must know yourself that it was very bitter for

all our people when your mother went astray with the surgeon. But there was a different feeling about her and this other woman. She was a poor young thing, five years younger than he was. And her friends, though they were poor, were honest people, and were just as angry and pained as we were, and were ready to move heaven and earth to get her to leave such a man and such a way of life.

And then she soon died—dwindled away, as we heard. And at the very last she got a man to take her in his cart twenty miles across country to some of her own people. We heard that she could not speak when she got there—but I daresay you know all the story well.”

“No, I do not,” David answered sadly. “I have never heard a word about my mother.”



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“Is it really so? Well, we heard about her in the different ways that people do hear. That was all we heard; but her going back, and dying as it were on the very threshold of decent folk that she knew would have nought to do with her unless she was repentant, made us have gentler thoughts of her, don't you see—the blame dropped in two, as it were, and half of it turned to pity. But this

other woman was of quite another sort. She was older than the surgeon to begin with—three years older. And she knew all about his family and the property he had. And she went into her bad ways, in a business fashion, with her eyes wide open. Don't talk to me of 'seduction' when the man is three years the younger and has money! And her own family never thought any shame

of her, but said that if she kept faithful to him it was marriage in the sight of God. Faithful to his money! I'd have liked to see the faithfulness of such a woman if she'd had a chance of bettering herself! And they visited her, and came back to our town, taking airs about the fine place their sister lived in! I suppose you've seen them here, sir."

"Yes," David said, not adding that he had never seen much of them, having always been hustled off into the kitchen whenever they came, during his childhood; and having voluntarily betaken himself to the surgery on such occasions in later times.

"I can assure you all this was exceedingly bitter to our family," the kinsman went on. "I know that your father's own mother, and his sister too, my poor dead mother, urged on the ceremony of marriage. The surgeon's way of life gave them great grief and anxiety, and they felt it was no use hoping for any improvement while he continued living in a course of direct sin. But they never contemplated such an issue as the present. We always supposed that a man in your father's circumstances would be sure to make a very explicit will. It seems awfully unjust, that by a mere legal superiority, that woman gets her full rights while you have nothing!"

"I have a right to nothing," said David, "therefore I am not the loser by her gain."

The miller shook his head. All his speech was but the preamble to a thought that had been in his mind all the way up to London. It had kept him awake two or three nights, and had made him deny his wife when she had suggested the purchase of two or three mild luxuries as a fitting mark of their accession to property. It was a thought which he had not welcomed. He had only not thrust it away or silenced it. He was a man who had never denied himself to landlord or tax-gatherer, however inconvenient their visits might be, and so he had learned to confront any idea that presented itself as a duty. If it was a duty, he would meet it and do its behests, not gently and kindly and cheerfully, as we drop our Sabbath offerings in the Holy House, but fully and painfully, as we pay a bill, even when we think it overcharged. This thought at last framed itself reluctantly into words.

"I must do something for you myself, David Maxwell," he said.

And then he went on, more briskly, putting out his ideas just as they lay in his mind, with that strange lack of connection common to people not given to utter thought,

especially thought made half of feeling:—"I've said so to myself ever since I found that though I can take your share, I can't touch that woman's. I'm sure you'll be a credit to us to what you might have been, my lad. You've got your grandmother Maxwell's face, and she was as much a saint as any woman can be. I don't know who your father took after, but not after her. You're the most of grandson she has left behind her, for mine are all girls. And I'm not a rich man. I only rub along. But as we never expected any of this money at all, we can do without it for another year, and give you over the three hundred pounds. It will give you a fair start. I'd only five hundred when I began life myself, for though my mother had share and share alike with your father, my father got through nearly all of it. It's a kind of way in the world. Some people can't spend money fast enough, and others find it terribly hard to get. I've often worried over my poor girls. But that's all right now; and they won't be poorer for giving you a help."

"It is so very good of you!" David answered warmly. "But ought I to take it? Let me think."

"Of course you ought to take it," said the miller; and having stoutly made the offer, began to feel lurking wishes that David would resolutely put it aside.

David would have done so directly, but that it seemed to him that this might be a godsend, given by his hand to Fergus Laurie. Once this idea flashed into his mind, practical arguments came trooping up to support it. He had certainly not been chargeable to his father for years,—never since he first took the teacher's place in the Hackney Academy. And of late, since he had been in the surgery, he had positively saved his father much expense, and consequently increased, so far, his property. Then, again, it had certainly been his father's bounden duty to give him some such start in life as this gift would render possible. As for taking it, David was clear-minded enough to perceive that he would have to stand indebted to somebody, and to whom more fairly than to this blood relation, who was at least a greater gainer by the poor, disreputable, dead surgeon, than anybody else could be? Then, again, David reflected that if he prospered in life, he could amply repay this gift in many ways, without even seeming to turn restive under the burden of gratitude. And if he did not prosper, this did not defraud any of what was really his own—a comfort that could scarcely attach to help from any other quarter.

"I will take it, sir," David said, at last, looking straight in the miller's troubled, watching face. "And I cannot thank you enough in words."

"It's all right," said the miller; "of course, I know you thank me. And I suppose, from what I hear, you'll be made into a doctor."

"I think not," David answered. "Something has come to light which will go much against me in that character. I will show you what it is." And he went to his own room, brought down the *Hackney Mercury*, and put it into the miller's hands.

The miller read it, and would have liked to put his thoughts into some bitter words, but refrained, and only asked, pointing to the paragraph—

"Is it true?"

"Yes," David answered. "I myself could bring forward proofs, though I never knew what they proved, till I read that."

"Was it infatuation for the study that led the surgeon into such mean dastardliness—surely he could have afforded to prosecute it in far different ways?" groaned the miller.

"He never prosecuted it at all," David answered sadly. "At least, never since my time. He always said he meant to do so, but did not. I think he must have done this for that purpose at first, and then went on, as a kind of habit."

"That a habit," said the miller, "and for no purpose! Habit indeed! Rather madness!"

David made no answer. He had not lived where he had for six-and-twenty years without learning that wickedness is either an idiocy or a lunacy of soul.

"I shall go into some business where my knowledge of chemistry will be useful," said David, forcing a cheery tone of voice, as people do when they step out of a charnel-house into the sunshine.

"Well, I hope you'll get on. Anyhow, I believe you'll be no discredit to our name, as you well might have been, all things considered."

The miller stayed in Blenheim House for some days, winding up affairs; but this conversation, with its result, was the only point where he touches our story. Most readers will not regret that he stayed in it such a short time; but will be almost as glad to get rid of him as of Mrs. Maxwell. And yet this single recorded action is a good one. But his is a character which never gets its share of the toleration and charity which goes about the world, begging to be allowed to enfold all shades of profligates and prodigals.

There is patience for weakness, but no patience for hardness. Folks make excuses for the man who slips into the slough of his worst nature, but cannot endure him who struggles out of it so hardly, that he cannot sit gracefully on its edge! In the world's eyes, it is better to have no line of duty at all, than to have one with no beauty curves about it! There is no joyous welcome about an iron stove, though it may give out twice the heat of the dancing wood fire. But it is better to have virtues hidden within one's fleshly temperament, than virtues which will drop off with it, as will much that passes as good feeling and generosity. There are some people who have cause to thank God for nothing so much as "that He is greater than their heart, and knoweth all things."

David's first proceeding was to consult Fergus. He told him all the history, adding that Fergus could have the whole use of the three hundred pounds, at least until such time as he required a portion of it. Or he might not need any, if he got a situation, and Fergus stood for any security that might be required.

"Why shouldn't you join me?" Fergus asked abruptly. "Your knowledge of chemistry is just what is wanted in our trade. Put your money and your skill along with my business faculty and connection. You will always have an eye on your capital, and a full share of whatever prosperity comes to us. I will guarantee you something of a salary if you like; but I can't be particularly tempting in that way, at first, David. You might get more of a certainty elsewhere, but scarcely such a prospect. If you come, you must regard your time as well as your money, as an investment, safe indeed, but a little slow at first."

"I would do it instantly; I should only be too glad to do anything to serve you; I know it would be serving myself too," David answered eagerly; "only I should like to be sure of enough to keep Phœbe, or I have no right to hinder her getting another place. If it was only myself, there would be no risk,—I would pull through, at a pinch, on thirty pounds for a year. But, I couldn't, with Phœbe, though she's as cheap a person as there can be. If she knew there was any difficulty, she'd want to go out working for herself, and waiting on me beside."

"I don't see why she shouldn't," said Fergus, "she's always been used to that sort of thing."

"If she must, of course she must," David replied; "but I will not make any arrange-

ments that will bring on the necessity. I know you wouldn't if it were you, Fergus."

"Ah, well, perhaps not. Anyhow, you are right. You say you could pull through at a pinch on thirty pounds. Surely, Phœbe could do the same," Fergus answered, half-carelessly.

"Of course she could. But that would make sixty," said David.

"Well, I should hope you don't think you are likely to get less than that the first year you work with me?" Fergus observed, almost angrily. "Double that, three times that, I should trust and believe."

"Then I shall be only too glad to accept your offer," said David. "The barest-living secured, especially for Phœbe, and I can cheerfully trust all the rest."

"I hope you will," Fergus answered gravely. "For if we are to work well together, you will have to trust me a good deal, David. Business tactics are peculiar, and I understand them, and you do not, and you may often fancy that I am doing queer things. I should not like to work with anybody who did not feel the greatest confidence in me."

"I don't think I've ever given you reason to fear I should be mistrustful and suspicious. You must trust me to trust you, Fergus," said David, and so the compact was sealed.

After that Fergus worked with a will. He secured suitable trade premises—parting at once with a large slice of David's capital to pay rent in advance. Many departments of work which old, long-established firms did at home, he was compelled to arrange for with other houses, from the utter impossibility of procuring heavy, expensive plant. About all this he was very candid with David, explaining that it must seriously reduce their profits, but was better than incurring large burden of debt, which candour and caution led David to the erroneous conclusion that all that was there was paid for—a mistake he easily fell into from his ignorance of the prices of machinery and office furniture. This candour on Fergus's part prevented David feeling any delicacy in making a few inquiries, and with a sense of his ignorance, and a simple-minded desire to remove it, he asked two or three questions as to prices, &c. To these he always received the fullest and most satisfactory answers, but given in a tone and manner that led his sensitive kindness to fear that Fergus writhed under the idea that his honest wish for information was only disguised criticism and doubt. So David said to himself that he was quite sure Fergus was

willing to tell him everything, but that it would be kindlier to let pass any accidental omission of information, even at inconvenience to his own future usefulness. David had not a legal mind, and did not in the least understand that the most voluminous affidavit may crumble beneath a monosyllable of cross-examination. He innocently thought that perhaps it was as natural for Fergus to be a little reserved on some points, as for himself to keep secret that he had been to a lawyer, and made a will, bequeathing to Jemima, Sarah, Emma, Kate, and Anne Maxwell, daughters of John Maxwell, miller, of Yarmouth, any property that he, David, might leave, not exceeding four hundred pounds in value; anything exceeding that sum to go to Phœbe Winter.

Robina Laurie paid a great many visits during those weeks of preparation. She called on Mrs. George Harvey. She called on Mrs. Webber. She connected herself with the Dorcas society, and called at the Vicarage. She called over and over again on Mrs. Harvey and Millicent. Fergus instigated all these calls, but he found she obeyed him more readily, and he commended her for it. Robina Laurie was a woman whose courage and sociability lay in her garments, and Fergus had given her ten pounds of David's money to thoroughly replenish her wardrobe, which, with Robina, meant to purchase two dresses, a cloak, and a bonnet with a feather. Robina knew nothing about her brother's affairs, except the fact, which ought to have had a significance even to her—that he had certainly no means of his own. Other people knew that he was poor, but nobody except his mother and sister—not even David—knew that he had nothing, in the literal meaning of the word. But Robina felt that she was gaining the highest aim of her life when she was buying her finery, and this eagerness made it easy for her to persuade herself that of course his superior talents could command plenty of cash on every side, and that she need ask no question whence came the particular cheque to decorate herself. She was very condescendingly affable to David Maxwell, remarking to Milly that her brother's ability to receive him into business at this particular juncture "had happened like a good providence for him."

All preliminaries were adjusted at last, and one fine Monday morning a smart errand boy opened the shutters of a newly-painted house, and disclosed a blind which announced to the world the new firm of "Fergus O. Laurie and Company."

GOD'S JUDGMENTS.

Being Thoughts on the Fiftieth Psalm.

BY PRINCIPAL CANDLISH, D.D.

I.—THE PREPARATION.

THIS Psalm describes a judicial procedure, or some transaction on the part of God partaking of that character. The silence of forbearance is broken: the Lord comes and sits as Judge. He is here now to take a reckoning with his Church; to summon its members before Him, and pronounce a critical and judicial verdict upon their character and standing. According to the customary method of prophetic delineation, the scene has, for its background, the final day of doom. It is painted in colours fitted to call up before the mind's eye, or the eye of conscience, the awful sublimities and solemnities of that closing catastrophe or consummation of this world's or the Church's history. Then the silence of forbearance is broken at last, and broken finally and for ever! Up till that terrible day, while the season of gracious long-suffering and offered mercy lasts, the rule or principle of the Lord's providence is his keeping silence. He holds his peace. To the last He holds his peace. His trumpet does not sound. His voice is not heard. Men say, "All things continue as they were: where is the God of judgment?" Suddenly, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the sky is overcast, and instantly opened. The loud signal of the trump of doom thunders. The great white throne is seen.

In the light, or upon the darkness, of that tremendous judgment for eternity, judgments in time and for time, are usually in Scripture pictured. And rightly so; for they are analogous, so far, in their nature and design. Like that last judgment, they interrupt the even tenor of the dispensation of seeming indifference or acquiescence on the part of God. And they do so also, at least in part, for the same purpose, to vindicate his holy character and righteous sovereignty, to awaken a slumbering world or a slumbering Church; to convict the guilty to their faces, and with whatever reserve of rebuke and admonition, to acknowledge the faithful as his own. Of this sort are the convulsions which, on a large scale, shake the foundations of states and empires, overturn great cities, overwhelm in mighty floods the high places of the earth. And so also are those more private and

personal visitations which bring sorrows manifold upon poor suffering souls, and sad changes upon mourning households. These are occasions when the Lord is to be seen, with the eye of faith, coming forth from the darkness, or the repose of tolerance, in which He appears to enshroud himself when the ongoings of his providence are smooth and even; coming forth thence for a judicial dealing with those under his authority; who, but for some such breaking in upon them of a season of trial, might be apt to sink into indolent security, or harden themselves in the postponement of the question, "Is it well with me and mine for eternity?"

The Psalm then brings before us a day of judgment. The first six verses represent the preliminaries, or, as it were, the accessories and accompaniments, of the grave transaction. And the representation is well fitted to awaken profoundest awe. There is a solemn and significant opening of the Divine Assizes.

1. "The mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof" (ver. 1). A voice is heard; sudden, loud, far-sounding, all-powerful; of boundless range; of resistless force. It is the voice of God; who is introduced here, or comes in view, under three aspects indicated by three different names, for such they are, rising one above another in sublimity and majesty. For the adjective, "mighty," should rather be translated as a proper noun; the first of three titles or designations—*El*, *Eloi*, *Jav* or *Jehovah*, descriptive of the Judge in this great trial. First, He is God absolutely; the one only God; "unto whom power belongeth;" who alone is strong and mighty. Secondly, He is God relatively, if I may so speak; or God acting, working, making; putting forth his power; strong, not merely as himself great in might, but as exerting his great might out of himself in creation, providence, rule, and judgment, both generally and in detail. The singular form of the noun, *El*, becomes the plural form, *Eloi*, as in the first chapter of Genesis, and elsewhere throughout Scripture, when it is as "working hitherto," always working, that the Supreme Being is contemplated. For in all his working, in all

that He does, He is the Triune God, the great Three-in-one, doing all, working all, according to the counsel of an eternal purpose in which Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are one. Lastly, in the third place, He is the I AM, the unchangeable; Jehovah; the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; claiming the confidence and commanding the reverence and fear of all, as being "without variable-ness or shadow of turning." So God sits as Judge; strong and mighty upon his unshaken throne; prompt and powerful to execute judgment; true and faithful, "keeping covenant and mercy, but by no means clearing the guilty." Who may move his dread tribunal? Who can arrest his uplifted arm? Who can challenge his unchanging sovereignty, or think to bend it into accommodation and accordance with any poor wish of his own? It is a solemn, terrible alarm, a startling trumpet-sound, when it is such a Judge that can no longer keep silence, but must speak out.

2. "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him" (vers. 2, 3). The mention of Zion as the place from which God speaks and shines, is significant. It indicates the character and nature of the judgment, as meant to be not legal but evangelical. Zion, not Sinai, is the seat or throne from which the Judge rises; Zion, the centre of grace and peace; where the Temple ministry of reconciliation goes on. Whatever business is to be transacted, be it ever so judicial, or corrective, or disciplinary, is business belonging to the dispensation, not of the law, but of the Gospel. Whatever dealing, whatever reckoning, the Lord is about to have with the parties to be summoned to his bar, must proceed upon the principles of the new covenant of mercy, and not on those of the old covenant of merit or of works. The assize is held in the Church; the Church of which Zion is the symbol and type; the Church in which redeeming love, atonement by blood, substitution in righteousness, salvation by free and sovereign grace, are the leading and ruling elements of the divine administration.

This aspect of the august scene may in one view be felt as partly divesting it of its terror; but, in another, it deepens its solemnity and awe. It is as having himself made provision for your being justified and saved, that God calls you to account for your treatment of Him. For it is "our God who shall

come." He comes as our God; ours, by his own free gift of himself to us, in his Son, whom He "has set his King upon his holy hill of Zion." As our God, shining out of Zion, the perfection of beauty,—the beauty of holiness, the beauty of peace, the beauty of grace and truth and love,—He comes; as "our God," well entitled to speak to us and deal with us as sustaining that relation to us, and to try and judge us accordingly. In that character "He shall not keep silence" (ver. 3). He shall not, He cannot, keep silence always. Strange it is, indeed, that He should keep silence at all; that He should keep silence so long; when such things are done within the very precincts of his own holy hill of Zion as are ever presenting themselves to his pure eye! That He should sit as if unmoved in heaven by what vexes many a righteous soul on earth, and makes rivers of water to flow down from many an eye! For God thus, as it were, to restrain himself, to be silent and not speak out, is like the smothering of hidden fire, the enforced shutting up of an explosive mine! No wonder, therefore, that when the silence is broken, it should be as when a conflagration rages, or volcanic charges violently rend the mountains. No wonder, if "a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him."

3. At this great judicial transaction there is an audience meet, and not few—a vast gathering of deeply attentive and interested on-lookers. At the first opening of the Lord's mouth, the earth from east to west has been summoned. And as the startled Church awakens to an apprehension of the awful solemnity, and awaits in silent suspense the close reckoning of her glorious Head with all her members, she hears a renewed summons given to the entire universe of created intelligences. There is a "call to the heavens from above and to the earth." All who can understand are invited to witness the proceedings, and to learn how God judges his people; by what rules and on what principles; that the very highest among them may see and own the vindicated justice of God; his justice openly vindicated at last after the long delay of his silent forbearance. Thus "the heavens shall declare his righteousness, for God is judge himself." All other judgment is superseded by his judgment. That justifies all his ways, and satisfies or silences all his thinking creatures. The hitherto inexplicable anomalies, the irreconcilable contradictions, the perplexing irregularities, the capricious distributions of good and evil—all

the difficulties which, in the view of finite minds, characterize the course of things, when the government here below is left apparently to second causes, and the Lord shrouds himself in dark reserve, all then take end. He assumes into his own hands the charge of his own government. He is judge Himself.

All this is fully and finally done in the last great day. But there are foreshadowings of it in the chastenings and visitations of his providence now. There are critical seasons in the Church's history—times of visitation in the experience of individual members of the Church and their households—marked interpositions of Providence—signal and striking indications of a divine hand in human affairs—personal and family events—that ought to be regarded in the light of a close dealing on the part of God with us, meant to sift and try and test. There are occasions—with some of us, it may be such an occasion even now—when the even tenor of life's commonplace routine is broken up, and we should pause to hear what God the Lord will speak; what He has to say to us; what complaint to bring against us; what censure to pronounce upon us; what fault to find with us; what lesson to teach us. "Teach me thy judgments, O Lord! Quicken me according to thy judgments."

4. The parties cited to the bar for this judicial procedure on the part of God are viewed first collectively (ver. 5), and then separately in two companies (vers. 7, 16).

First, collectively, they are "his saints, who have made made a covenant with Him by sacrifice." They are his saints: not merely as being consecrated, dedicated, separated, and set apart to be his, but as being personally well inclined and well affected towards Him. That is the exact meaning of the term "saints," or holy ones, here. It is not that word "holy" which signifies being taken out of the category of common things or persons, and invested with a sacred stamp or impress, devoted to a sacred use or purpose. It is that other word "holy," which indicates, not a state or relation merely, but a personal frame of mind, a personal disposition of heart: not relative holiness, so to speak, but real holiness—real inward and indwelling holiness. Those called for judgment are the professedly pious. The character which they have to sustain is the character of piety, of godliness, of divine charity or love. That is the standard by which they are to be tried. They have to make good and verify their possession of

personal holiness. And the holiness is holiness of a particular or special type. It is connected with their "having made a covenant with God." It rests upon the basis of a covenant; a distinct agreement or engagement into which they are understood to have entered with the Holy One, binding them by a solemn vow to be holy as He is holy. It is not a mere spontaneous impulse, or influence, or sentiment. It is a serious and awful pledge, having in it all the validity and force, all the binding obligation, of a strict and stern covenant. And the covenant is "by sacrifice." It is a sacrificial covenant in the fullest sense. Not only is it a covenant ratified and sealed by sacrifice; it is a covenant of which sacrifice is the source and the very substance; into which sacrifice enters as its constituent principle, its living essence. Sacrifice used often in the olden time to follow covenanting. Two parties agreeing beforehand in covenant, confirmed their covenant agreement afterwards by a sacrificial offering and a sacrificial meal. That may partly explain the connection here between making a covenant with God and sacrifice; but that does not exhaust the meaning. Nor is it the principal and primary thought. For here sacrifice precedes covenanting, in the order of connection, if not of time. The covenant is not merely sealed by sacrifice; it is itself made by sacrifice; it originates in sacrifice, and springs out of sacrifice; and the sacrifice by which it is made is plainly sacrifice expiatory and propitiatory. It must be so, for it is the condition and the cause of the covenanting. It opens the way to my making a covenant with God as my God. It is the means of my making a covenant with my God. It is itself the very essence of my making a covenant with my God. For it is my reconciliation to God. It is the ending of the long and sad estrangement which sin has caused between my God and me. It is the expiation of my guilt—the absolving of me personally from all criminality, through the acceptance on the part of my God of a voluntary and infinitely worthy substitute in my stead. It is on my part a glad sense of justice satisfied, sin purged, myself absolved, acquitted, sanctified, restored to the favour, fellowship, and likeness of my God. On the footing of such a sacrifice I make a covenant with God. And as thus covenanting, I am one of his holy ones.

Such is the ideal according to which the divine judgment is to be conducted; such the standard of this august and heavenly judicial procedure. It is an ideal, a standard,

pitched very high ; at the very highest pitch indeed. And rightly so. For, whatever modifications or explanations, if any, the subsequent application of the principle of this great assize may allow or require—and that may be a question for the rest of the Psalm—the principle itself must in the outset be conserved and asserted in its integrity. It is the perfection of the religious life that God, “shining out of Zion, the perfection of beauty,” must needs set up as the rule of judgment and test of character ;—the full-orbed type or model of the perfect spiritual man. As such, it has in it these three elements—holiness, covenant, and sacrifice. They are intimately connected with one another, and mutually dependent on one another. They hang together. Each is to be viewed as coming out of the other. There is, first, your being the Lord’s holy ones, his saints, his pious and devoted ones. For we need not now and here discriminate nicely the two senses of the word. In fact, they reciprocally imply or involve one another. You are the Lord’s holy ones ; consecrated, set apart, sealed ; renewed, purified, sanctified ; the Lord’s dedicated property ; bearing the stamp of his image and likeness. You are his holy ones ; holy unto Him, holy in and after Him. And you are his holy ones as having made a covenant with Him ; bound and pledged and sworn to be his holy ones ; solemnly engaged ; under the sanction of an oath or a vow. And the oath, the vow, springs out of sacrifice—a sacrifice of reconciliation, a sacrifice of peace. It is the fruit and forthcoming of a great sacrificial transaction, bringing God near to you as yours and you near to God as his, on the footing of a full and perfect settlement of all that ever did or ever could keep you apart. So “God is judge himself.” Such must be his manner of judgment when it is his Church, or any branch or any members of his Church, with whom He is judicially dealing.

It is, indeed, in one view, an awful ordeal. It demands a high attainment. It admits of no lower aim on our part if we would hope to meet and stand it. But yet there is encouragement for the poor and humble in the threefold Jacob’s ladder, as it were, here let down to us. It reaches heavenward ; it begins from heaven. But it reaches also earthward ; it comes down to earth. Let me revert the order of its steps from what it is as given in this text.

There is, then, first, sacrifice. That, at any rate, comes low enough. It comes to the lowest who will say with Paul, “It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.” Sacrifice ! Yes ! That is a step on which the least and lowest, the worst and vilest, may here and now plant his foot. “God is Love. Herein is manifested the love of God, that He sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” Sacrifice ! Yes ! I can lay hold of that ! “Lord, I believe. Help thou mine unbelief.” Sinner as I am, I cling and cleave to thee, “O Lamb of God that takest away the sin of the world !” That first round of the ladder—wilt thou not help me—enable me—to mount ? Yes. Thou wilt ! Assuredly thou wilt ! Then I will venture, on the footing of that great sacrifice, and in the faith of its being in all its efficacy available for me, to make a covenant with thee. Otherwise, the very thought of my doing that would be intolerable presumption. What ! For me to venture on making a covenant with thee ! For me, a worm of the dust, vile in thy pure sight, guilty under thy righteous law, to aspire to the position of one covenanting with thee ! Yes, I may venture, I may dare, if it is by sacrifice that I do so. Nay, I cannot but make the covenant with thee if I accept the sacrifice. For the sacrifice involves the covenant. I cannot have the one without the other. Nor could I wish it to be otherwise. The recommendation of the sacrifice to me is that it has in it the covenant ; my covenanting with God on the faith of it. That is why I welcome and embrace it. Freeing me from guilt, restoring me to favour, renewing at once my position and my nature, it entitles and enables me to covenant with my God ! And to covenant for what ? To covenant that I mean to be one of his holy ones ! Yes ! To that high aim I may rise. Thus I may rise to it. And here and now. The sacrifice is mine, here and now ; mine, in all its virtue and power if I will but have it to be mine. The covenant upon the sacrifice is mine ; mine, here and now, if I will but make it mine. And oh ! how high may I thus rise here and now ! I may reach the position of God’s own holy ones ! Let nothing short of that content me. Nothing short of it will stand the test or ordeal of the judgment of God.

AGAINST THE STREAM:

The Story of an Heroic Age in England.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE SCHONBERG-COTTA FAMILY."

CHAPTER XII.



This characteristic of all truly upward paths that as we rise the little hills grow less, and the high hills higher.

Happy for us when the heights of our childhood

are so truly high that they do not sink, but rise, with our rising, and only seem the more above us the nearer we approach them. It was always thus with Loveday Benbow, as through the years I grew to understand better what she was. She was in so many ways a centre to our little circle; partly by virtue of the very stillness and unchangeableness of her life amidst our changing revolving conditions; by the simple fact of her being *always there*, and much more by the fact of her being always *all there*."

Invalids have little idea how much the very stillness and monotony of their sick chambers (so hard often for them to comprehend or bear) tend to make them a sanctuary where others, stepping aside from the tumultuous world outside, are calmed, refreshed, and rested.

Loveday was our centre also, because she lived so near the true Centre, which is the Sun, and therefore with her heart in the glow of that central sunlight, her mind looked freely all around, and saw things in their true relations and proportions, for us all; as we, in the coil and tumult could seldom do. She became the "eye" of our little landscape, as

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still waters do, by simply reflecting the light. Against the stream, as many of her convictions were, she never seemed contending so much as following; calmly floating, or rather sailing on, because her inmost spirit had found the "rushing mighty wind" which "breathes upon the slain, and they live;" the Spirit which broods on the face of the waters, and they are full of the living. She was borne on, calmly, by the breath mightier than all the torrents of the world. With her the deepest things in us all were opened, to ourselves and to her.

If Amice had lifted me first to a point of view outside my home, and Claire to one outside our England, Loveday lifted us all to a point of view from which we felt there was an outside, a glorious "expansion" a starry "firmament" beyond our visible world.

Piers was her prime favourite. She loved him almost as much as I did, and more than she did me, which was saying much.

His school-life was not an eventful one. After that first conflict, he was seldom in the wars, or at least we did not hear of it. The joys of battle were dear in themselves to Dick Fyford. But helping, not fighting, was what Piers delighted in; although, if the fighting came in course of the helping, he took to it heartily enough. The energy which in Dick was apt to turn to destructiveness, in Piers went to construction. He had as much boyish delight in making a ship, or a shed, or a model water-wheel, and making them well, as Dick had in maiming his uncle's trees and his own limbs by reckless climbing.

I cannot say that in "book-learning," as taught by Mr. Rabbidge, he excelled. He looked at that time on the writers of books, rather as mere talkers on an extended scale. And talking, as I have said, he regarded as the especial province of women; or of people in general who could not or would not work. Thus, on all professions of which speech was the medium, he looked not without contempt.

Two careers in life commended themselves to him. He wished either to be a manufacturer or a doctor. Doctors and manufacturers, he said, knew what they were about. To cure men, and to make things, was plain, honest work. That is, the ideal of those callings, was clear to him. They were something like keeping the garden, and tilling it, or

keeping down the thorns and thistles of the wilderness. To be a doctor he thought the best. The delight in watching the ways of birds and beasts, which was natural to him, inclined him to natural history, and the skill and accuracy with which he handled things, might avail him in surgery.

What his conversations with Loveday were about, I often did not know. She used to say the boy's spirit dwelt among the "realities," among "the things that *are*—justice, goodness, and truth," unconsciously quoting Plato. She greatly longed for him to become a physician. There was a passage in George Fox's journal to which she especially delighted to refer. "The physicians," George Fox wrote (lamenting over the declension of all the professions from their true ideal), "were out of the Wisdom of God, by which the creatures were made, and so knew not their virtues. But they might be brought back into the true wisdom of God, the Word of Wisdom, by which all things are." And to this end she believed Piers, with his honest heart, clear judgment, his delight to "hear and to ask questions" of every one and everything, his determination to see and know things as they are, might greatly help.

I suppose his early revulsion from literature was owing partly to Mr. Rabbidge's mode of instruction. With Mr. Rabbidge literature was strictly "letters," in the literal sense; the instrument was everything. Even the great old Greek dramas and histories were to him rather herbariums of classical expressions, than living fields of thought and beauty. The climax of attainment set before Piers was not to understand Æschylus or Herodotus, and through them Greek life and thought, but to write Greek verses, in which what was said was immaterial if it was classically said. It took years of living to counteract the effect of those years of learning, and to bring him back through the realities of the present to the glorious realities of the past.

Also it was natural to him not to take the same turn as our brother Francis; and Francis took at once to literature in Mr. Rabbidge's sense of it. "Words for the sake of words" did not at all repel him. To be an "elegant scholar" seemed to him, and to Mr. and Mrs. Danescombe, a lofty ambition. Francis became Mr. Rabbidge's favourite scholar. His memory was accurate, and his taste in a certain cold and superficial way correct; and the glory of prizes of the "first place" and of public recitations was exactly the kind of glory he appreciated and his mother delighted in.

Very early she began to suggest that it

would be a loss to the reputation of the town if Francis were not sent to the university; whilst at the same time a year or two more or less of school could make no difference to Piers, whose tastes were not in any way opposed to commerce. My vanity and ambition were often aroused on behalf of Piers. But Piers was not to be thus roused. He had ambitions; but not on that level.

That Amice Glanvil and I should be at home with Loveday, and even Piers, and open our inmost world to her was natural enough, she being the dovelike winged creature that Amice Platonically said she was, and we sorely in want of such brooding warmth.

Amice having free range of her paternal library at Court, had been greatly delighted on behalf of Loveday when she discovered in an old translation of Plato his theory of "wings secretly growing in the soul here preparatory to her free expanded life hereafter."

Loveday's spiritual wings were, Amice felt sure, already fully developed; wings that could make a nest anywhere—on any rock, for her nestlings, and could also soar far beyond our ken. It was only natural, therefore, that we motherless creatures should nestle beneath them.

But with Dick Fyford, the most militant and un-Quakerlike amongst us, it was the same. From very early days he was always either falling into desperate quarrels, or in desperate love, not unfrequently both together. And in all cases Miss Loveday was his chosen confidant.

"She always took things so seriously," he said, "and did not make fun of a fellow." And a serious tax on any one's sympathy it must have been to take Dick Fyford's loves and wars in earnest, so frequently were the "scoundrelly dogs" of his limited but strong vocabulary, yesterday, "Not at all bad fellows after all," to-day; and the hard-heartedness and cruelty he should never get over to-day, in a few weeks obliterated by the unequalled fascinations of the next heroine.

It was a relief to Loveday when Dick went to sea, although she had many scruples about seeming to sanction it. "Making climbing at the risk of the neck a matter of duty," she pleaded, "does seem the only way of saving some lads from breaking their necks as a matter of choice. And a sailor need not absolutely be a man of war, although in these days it does seem too probable he will."

It was so also with Madame des Ormes. Nothing soothed her so much as to sit by the little couch where Loveday had to spend so much of her life, in the plain unadorned room,

where the only lustrous thing was the old oaken floor, polished with the rubbing of generations. She said it made her think of Thomas à Kempis, and made luxury seem a folly and a vulgarity.

The contrast of the stately gracious lady with her animated face and movements, and our dear dove-coloured Loveday with her still soft face and voice, often charmed me.

With most of us, Madame was, on religious questions, a foreigner. There were mutual suspicions, mutual reserves, mutual antagonisms concealed or confessed, mutual ignorance of the real basis of one another's daily life. Even with my father the sympathy did not reach beyond "questions of the Second Table." She recognised him fully as her "neighbour," and loved him as a lover of mankind, but as to his ecclesiastical position she was not without disquiet.

With Loveday Benbow she was at home. To her she opened the inmost sanctuary of her constant heart. To her she spoke as to none beside of her husband, cut down by the mob of Paris, at the door of the prison of the village, at the terrible sentence "A La Force;" the terrible revolutionary formula corresponding to the masked sentence of an earlier inquisition, "To the Secular Arm."

"They dared not cry to all those innocent victims," she said, "'A la mort.' So terrible has God made crime to conscience, my friend, that the worst of us dare not utter the worst they can do."

They sate together under the great shadow of death, but they found it the shadow of the great Threshold. One day the gate would open, they knew, and let them in. To their victorious Christian faith in the unity of the Church, that barrier, so terribly real to most of us, which separates the Church visible on earth from that invisible in heaven, had become a mere "veil," transparent altogether from the other side, and if not transparent, at least translucent often here.

The Church for them was divided not into Roman and Anglican, Catholic and Protestant; but into the wrestlers and the victors, the combatants and the crowned, the faint and few, struggling still through the waves of this troublesome world, and the glorious multitude innumerable, welcomed and welcoming on the other shore. Yet Loveday Benbow was in the whole type of her piety a Quaker. She had indeed been baptized in infancy, with Miss Felicity as one of her sponsors. And whatever had been her convictions, her health would have prevented her attending the public services of the church.

Moreover, the Sacrament was not administered in Abbot's Weir more than four times a year, and the office for the Communion of the Sick was regarded chiefly as a mild mode of announcing the medical sentence of death.

Had her belief as to the Sacrament been that of the nuns of Port Royal, she must have been practically reduced by circumstances, as many of the nuns of Port Royal were by persecution, after their dispersion, to "spiritual communion." Yet the mutual attraction between her and Madame des Ormes was not an isolated instance of union of heart between Roman Catholics and Quakers, nor do I think the attraction was merely one of personal character.

The Holy of Holies in all forms of Christianity is surely the same. For Friends the outer sanctuaries and courts do not exist; for the most spiritual saints in all communions they only exist outside. The very multitude of dogmas and complication of rites in the Roman Church has, in many instances, driven her saints inward to find their rest in the bare simplicity of some great first principle.

For Brother Lawrence, as for John Woolman, alike, the true dwelling-place and "covering" of the spirit is in "awful retirement inward in the presence of God."

Also, both Loveday and the Marquise were sufferers. To both the whole world lay under the shadow and the shelter of the Cross of Redemption.

By both it was never forgotten that the only perfect life ever lived on earth had ended visibly there; and with both it was the deepest conviction of the heart that this apparent end was not an end, but a beginning, and meant not defeat but victory.

On both, moreover, had been laid a life-long burden, which could never more be laid aside—the burden of irreparable bereavement, and of irremediable pain. To both, therefore, life had made it plain that the Master's Cross was not only to rescue from suffering, but to empower to suffer; not to abolish the Cross for the disciple, but to consecrate the yoke into the Cross, by the simple act of willingly taking up the involuntary burden daily after Him. Thus, neither Madame des Ormes nor Loveday Benbow were in the danger which besets the prosperous "religious world" of making their ideal of religious service a beneficent dispensing of alms from the throne, instead of, like the Master's, a sympathetic bearing of the yoke with the suffering.

"Quærens me sedisti lassus,"

for the pattern of life, was as present to them as

"Redemisti crucem passus,"

for its motive power.

I have always been glad that my first acquaintance with holy people was among those who dwelt in the shadow, rather than among those who dwelt in the sunshine.

It made it clearer whence the inward sunshine came. It made me see a little into the depths of Christian life before learning more of its expansions.

Yet there was a difference as well as a resemblance between Loveday and the Marquise. It arose, I think, partly from their types of faith, but also partly from their differences of character and experience.

The element of hope was far stronger in Loveday Benbow,—not the imperishable hope of the immortal life, this was equally strong in both,—but hope for this struggling, sinning, suffering world,—hope for humanity.

In representing the life of the two symbolically, I would picture Madame des Ormes kneeling with clasped hands and upturned weeping face at the foot of the Cross—the Crucified still fixed there; but Loveday should stand by the empty Sepulchre, her hands outstretched to clasp the feet that were to "go before into Galilee," and on her lips and on her radiant face the rapturous "Rabboni."

The words that seem to vibrate on the ear of one are, "*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*" on the other falls the inspiring message, "*Go tell my brethren that I am risen and go before you.*"

But the thing about Loveday Benbow that was characteristically "Quaker" was the *listening* attitude of her whole being. Of all the titles given to the early Church before she received her Christian name at Antioch—"brethren, saints, believers, disciples"—the one most applicable to Loveday would have been that of "disciple." You felt always that she was a "learner," only a teacher because always learning. With her no pupil came to drink of a stagnant water.

The well of living water did indeed spring up in her heart continually—the Dropping Well from the Rock; and she listened to its musical flow, and drank of it, and drew from it always fresh for every fresh pitcher presented to her, every thirsty heart that came to her.

When you came to her for counsel, she did not supply you in a moment with some ready-made maxim. She herself had to consult her authority, and her authority was no library of old parchments, no mere record of

decisions on other cases. It was a voice, a living voice, with a fresh decision for every case. There was indeed a Book more precious to her than gold and sweeter than honey; but to her that Book was the utterance of One who lives, and speaks, and inspires still.

The Revelation of God through the History of One People, and above all of One Life, was she believed inspired into the hearts of all people to be the food of every life by a Spirit who communes for ever personally with the spirits of men, who teaches, reminds, pleads, enkindles, rebukes, exhorts, comforts,—does all that is involved in the manifold word Paraclete.

In this great Catholic truth, brought forward and pressed on the consciousness of the Church, as so many truths have been, by one section of it, often in disproportion, and with that one-sided intensity which seems the condition of the progress of truth amongst us (who having a mountain to climb, have to climb it for the most part by a road engineered in zig-zags), Loveday had been nurtured by her Quaker mother.

When first I remember her she must have been still young, scarcely twenty. To us she never seemed either young or old. In the external sense youth, with its vigour and eager impulse, was never hers. In its deepest sense youth was hers, with all its freshness and glow of hope, always. Scarcely twenty, yet her life as to personal incident and action was already finished.

Mother's love for her had early passed into the heavens; father's love—protective, self-denying, provident, generous—she had never known. From earliest childhood she had seen her mother pining, fading, dying under her father's neglect and extravagance. The very love which made her quick to see and wise to soften her mother's sufferings, rendered her keen to see and quick to hate her father's selfishness.

Terrible are the lives thus poisoned at the fountain, for which the instinctive affections which are at the root of all love, are at war with the moral principles which are at the root of all right; for which the alternative lies between "calling evil good," and not being able in the inmost heart to "give honour where honour is most due." Terrible when the great sacred parable of human relationships is reversed and falsified, when the stone is given to the children for bread, and the poisonous serpent laid in the child's bosom by the very hand that should have guarded from it. In such a chaos there is no resource but one, to look up from the broken

mirror to the unbroken light it should have reflected, from the love which has failed to the eternal love, which is fatherly and motherly at once, and never fails.

And this Loveday Benbow did.

The solitude in which her mother's death left her was, for heart, and mind, and spirit, for all that makes "me," as absolute as that of Moses on Sinai. Below was Miss Felicity worshipping her idol, which she had robbed herself of gold, and jewels, or such equivalents as she possessed, and every precious thing to make what it was; happy once more to be sole priestess at its shrine.

To little Loveday it was no shrine. The utmost which her patient and injured mother had been able in dying to leave her was a legacy of reverent pity, reverence for the unfulfilled relationship, pity for the lost man.

And in this solitude came to her the voice of God. Direct, through no mediating mortal lips, but immediate from spirit to spirit, piercing through all the weeping and the wailing of the people, that voice had reached her; and direct, by no tender human links, except the humanity of God made man, by no gentle steps of love ascending softly from higher to highest, her spirit darted with an arrow's flight to Him. She felt Him always nearest, His voice the clearest to hear, the easiest to understand, the dearest to follow, His love not only the sublime crown and climax of all, but the most familiar and home-like of all; what He cared for, her closest care; what He hated, her most natural indignation. For to her the voice of God was no mere inarticulate music, but a living voice whose "*Woe unto you*" was as real and as needed as its "*Come unto Me*"—"Woe unto you" to the oppressor under any disguise, "*Come unto Me*" for the weary and heavy laden of every colour.

Well for her that her love for God was so true, that like all true love it brought its burden as well as its joy. She did not perplex herself with theories about anthropomorphism. She believed in the possibility of the Incarnation with all its attendant possibilities, and in the fact of the Incarnation with all its results. That God should be "grieved at His heart" to her meant, at all events, something quite real, something at which those who loved Him must be grieved at heart too. That God should be afflicted with the afflictions of Israel of old meant not that He had been roused from the calm of the serene upper heavens to a transitory exceptional pity, but that He pitied all the creatures He had made, and was afflicted with their afflictions always.

And the wronged people of the time, her

mother had taught her, were the "black mankind" whom the English people in the West Indies and in America stole, and bought, and sold, and held in bondage, whom the Quaker Society, alone of all sections of the Christian Church, had voluntarily emancipated and refused to hold in bondage, and were labouring to set free throughout the world.

There was something surely in the "listening," the stillness, the "waiting," on which fell clear as a church bell when the whole church was asleep and heard nothing, the conviction that to buy, and sell, and hold in bondage "black mankind" was a sin. During her long nights of weariness and days of pain her spirit had suffered with that suffering people. She had identified herself with them as Kosciusko with his Poland, or Hofer with his Tyrol, or the most loyal Vendean with the fallen race of St. Louis. She had made that wronged people her people, as truly as she believed her God her God.

Not with a blind enthusiasm. She loved too much to idealise. She longed to help too much to suffer herself to be deceived as to what help was needed. That the degradation was also moral, that the chains bound round them were also chains of sin, only made her pity more intense.

Taking them at their worst, stupid, childish, helpless, brutalised, idle, vulgar, as their hardest enemies could picture them, at their worst, and because of the worst oppression had made them, her heart glowed towards them with indignant pity and agonizing love.

To me, through her inspiration, that great anti-slavery conflict became like one of Homer's battles, or the story of the Peninsular War, or of Waterloo, as I have heard them from those who fought there. Pennsylvania and New England, where John Woolman went on his weary foot-pilgrimages of compassion to rouse the "Society" to the wrongs of the slaves, were to me romantic and sacred names. Those quaint old volumes of Quaker literature which she loved to read, with their old-fashioned printing and their more old-fashioned wording and thinking, conscientiously, or unconsciously, plain, to the utmost limit of plainness, as to the picturesque and the æsthetic, even now make my heart throb like some new message from a dear voice of the many now out of sight and hearing to me. As Amice Glanvil used to say, "if the slaves had been white, or olive, or any artistic colour, and instead of woolly hair had rejoiced in raven tresses" or "radiant masses of gold," the world would have awakened up earlier to their wrongs. But Loveday took them at the

worst, thick-lipped, woolly-haired, ungraceful, and loved them better for their very ugliness, as a mother her ugly child. In her heart, Amice declared, Loveday called them not *black*, but *bronze*, a kind of duller gold.

Too often, indeed, the picturesque of things seen and temporal may blind us to the true poetic of the things unseen and eternal. The whole history of that great wrong was vivid and distinct to Loveday as her own. "How nearly," she used to say, "the monstrous evil of modern slavery had, at the very beginning, been crushed in the germ; how irresistibly and swiftly, once allowed to live, it had grown!"

For centuries the Christian Church had protested against slavery, had fought against it. For two centuries she had vanquished it, and driven it from every realm where she had sway. First of the nations, Ireland, on this point twice in this long campaign, wisest of all by virtue of the wisdom of the warm heart, had renounced this wrong. In 1172 her clergy forbid all traffic in human beings, and accomplished the emancipation of those who had already been sold into bondage, chiefly English men and women, kidnapped and shipped from Bristol. In France the burden of the wrong had rested on the heart of her king, and in 1315, Louis X. enfranchised all crown serfs, declaring that "slavery was contrary to nature, which intended that all men should be by birth free and equal."

And so for two centuries the cry of the bondsman had ceased to go up to heaven from Christendom, at least for any of the children of the Church.

That victory might have seemed won for ever. But, alas! the banner under which it was won was too narrow. And, moreover, the religious wars of the Cross checked the progress of emancipation. It was held unlawful for any Christian to enslave his brethren; but the followers of Mohammed were not "brethren," they were aliens, enemies of God and man, and accordingly numbers of Saracens were sold into bondage without remorse. For broad as the field of Christendom is, humanity is broader. The Church had nobly thrown her shield over all her children down to the meanest. She had freed all Christendom from slavery. She had yet to learn that the pity and the justice of God reach further than the most Catholic Church that has learned to believe in them, and that creation is an earlier claim on His love than baptism.

In this mediæval limitation of emancipation, noble as mediæval Christian emancipation was, lay the little rift which was again to spoil all its music. Through this one weak place

came in, slowly at first, and then in overwhelming force, the whole monstrous iniquity of modern slavery, worse than ancient, by all the Christian pity it had to stifle, by the "little grain of conscience" which "made it sour."

The Spanish conquest of Mexico and Peru caused the desolation of two countries. The native races of America were crushed beneath the weight of forced labour, and the native races of Africa were torn from their homes to supply their places. Not without individual protest. Again and again the merciful heart, always beating in the Church, beneath all slumber, and all disguises, rose against this great wickedness.

Cardinal Ximenes refused (even at the instance of Las Casas, in his mistaken hope of saving the Indians,) to sanction the African slave-trade. Charles V. abolished slavery throughout his dominions. The Dominicans condemned it, in contradiction to the Franciscans, and Leo X., when the contending orders brought the question before him, gave decision on the broadest issues. "Not the Christian religion only," he said, "but Nature herself protested against a state of slavery." On two other sovereigns this great wrong weighed heavily—Louis XIII. of France, and Elizabeth of England.

The conscience of Christendom on the heights, above the temptation, was clear. But great torrents of wrong are not stemmed by voices from the heights, but by humble men on the levels, pulling against the stream, or laboriously building dykes of common earth, to turn its course. If kings are to serve a kingdom, it can only be by coming down to serve. And Elizabeth and Louis XIII. did not come down and serve; they stood on the heights and protested. And the thing against which they protested paused for a moment, and then went on.

Self-interest proved stronger than monarchs and Popes. Slavery rooted itself North and South through all the continent of America.

Louis was "uneasy" at having to sign an edict consigning all Africans who came to his colonies to slavery.

Elizabeth had a "religious scruple;" and sending for Sir John Hawkins, the founder of the English slave-trade, expressed her horror at Africans being taken from their country "without their free consent."

To Louis XIII., for the first time probably, the religious argument was used. It was suggested that slavery would be an effective means of propagating the Gospel among those benighted Africans. And the edict was signed.

To Queen Elizabeth Sir John Hawkins promised obedience; a promise which he kept by kidnapping as many natives as he could from the African coast on his next voyage.

Something stronger than "religious scruples" and "uneasiness" is needed to combat such evils.

The Puritan forefathers of Massachusetts also protested. In the first instance, fresh from English political freedom, and their own struggles for religious liberty, they did more than protest. They threw two masters of slave ships into prison, and threatened all future kidnapers with death. In Rhode Island (1527) Roger Williams, the founder, declared all negro servants free after ten years of service.

Yet self-interest and love of money prevailed. The evil crept on. By the middle of the seventeenth century every State south of Rhode Island was slave-holding; and even the Quakers of Pennsylvania were involved both in the traffic and the property.

The mediæval day of emancipation was dying fast, and thick night was coming once more over the nations. The last voices of the nightfall have their especial interest as well as the first voices of the dawn.

Of these Baxter and George Fox are among the last solitary protests.

The last cry of warning from any body of men comes in 1688 from a little community of German Quakers, driven from Kreishiem in the Palatinate to Pennsylvania. Coming, as they believed, to a land of light and freedom, they break into a cry of indignant astonishment at finding "black brethren" held in bondage there by Friends.

"Ah, do consider well this thing," they wrote to the Monthly Meeting at Philadelphia, "you who do it, if you would be done unto in this manner. And if it is done according to Christianity, pray what thing in the world can be done worse unto us, than if men should rob or steal us away, and sell us for slaves into strange countries, especially husbands from their wives and children? If this is done well, what shall we say is done ill?"

Clear and strong, the protest of these humble, single-hearted men rings out through the growing darkness; and then falls the silence of night. The chains of darkness are riveted on America north and south, on the bodies of black mankind, and on the souls of the white. Yet even through the night the silence is not unbroken. There are voices mild and slumbrous as of those who mutter in sleep, or isolated and piercing as of the

watchers who dwell in the presence of Him who neither slumbereth nor sleepeth.

In 1727, a London Quarterly Quaker meeting, "uneasy," like Louis XIII., resolved, that the importing of negroes from their native country by Friends is "not a commendable nor allowed practice," and is therefore censured. And in America similar mild rebukes were repeated from time to time. But however uneasy the censure may have made those it concerned, the uncommendable practice went on. Until at last began what Loveday used to call the first voices of the dawn, the morning spread upon the mountains, which she was persuaded should never again die into darkness.

Solitary, scattered, too far apart, and too feeble to be echoes of each other; each separate voice called forth in response to the Voice of the Shepherd; each separate witness, concerned not to "deliver his own soul," but to deliver the oppressed whose burden lay upon him. At last in a few human hearts a love to God and man had sprung up as determined and active as the love of gain in the oppressors.

Self-love had encountered a love of man as real as itself, and when real always stronger, as God is stronger than the world.

In Long Island, William Burling, true to the last to the generous sympathies of his youth, "abhorring slavery from his early youth;" in Philadelphia, the merchant, sober Ralph Sandiford, refusing to accept pecuniary aid from any who held slaves; and Benjamin Lay, scarcely four feet high, with his long white beard, and stoical life, driven nearly to madness by the scenes he had witnessed among the negroes in Barbadoes.

And then, no longer solitary, but leading on a chorus which was swelling daily, Anthony Benezet and John Woolman.

It was good, Loveday thought, to observe that each of these to whom it was given first to wake at the Master's call, and to carry it on to others, and so to wake the Church, had been listening for His voice, were men who had already risen above the common idolatry of the age, who having refused to bow the knee to Mammon, had learned to say No to the prevailing sin around them, before they said Yes to this high especial call.

It was no sin, she said, to buy and sell in the market-place, but it was not in the market-place that the heavenly voices sounded clearest.

Anthony Benezet, coming of a race trained for generations to endurance, son of a father exiled by the revocation of the edict of

Nantz (one of the many heroes France had driven from her), holding that the noblest service is rendered with the noblest part of us, that in God's kingdom the highest offices are those which serve men directly instead of paying others to serve, chose the career of a teacher in Philadelphia, rather than that of a merchant. Of silver and gold having

none, better gifts were given him; impotent hearts leaped at his word to action.

His tract on the history of Guinea furnished Clarkson with material for his Essay on the Slave-trade, and so gave the impulse to the English abolition movement. His pupil, William Dillwyn, formed the link between the American abolitionists and the



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English. But most of all Loveday delighted in some manuscript fragments which she possessed from the journals of John Woolman, of New Jersey, a "Minister among Friends," who had died at York in 1772.

"From what I had heard and read," he wrote, "I believed there had been, in past ages, people who walked in uprightness before God, in a degree exceeding any that I knew or heard of now living. And the

apprehension of there being less steadiness and firmness among people of this age than in past ages often troubled me while I was a child."

There Loveday used to say was the well-spring on the hills from which the river flowed. John Woolman had learnt that in the Church of God *there is no irrevocable Golden Age in the past*. The child in the new colony in the new continent of the far

West was as near the source of "uprightness," of truth, theological and practical, as the children in the old country in the far East, on whom Divine hands were laid eighteen centuries ago; as the young man whose name was Paul, at whose feet the murderers of the first martyr laid their clothes, on whose dazzled eyes broke the light brighter than the Syrian sun, on whose ears fell the transforming "Why persecutest thou Me?"

The dragons are ever springing anew from the earth, and the heroes are ever needed to encounter them. The Church is a living body, as her Lord is living, not a sculptured copy of more glorious sculpture of olden days. The good Shepherd leads, the good Spirit inspires, now as of old.

Around John Woolman doubtless were countless religious men, admirers of prophets, apostles, and martyrs, and all the dragon-slayers of old, quietly tolerating the dragon of their own days, and even persuading themselves that he was a necessary beast of burden, without whom the soil by which they lived could not be tilled. To John Woolman, "whose concern it was to attend, with singleness of heart, to the voice of the true Shepherd, and to be so supported as to remain unmoved at the faces of men," he appeared in his true form, as the destroyer of moral and spiritual life,—not to be tolerated for an instant, whether the fields could be tilled and the owners live without him or not.

To the sober New Englander the first encounter came in prosaic New England shape. He was asked to write a will bequeathing black mankind as property.

"As writing was a profitable employ, and as offending sober people was disagreeable to my inclination, I was straitened in my mind, but as I looked to the Lord He inclined my heart to His testimony; and I told the man that I believed the practice of continuing slavery to this people was not right, and that I had a scruple in my mind against doing writings of that kind; that though many in our society kept them as slaves, still I was not easy to be concerned in it. I spoke to him in the fear of the Lord, and he made no reply to what I said, but went away; he also had some concerns in the practice, and I thought he was displeased with me.

"In this case I had a fresh confirmation, that acting contrary to present outward interest from a motive of Divine love, and in regard to truth and righteousness, opens the way to a treasure better than silver, and to a friendship exceeding the friendship of men."

He was not lifted above the level of his neighbours. To him sober accumulation of silver would have been pleasant; and to lose at once silver and approbation was not pleasant; but truth and righteousness and the friendship of God were better, and he chose them. The sacrifice required of him was not great, a few silver coins,—the sullen silence of a neighbour. But the principle would have led to any sacrifice. The faithfulness which enabled him to refuse the shillings would have strengthened him to choose the stake.

His testimony began in 1759.

The Hand whose slightest indication he followed led him on. His mind being "in awful retiredness inward to the Lord," the things which grieve the Merciful One became intolerable to him. He could not bear in his journeys as a minister, to "eat, drink, and lodge free cost" with those who lived in ease on the hard labour of their slaves; he could not bear to ride at ease, while the oppressed were toiling, "hardly used," for those who welcomed him. Often weakly, and with a weary body, he travelled on foot from place to place to bear his testimony.

"Though travelling thus on foot was wearisome to his body, it was agreeable to his state of mind," whilst his spirit was "covered with sorrow and heaviness," on account of "friends living in fatness on the labours of the poor oppressed negroes."

In these lonely long walks and "in this state of humiliation, the sufferings of Christ and His tasting death for every man, and the travels and sufferings of the primitive Christians were livingly revived" in him.

His spirit grew freer under the yoke, and he "expatiated" at one of the quarterly meetings "on the tenderness and lovingkindness of the Apostles as shown in labours, perils, and sufferings towards the poor Gentiles," and contrasted with "this the treatment which those Gentiles the negroes received at their hands," and "the power of truth came over those present, and his mind was united to a tender-hearted people in those parts."

Many journeys he made from house to house, earnestly warning the slave-owner against his sin. In 1772 he came on a religious visit to England, and laid before the quarterly meeting at York the wrongs of this oppressed people. And soon afterwards he died.

But in 1774 the Quakers of Pennsylvania and New Jersey disowned any of their members concerned in the slave-trade; and in 1776 they disowned any who refused to emancipate their slaves. Twelve years after-

wards not a slave was held by any member of the Society of Friends.

But these were dead. Who held the banner and carried on the fight now?

It was a way of Loveday's that she never spoke of "the dead." Death, she taught us, was not a permanent condition, but a momentary transition, a commending of the spirit, not for the first time nor the last, into the hands of God. "From the hand of God to the hand of God." They lived by the hand of God. They live in his protecting, moulding, perfecting hands for ever.

"These all died in faith," she said, "not having obtained the promises: they embraced them in weakness and in the darkness afar off. Do you think they will not embrace them now, when they are in the light, in fulness of strength, when the fulfilment comes near, as it is coming every day?"

She could never endure a word which seemed to give the visible precedence over the invisible just made perfect.

"We shall not prevent (precede) them that are asleep," she would say. "They went before, and they shall be first."

"But, Loveday," I said one day, "these have overcome, and the battle goes on; you say the great thing for us is to find out the dragons and the heroes now."

"Yes," she said. "It is because God is not the God of the dead, because the prophets are living now, that it is such empty work to build their sepulchres. They are not caring for their sepulchres, but for the issue of the battle in which they shared."

"But how shall we find out the heroes and the dragons?" I asked, thinking that the Frenchmen who destroyed the Bastille, in whose cause (partly) I had worn the foolscap, had not exactly proved the right heroes, and hoping that Granville Sharp would not similarly fail.

"By fighting your own little bit of the battle well under the Captain's eye; by pulling against the stream of little temptations," she said. "It was by refusing the ill-earned shillings John Woolman was made ready to embrace the emancipation of a race. In the intervals of the battle, if there are any, by keeping our armour bright, and listening for the Master's word of command, and being ready to obey it at all costs. Above all by *listening*. He can direct us *through any voice*, if we are awake and listening. John Woolman was guided into his right path by a temptation to forsake it; Granville Sharp by an appeal to his kindness from a poor bruised and wounded runaway slave, Jonathan Strong;

Thomas Clarkson by an invitation to write a prize essay; William Wilberforce, by an appeal from Thomas Clarkson. But neither of them would have followed the call," said Loveday, "unless they had been listening for the Voice, and had cared before all things in the world to follow it."

CHAPTER XIII.

It was New-Year's Eve; the eve of the birthday of the new century.

It had been proposed that the most intimate members of our circle should welcome it in together in our house. But this fell to the ground.

Madame des Ormes could not trust herself to be in company on that evening. The old century had slain and buried too much. Its last day would to her but be a "jour des morts." She would keep the vigil alone; and her Claire would, she hoped, sleep it in, and see the new century first in the light of dawn. Her poor child's face ought to be towards the dawn; but scarcely her own.

Miss Felicity preferred being under the same roof with her poor brother, though to him years or centuries could bring but little change.

Loveday was not an observer of days and months, and times, and years. To her every morning brought its new mercies, and began a new life. She sate beside the river which makes glad the city of God; and the river of time flowed by her less heeded. It came from the exhaustless clouds and flowed to the boundless seas, and was flowing always. There were breaks in it, rapids, and calms, but they were not affected by the commencement of what we call centuries. Days and nights were realities; and mankind had its days and nights, but they did not date from such artificial barriers. History and life did not, for her, divide themselves in that way.

So our New-Year's gathering was reduced to our own family and my uncle Fyford. Dick was far away in the Mediterranean, blockading Malta, and defending indefensible Naples; his brief letters, when he wrote, full of nothing but Nelson.

Mrs. Danescombe had desired to have introduced the new century in state with the amber damask uncovered, in the drawing-room, but my father for once overruled her decision, and we met it gathered around the wood fire in the old Stone Parlour.

"Yesterday," said my uncle, "the king will have closed the session; in three weeks the Irish members will be flocking to London,

and we shall have the first United Imperial Parliament."

"Scarcely united, I am afraid," said my father. "The old Irish Parliament died hard."

"Everything in Ireland dies hard," retorted my uncle. "Dying and massacring is their strong point. Seventy thousand in the last rebellion, '98. If they could only live and let live, it would be another thing."

"Well," said my father, "in one good thing they are strong—they are against the slave-trade to a man."

"Poor creatures," said my uncle, "they never had any slaves. Property of any kind is not at all events their strong point, and it is easy enough to be generous with other people's."

"You are right as to the slaves, Richard," replied my father rather warmly. "They have never had any slaves since the Irish clergy denounced the Bristol slave-trade in 1172. I should like to see our clergy follow their example now."

"Pray, Mr. Danescombe," said my step-mother, "let politics be banished this one evening. Let us speak of something more suitable to the occasion."

"What would you have, Euphrasia?" he replied, smiling. "Politics are only the gossip of centuries. I wish Dick were here," he added. "You have a letter from him, Piers. Did he say anything about himself?"

"Nothing about himself," said Piers; "scarcely anything about anybody but Nelson."

The "scarcely" meant Amice Glanvil, with whom at the moment our cousin was vehemently in love; "this time," he said, "no boy's fancy, but serious—a matter of life and death!"

"I wonder if the lad says true," said my father. "I should not wonder. The judgment of the people who work under a man, especially that of the young, often squares more with the decision of the centuries, than the judgment in high places. Pity he should be defending that abominable Neapolitan tyranny!"

"There is something in the letter about the execution of a Neapolitan admiral," said Piers, "and the corpse rising up out of the sea and following the ships upright. It was horribly like the Day of Judgment, Dick says; and the poor fellow was called a patriot."

"Poor Caraccioli!" replied my father. "It was a sad business. The noblest helping to sustain the vilest. No wonder the sailors shuddered."

"It was only the weight of the stones

attached to the feet, which caused it," said my uncle drily.

"Very probably," replied my father. "I suppose the Day of Judgment will be brought about by some weight proving too heavy at last. Everything must sink or float by some balancing of weights, — even Neapolitan courts. The wretched thing is to keep up things that ought to sink, by weights unfairly attached,—the weight of Nelson's nobleness and England's freedom, for instance, attached to a defunct tyranny, making it float after living men with a ghastly semblance of life."

We were drifting into politics again.

"At all events," responded my uncle, "I suppose you are not too cosmopolitan to rejoice in the capture of Malta."

"One defunct thing safely buried, at all events, that old order of the Knights," said my father. "Yet that had a grand life and meaning in it once."

"Your old admiration, the French republic, has life enough in it, at all events," said my uncle. "As to meaning, I cannot say. Not exactly the same as it began with, certainly. War and victories on all sides. In Italy, Marengo; in Bavaria, Hohenlinden on the 2nd, a month since. The Czar an adorer of the new Alexander—Napoleon Buonaparte. And even as to your blacks, the Convention decrees emancipation in 1794, and their ships ravage your Free Black Colony in Sierra Leone the same year. What French liberty means, is not so plain."

"It means the First Consul!" said my father, very sadly. "Richard, you are a little hard on me. How could I help hoping? Every one hoped twenty years since. Religious men hoped; and even scepticism hoped. Rousseau, and Tom Paine himself, only wanted to destroy the old beliefs, not for the sake of destroying, but because they fancied they had a new panacea for humanity. For once the toiling, silent multitudes—the multitudes the Master had compassion on, Richard, made themselves heard, and not having learned letters, they spoke in whirlwinds. And the first breath of the whirlwind swept away the Bastille, and seemed to let in a flood of light, and make a world of room for men to think, and form, and reform in. No one thought whirlwinds would build. We only thought they would clear the ground for the builders. But so far, in France at least, the builders have not come, and the whirlwind having destroyed the Bastilles, whirls round the dust of their ruins, on and on, blinding men's eyes and stifling their breath. In England, please God, we will begin with

building, not with destroying. It makes a very irregular edifice, but at least it does not make a world of ruin. The difficult thing now, Richard," he concluded, with a tremor in his voice, "is not to repent, but to hope. You are a teacher of Christianity. Teach us to hope."

"It is five minutes to twelve!" interposed Mrs. Danescombe.

We had made no plan of greeting the coming century. But silence fell on us all. My father went to the window and opened it. We stood near it with hushed breath, hand in hand, mine in Piers's and father's. I knew Reuben Pengelly and the Methodists were watching in the New Year together; and at the old house across the market-place Madame des Ormes, and Claire, and Loveday were keeping vigil. The still air seemed palpitating with prayer. And clear and deep at last fell the twelve midnight beats of the fine silvery old church bell. It was not tolling in its first new century!

And then, through the still, frosty night, the chimes rang out in their slow, lingering music the Old Hundredth Psalm. We all stood still until the last vibration died away along the empty, unlighted, silent streets.

"The old sacred voice is teaching us to hope!" said my father at last. "'Praise God'—there is no surer path to hope." And then in a lower voice he added, as if to himself, "'all creatures here below.' Yes, we are only below! The whirlwind and darkness are only below. 'Praise Him above, ye heavenly host.' They are doing it. *They* have learned the way to hope, the only way. Richard," he said, grasping my uncle's hand, "let us have a prayer, and part."

My uncle looked perplexed. Family prayer even was not then a common institution, extempore prayer was an idea that would never have occurred to him, and the Liturgy itself was scarcely conceivable to him, except, as a whole, in its ordered sequence. And no prayer-book was at hand to read out of. Moreover, there was something curious in kneeling except in a pew or at a bed-side. Yet, he did not like to decline. He hesitated a little, and then did about the best thing that could have been done.

We all knelt at the long, low window-seat, the stars twinkling on us through the frosty air, and the little star in Loveday Benbow's window and in Madame's shining across the market-place; and in a low voice my uncle said, "*Let us pray for the whole state of Christ's church militant here on earth.*"

So we entered the new century, as I trust,

in communion with the whole church, suffering and battling in this transitory life, and departed from it to the King in his heavenly kingdom; always militant here, and always militant in hope.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE next morning I remember feeling it almost strange how unchanged the world looked. The sun dawned, not on a new century, but simply on a new day.

But then, how much a new day means! A new morning and evening, the only eras nature recognises, illuminating the heavens for their birth and close, with unwearied varieties of festive ceremonial, of gladness and of tender solemnity.

Daily life began again, grouped not around centuries, but around its own endlessly varying work and interests.

Although a century had begun, I could not forget the important event immediately before me and Piers; for it was settled at last that Piers and I were to pay the long-promised visit to our cousins the Crichtons at Clapham.

A journey to London was not indeed as formidable a thing as fifty years before. It could be accomplished, travelling early and late, in three days. My father had been to London six times, Mrs. Danescombe once. There were at least twenty people in Abbot's Weir who had spent some days, at one time of their life or another, in the great city. The chief mantua-maker, if she had not achieved the journey herself, procured her fashions from a friend in the neighbouring large town, who went annually. Still it was distinctly an event. Preparations were made for it about on the same scale as in these days for a voyage by the overland route. It was still a popular belief amongst us that the denizens of the metropolis were, in the lower strata, a people of preternatural cunning and acuteness, against whose machinations inexperienced young persons should be carefully warned; and among the higher classes, endowed with a preternatural perfection of good manners, of which provincial young persons were to stand in awe.

People warned you, congratulated you, gave you solemn auguries, or anxious good wishes, according to their experience and disposition, as at the beginning of a new stage of your existence. Madam Glanvil, indeed, who prided herself on a certain fine old county flavour, and would have held it a degradation to tone down even a certain rough provincialism of accent, to the common smoothness of people who were "no

better known in one county than in another," by no means shared this sentiment. I had rather a shrinking from her rough handling of the subject. But that day I had to encounter her; my first New Year's greeting being promised to Amice.

Madam Glanvil received me with her most critical air.

"Don't bring back any fine London airs to me," she said, sitting in her high-backed chair, and pinching me mentally between her fingers, like the pinch of snuff she was taking, "or come mincing your words small like the stones in those new roads of Mr. MacAdam's, till there's no telling what they are or where they come from. Townsfolks are townsfolks, and nothing better, whether the town is where the palaces and Parliament Houses happen to be, or any other. And you Danescobes are better than that, at least on one side. And above all," she added, her manner changing from rough play to sharp and serious warning, and her eyes giving out one of their stormy steely flashes, "don't bring home any new-fangled nonsense of religion or philanthropy. I know where you are going well enough, and the kind of cant they talk at Clapham; calling themselves 'poor sinners' and 'worms of the dust,' and all the time fancying they can see everybody's duties and set everybody right all the world over! That they call 'saving faith.' Believing any wicked lies against their own countrymen and countrywomen, and crying and sighing over any lazy runaway of a black that comes whining to them! And that they call philanthropy. All I know is such religion and such philanthropy don't set foot in Court while the breath is in my body. And that, Bride Danescombe, I hope you quite understand. Methodists there will be, I suppose, as long as there are poor ignorant fools to listen to them, and, as far as I see, among such they do no great harm. It keeps them from worse, as we set fire to the furze when it grows too wild. And I allow they are better than Jacobins. But Methodists in Mufti, Methodists turned parsons, or parsons turned Methodists, and worse than all, Methodists turned philanthropists, that is Jacobins and Methodists in one, I never will abide. And that is what they are at Clapham. I would as soon send Amice to Paris, to learn religion from the French Convention. But there's your father's weak point, and he must take the consequences. Only you understand, I mean what I say. Forewarned is forearmed."

Then, half amused at the warmth she had worked herself into, and pleased to see me

unmoved, as I always was when her assaults in any way touched my father, she added, "Poor little maid, you stand fire pretty well. Come with me, and I will show you something, I'll be bound you care for more than Methodism or philanthropy, black or white." And she walked before me up the old oak staircase into her own bedroom, and there, drawing out from a Japan cabinet sundry treasures of lace and ancient jewellery, she presented me with a piece of choice old English point, and with a pendant of amethyst.

I should greatly have liked not to take them. They seemed to me missiles thrown at Granville Sharp, Mr. Clarkson, Mr. Wilberforce, and all the Clapham names I delighted to honour. But Amice clasped the jewel round my neck.

"I know you would like to throw them at Granny's feet," she murmured, "or to subscribe them to an anti-slavery society. But one would be melodramatic, and the other dishonest. So submit."

And I submitted.

Amice and I walked back through the woods to Abbot's Weir. The air was clear and frosty; the river beside which our path wound mingled its tinkling icicles with the rush of its many waters over the rocks.

"I like a day such as this," Amice said. "There seems room in the world to breathe. The sky seems so boundless and yet so near, and one's own body, like the river, so strong and free; not a burden, but a power. But I am not a power!" she added suddenly, "not a river, indeed, nor a rock to stop it,—only a pebble. All women are no more than that."

"Nothing is really a power," I said, "except in its own place."

"Yes, that is your religion," she said; "God in everything. Do you know, Bride, I have been puzzling out church histories and philosophies, and all kinds of books, in my grandfather's library. Books are the only world in which I am free—free to think; and that is why I care about them. If Piers could not make and work, he would understand what books are better. By-and-by he will; and I have come to the conclusion there are only two religions—Pantheism and Dualism. Polytheism is only the popular side of Pantheism."

"Among the heathen, you mean," I suggested.

"Not at all," she replied. "We may call ourselves what we like, but you are a Pantheist and I am a Dualist. You believe in one power—good; and I in two—good and evil."

"Of course I believe there is the devil, Amice," I said.

"You think you do," she said, "but you think of him as of Attila, the scourge of God; vanquished and swept over by the tide of victory ages ago; or as of an extinct race of wolves or tigers, prowling maliciously around the folds, they dare not ravage. I believe in him as I believe in this terrible Napoleon Bonaparte; and I have not the least idea how the war is to end."

"He *is* vanquished," I said. "I am quite sure how the war will end. But of course I am not sure how this campaign will end."

"You are thinking of Clapham," she said, "and its campaigns against wrongs, against *us*, Bride Danescombe, the slave-holders. I can tell you how that will end. Slavery will be abolished, sooner or later, in ten, say, or twenty or forty years; that is, such slavery as Acts of Parliament can abolish. But things are not so simple as you and Piers and Clapham think. That is the perplexity about the Bible. All the problems there are so simple. There is Christ and Satan, the world and the Church, light and darkness, scarlet and white, Babylon and the Bride. But here nothing is simple; it is all twilight, and intermixing of every colour, and complications of every form. While this contest is going on in Parliament, generations are finishing the warfare, and passing away to be judged. I am passing on to be judged, Bride, and my poor slaves are passing on, and we shall meet there, and we cannot meet here; and it seems as if I might do everything, and I can do nothing. How can I help believing in two powers?"

Her voice and her whole frame quivered, and she stood still.

"How could I help believing them almost equal?—at least," she added, with a sudden illumination of her whole countenance, "I did believe so till last night."

In all our intercourse, intimate as it had been, implied as all this had been, she had never spoke directly thus before. She sat down on the stump of a tree, and, looking down, began to write on the ground with her foot.

"Where do you think I spent last night?" she resumed, suddenly looking up, her whole face radiant. "In the church, by the tombs of my forefathers. Granny does not know, of course. But I was quite sure it would do me good, and quite sure she would not let me go. So I took Chloe and went. To-day I shall tell her. She will storm, and then she will smile, and she will call me mad, and like me rather the better for doing it, and for daring her. It was so strange,

Bride, in the night. The wood was as weird as the church; indeed, the church felt quite homelike after it. Nature is *not* all good and sweet. *She* is dualistic at all events. She has tigers and serpents, and hurricanes and volcanoes, and earthquakes and avalanches; and even in her tame state here in England her winds and rivers moan and roar with voices not altogether angelic. They did, at least, last night. To-day the wind is a playmate—the waters are trickling and sparkling, leaping and coursing like horses set free on the moors. Last night they crept and whirled and plashed sullenly into dark, deep pools, where they could drown people; and the winds wailed and laughed and jabbered and made sudden angry rushes at us."

"'Tis conscience that makes cowards of us all," I said, smiling.

"It was not conscience," she said, "and I was not afraid. It was simply the night, the dark side, *which is always there*. It was the beautiful tamed leopard showing her teeth. They may call her a nurse of men if they like. But she is a nurse of another race, a passionate, tropical creature. If she loves us sometimes, at other times she turns on us, and envies and hates us, and in her rage will do us any mischief she can. One does not know what dark old memories are haunting and maddening her; perhaps it is those mighty fallen spirits of Milton's. Their memories are bitter enough. At any rate, it is very strange to me that men, poets and others, can go on sentimentalising about nature as if she were a beautiful, meek, passive creature, that meant us nothing but good."

"But you got into the church?"

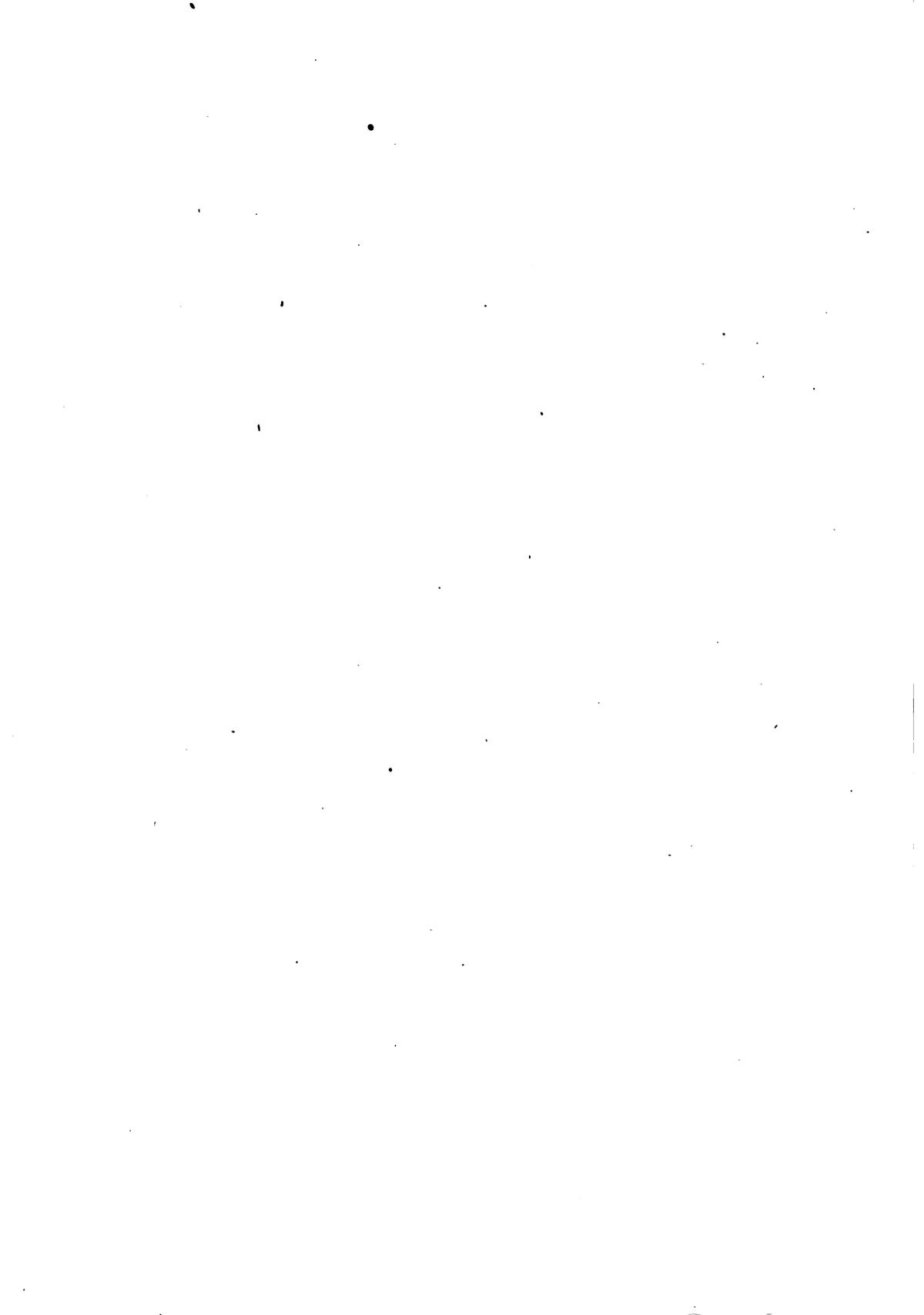
"Yes; there it was different; there I felt at home."

"Yet," I said, "some people would think the church, with the tombs and the silence, far more dreadful at midnight than the woods."

"Because they think the dead are there. We are Christians, and *we know there are no dead*," she said in a low voice. "The dust of those who died is there—all that nature can touch or dissolve. Certainly I am not afraid of that, no more now than on the first day when they let us kiss the cold hands. If those who have died were there, Bride," she added, her rich voice becoming tremulous, "certainly you and I would feel something very different from fear. There are two tombs there, you know, of my ancestors. I knelt between them, and it helped me. One was the Crusader's, with the crossed feet, the rigid, recumbent, stone limbs and helmed head, and the



"AGAINST THE STREAM."



reverent clasped hands. That helped me. He had lived in his day for something more than hunting and feasting, doing what he liked, and adding field to field. He had toiled through mountain and plain, and done things he did not like, fought and hungered and suffered just to rescue that little sacred spot of earth from the Infidel, just because for three days the Lord who died for us had been buried there. How simple the combat seemed to him! Infidel and believer, Turk and Christian, a plain, visible piece of earth to rescue from undeniable visible flesh-and-blood foes, and he would have done his work, and pleased the Master; as simple as for Abraham, or Moses, or David, or Daniel. How easy for him to dare or to sacrifice anything, everything! So sure he must have been and so single-hearted."

"But it was not so sure! at least it does not seem so to us," I said.

"That is the worst of it. The ways which seem so plain at the time are not always those which shine out unquestionable afterwards. The Elizabethan monument helped me more. The husband on the couch, not recumbent, reclining. I like the recumbent, prayerful effigy better. But of course he would not be there reposing if it did not mean that the active work of life were over for him. Beside him the wife kneeling in prayer, with all the children in the quaint ruffs and robes kneeling behind her. I have always been attached to that family of my ancestors. The whole of them seem waiting, just as I am. The father waiting for death and its awakenings; the mother and the children for life and its duties. So they have knelt for two hundred years. I knelt beside them, and tried to pray. Their path could not have been so simple. The Reformation had come, and the world had grown very entangled and complicated. What numbers of good people thought the word and will of God, others thought heresy and self-will. It must have been like it is now: They had need to pray and wait. It was good to kneel beside them in the silence. There is wonderful help in silence."

"We can seldom have silence like that," I said.

"No," she said; "it seemed to take substance—a silence and a darkness that might be felt. The wind moaned a little through the churchyard trees, but it seemed in another world. It was in another world. It is not spirit, with all its spiritual seeming; it is of the earth earthy, as much as the dust it raises. There was no sound near me but poor Chloe's

breathing, and she was too frightened to do anything but breathe, or rather pant. But Chloe was not in any other world. She was not of the things that perish, poor dear, but of the things that abide, for love abides; and she is little else, to God and to me, and to all. She helped me most of all, most of all, Bride. It was through Chloe, Bride, that this wonderful light came to me. It was so strange. It came down on me with overwhelming power, that our Lord, the Son of God—oh, Bride, think!—had died the death of a slave; a death only slaves could die!

"The nature He stooped to is ours—and what stooping!—but the *place* He stooped to, the death He was obedient to, is that of the Cross, that of the slave.

"I cannot tell you what I felt. It seemed to me as if the Blessed Lord Himself were kneeling there beside me, as He did in Gethsemane, identified with poor Chloe, looking up to God and saying of her and her poor, low, despised race, 'I in thee, and they in Me;' and then round on His Christendom—His England—on me, Bride, saying, 'Why persecutest thou *Me*?'"

"One with Chloe—that seemed clear! But, oh, Bride, yet also one with me! Stooping as low to reach me as to reach her—*lower, since pride is lowest of all*, and love is highest of all; and I was full of pride, and she was full of love.

"And I wept as I never wept before. And I said in my heart to Him that I would be one with those poor, despised ones, would live for them and under the burden of their wrongs, until they could be lifted off, and do my best to lighten their wrongs, and succour and sustain them, and lead them to Him, all my life.

"And then the great church bell boomed out midnight, and the chimes rang out, 'Praise God.' And it seemed like a voice of which others might say, 'It thundered;' but to me it said, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear Him.' And my vow was accepted, and I was consecrated to His service, in the least of those His brethren, for ever.

"Oh, Bride, I rose so joyful. And then I kissed Chloe, and we cried together. Poor Chloe is always ready for that. And even the 'how' perplexes me no longer. If He will take us as His servants, it is His work not ours, and He has to show us the way. That is his part, you know, and He will not, cannot fail. But still I am more of a Dualist than a Pantheist. I am sure the battle is

very real, and I cannot tell how my part of it will end."

Then we gave each other a long embrace, and at the little gate of the wood we parted, and her last words were—

"Perhaps at Clapham you may find out something, Bride, to help me to help. We are women, you know, now, and it is time our work should begin."

CHAPTER XV.

THE leave-takings before our journey to London were numerous.

Piers and I were, in a way, the property of the whole town. My father's genial ways, his large employment of labour, his real "public spirit," which made the well-being of Abbot's Weir a matter of as grave interest to him as that of his own affairs, his countless unostentatious private kindnesses, of which we were often the ministers, the long establishment of the family in the town and neighbourhood, gave us a relationship to the little community, isolated from all other communities by the steep and muddy lanes which led to it, and by the rocky moors and furzy downs, which bordered its territories on more than one side.

One custom instituted by my own mother had brought me into contact with many of our neighbours. Every Saturday, in my childhood, I, and afterwards Piers, had been dispatched laden with a great basketful of fresh fruit and vegetables from our large garden to various people who had known, or might have known, better days, and who could only be relieved without being wounded, in the form of a kind of hospitality. "You know the sunny slopes on which they grew," my father would say, "and that always makes things taste better." Then there were the workmen, who, according to their prejudices or intelligence, regarded our going as a glorious voyage of discovery, or a perilous venture; and the waggoners, who warned us solemnly against "them racing fast coaches;" the shopkeepers, especially Mrs. Burnaby the confectioner, who made the most original and artistic sweetmeats, and whose shop we only avoided through delicacy, so liberal was her heart, who "expected we should think little of her tarts when we came back, and yet we might find there were a few things they did not do better in London;" and Mrs. Wilmington, the bookseller, whose whole little store of books used to be at our service when childish illnesses drove us to literature, and who always in after-days kept for us the first reading of Sir Walter, and who, having an

enlarged mind in her prim little body, assured us that "the best books had not been written in London, whatever anybody might say." And, above all, there was Priscy Pengelly, who condoled with us, and ominously "hoped that we might find things as we left them;" and Reuben, who admitted that it would be a fine thing to see John Wesley's great chapel at the Foundry, "up to London," and to see Squire Wilberforce, but reminded us that London was no nearer heaven than Abbot's Weir, "though, sure enough, it was as near." "As near," he concluded, passing his rough hand over his eyes, "never you forget that. And God forbid I should, though it does seem cruel far away."

And there were all the things and persons that could *not* be taken leave of—the dear familiar dropping-well, and garden slopes, and the Leas and the Leat, and the hills, and the little children, who could not understand leave-takings, and would so soon forget, and the dear dogs, who did quite understand to their distress that we were going away, but could not understand we were to return, and would *not* forget.

And Madame des Ormes, who said—

"Your London is not to you what our Paris was to us. That was like the *heart* of France—poor, passionate, foolish heart—which we loved, and which has lost itself and betrayed us. London is only brain, I think, to England, very busy and clever, but I do not see that you love it. It will not absorb you, my child, or make you forget us; I am not afraid. London is very large," she continued, "but perhaps you will be able to give this packet into the hand of my friend. It is a letter of our martyred Madame Elizabeth, which she will like to see, too precious to send by post. And for you, you must take some little souvenir of the old Frenchwoman for whom you had so much goodness." And she placed in my hand a little bracelet of the Renaissance work, with a locket enamelled with roses and Loves, and also, I suppose to neutralise my vanity, a copy of Thomas à Kempis in French. "You will not object to the little Loves?" she said, clasping it round my arm. "Baptize them, my child, with your own tender spirit, and they become little angels."

In Claire's eyes there were tears, and a tremor was in her voice.

"I have painted you a flower," she said; "I had nothing else."

And she gave me a little painted velvet pincushion, with forget-me-nots.

I missed it the first day of our journey, and never found it till long years afterwards, poor little faded treasure.

Miss Felicity shook her head and compressed her lips. She had never liked people wandering from their kith and kin and all belonging to them, and it was of no use to pretend she did. She had seen no good come of it. People, especially young people, came back fancying themselves half a head taller because they had stood on the top of St. Paul's, and a whole world wiser, because they had seen a few miles more of it. But when you came to think of it, crowds were made up of men, women, and children, and men, women, and children were no bigger and no wiser because there were a hundred thousand of them at hand instead of three. However, she had done her best to ground us well, and she hoped we should come back as good as, on the whole, we went.

Loveday said little. But her dear eyes shone more than usual.

"You will see the men who are fighting the battle for us all," she said. "Don't let anything make you mistake them. The good fight is fought, visibly, remember, not by angels, but by men and women and little children, by poor King David, and by Jonathan, who could not do without the honey. You would not have thought the dear Apostle Peter had walked on the sea, and would die on the cross, if you had heard him that dreadful night, and seen him warming himself at the fire. Did you say you wish I were going with you, my dear? It seems as if it would be a wonderful help; and I shall so miss you, Bride and Piers! But we shall see them all one day, you know," she added, "see them *at their very best, and for a long time be at home with them, Bride!*"

And she looked so near seeing the just made perfect, with her dear pallid face, and the far-away look in her eyes, that I could do nothing but cry and feel as if the parting were for ever, though I insisted to her that it was but for a very little while.

My father made less of it than any one in words.

"One would think the children were going to be married, or going to emigrate to Nova Scotia," he said, "from the fuss made about it."

He entirely declined to allow that the expedition was anything of importance, but meanwhile he was constantly recurring to it with a tender solicitude which often made me ready to give it up, incessantly planning one small comfort or another, with a certain

uneasy sense that he had to be both mother and father to us, and did not exactly know how.

Mrs. Danescombe, on the other hand, told me that it was a most momentous crisis of my life. One could not tell what might not depend on our making a pleasant impression on our cousins, who were, she understood, most influential and highly cultivated people. And she gave Piers and me directions as to forms of address and behaviour which would have infallibly given us an air of elaborately concealed rusticity, had we not forgotten them all and fallen back on our natural manners.

She was most solicitous also as to preparations of clothes, deeming no mantua-maker in Abbot's Weir sufficiently fashionable, until my father suggested that a smaller wardrobe and a fuller purse would be far more advantageous; in consequence of which suggestion we were sent away with light luggage, well-filled purses, and recommendations to observe and bring back the fashions which our "influential" cousins affected.

At the last moment there were so many forgotten trifles to be remembered, and so many last directions to be received, and so many fears of being late, that there was no leave-taking at all.

We were in the weekly coach struggling up the steep hill which led out of the town, Piers and I, launched on the wide world together, in the dusk of the winter morning, before I had time to think.

It was not, however, until the last familiar grey Tor had vanished out of sight, at the next town, where we were to change from the heavy Abbot's Weir coach into what was considered the marvel of speed and convenience which was to convey us by the main road to London, and until the last face and voice familiar from childhood had been left behind, that I felt we were really off.

From the warm nest into the world—"the cold world," as some people called it.

I did not think the world seemed cold at all. Every one was very protective and kind to us, more protective than Piers always altogether liked, he being now for the first time my "natural protector." But how warm the nest had been I had never felt before.

Yet, after all, some of the best warmth of the nest was with me. I had Piers to watch over; and Piers had me. And most delightful it was to belong entirely to each other, and to have the world before us. Since we were children we had not had such long unbroken talks. And now we were better than children, it seemed to us, and

the things we had to talk about in what seemed then the long common past, and the long unrolled future, were of endless interest.

And Piers reminded me in so many ways of father, countless little turns of manner and little dry, droll sayings, and little thoughtful attentions to one's comfort. And yet so different: more reserved, more decided, more definite, more of the master about him; people did what he said as a matter of course; less seeing on all sides, perhaps seeing better the one point to be reached; less sanguineness, yet more hope.

It distresses me that I can picture him so little in words; that picture always so clear to me: especially Piers. It was the absence of self-assertion, with the quiet power of commanding because he knew what and when to command, and did not care in the least for ruling for its own sake, but only for getting things rightly done, and people effectively helped, the gravity, with the under-current of joyousness, the quick

sense of ludicrous incongruity, with the under-current of tender, helpful, chivalrous sympathy that made satire impossible to him. And when I have put down all these words, I find I have only balanced one tint against another, and left no colour at all; no picture, no individual, but a type. And he was altogether individual, and so full of life and variety, entirely unlike any one else. Well, it would not be easy to describe an oak, the most individual tree in existence, to any one who had not seen it. A branch here, and a branch there, and leaves everywhere, and the branches full of every conceivable twist, moulded by winds of circumstance, and the whole full of all conceivable majestic symmetry, growing by inward laws of life, and the root grasping the earth as if for eternity, and the leaves fluttering each with its own delicate variety of tint and form, and the shadow a shelter that has sheltered and will shelter generations. But there my oak was, and that was enough for me.

THE CHARIOTS OF GOD.

"The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them."
"There is none that can deliver out of His hand."

LORD of the howling wastes of life
Where evils watch for prey,
And many a guardian gleam of good
In shadow dies away,
Borne on by Thee in paths unknown,
Well may we trust Thy hand alone,
And suffer angels of Thy own
To shield us while they may.

That hand is faithful to its charge,
It wins no hold in vain;
It brings us under many powers
To one eternal reign;
It bends the will to things that bless,
It hallows their imperfectness,
It sanctions trouble and distress
To make its goodness plain.

Revealer of a heaven encamped
Where'er Thy servants go,
By ministries of love to each
That none beside may know,
By wings at many a pass outspread,
By winning joy and warning dread,
We learn the word which Thou hast said,
The truth which Thou wilt show.

And ever to the heavenward eye
On noble aims intent,
Some vision from a farther gaze
At every step is sent.
That which could guide us in Thy name
Beyond the rule of sin and shame—
We shall not question whence it came
Or wonder why it went.

Oh, blessed, blessed is the light
That in Thy light we see,
While good and harm in one restraint
Prevail to prove us free.
Oh, blessed from before Thy face,
With all its bonds of time and place,
The changing convoy of Thy grace
That leaves the heart to Thee.

A. L. WARING.

FROM ROME.

By JOHN KER, D.D.

II.

ROME, Jan. 22, 1873.

MY DEAR DR. GUTHRIE,—I wish to give you some account of the religious services which have been held in Rome at the beginning of the year, as these will convey some idea of how matters are moving both among the English-speaking and the native Christian communities. First, however, it may be well that I should tell you of some corresponding services of the Roman Catholic Church. There used to be a great demonstration at the commencement of the year in the Propaganda Fide College, the immense pile which every English tourist is acquainted with, as abutting on the Piazza di Spagna, just beyond the column of the Immaculate Conception. Since the Italians entered Rome, however, this has ceased, with many other things of the kind, and the chief token of activity there is in pamphlets and almanacs, which occupy the windows of the Bookselling Department. The almanac has its work to do at this season in religious attack and defence, for naturally enough it brings up the question of saints' days and their claims. The *Amico di Casa* (Home Friend), edited by the late Dr. De Sanctis, did and does good service for gospel truth, and has a circulation of many thousands throughout Italy, spreading salutary information both for body and soul. I observe that one of the publications of the Propaganda is a travestie of it, which shows a sense of its power. But though the demonstration at the great missionary college has ceased, there has been another, held also annually, in the Church of St. Andrea della Valle. This church is in one of the most populous parts of Rome, immediately beyond the Pantheon, and is said to occupy the site of the Curia of Pompey, where the senate sat on the day of the assassination of Cæsar. The statue of Pompey, which stood here, and at the foot of which "great Cæsar fell," may still be seen in the Palazzo Spada, not far distant. The modern church of St. Andrea is large and handsome, and contains, among other monuments, the tomb of the well-known Pope Eneas Sylvius, who held the Council of Basle. It is, beyond others in Rome, devoted to the celebration of Epiphany, and is therefore selected for missionary services at this season. Behind the altar there is an

immense structure representing the stable, with the Virgin Mary and the Child Jesus, the shepherds and the Magi, all dressed in the gorgeous and somewhat fantastic style common in Roman churches, and very unlike what one would think of as the humble reality. The oxen fill up the background, with a distant landscape and sky, where the star appears, and the whole, as one may suppose, draws crowds of spectators throughout Epiphany week. Mass is celebrated according to different rites, Latin, Greek, and Armenian, and sermons are delivered by celebrated preachers in various languages—English, German, French, and Italian. At the side of the church are erected a lofty and roomy pulpit, and, for those whose fervid style of oratory demands it, a still more spacious platform, with a chair and table, and large crucifix standing beside them. Owing to our own services in the Week of Prayer being held at the same time, I was unable to be present until the last day, but it gave me a general idea of the whole. In the forenoon, Monday, the sermon was in English, by the Rev. P. G. Lambert, of the Society of Jesus, on the Adoration of the Virgin. The preacher, a spare, elderly man, took the pulpit, and gave a quiet, unimpassioned, and, as it seemed to Protestants, weakly discourse on the merits of the Virgin, beginning with the Council of Ephesus and Pope Celestine, and ending with the decree of Pius IX., "a greater," as he said, "than Celestine," affirming the Immaculate Conception. The world was in a sad state just now with revolution and materialism, but one great comfort was that so many confraternities for the veneration of Mary existed, and that such miracles as those of Lourdes were testifying to her power. He deplored the state of England, which was so rich and prosperous, but had such masses without any consciousness of God, while here every street corner showed the regard for the Blessed Mother. In London there were once thirteen churches dedicated to the Virgin, but now their sites were known only to antiquaries. Yet there was hope for England; faith was returning, and there was one country united to her, Ireland, which had never ceased to call the Virgin "blessed." There might be some thirty English present, con-

spicuous most of them by their Murray, and about as many more English youths connected with Roman seminaries. I know of one effect of the sermon. An English lady who has been led through High Church teaching to the verge of the Church of Rome, but whose chief difficulty consisted in the adoration of the Virgin, was brought here by her guides to have it removed. Meanwhile the result has been the reverse. The dose was too strong, and has driven her farther from joining the Church than she was.

The afternoon service, however, was much more interesting. It began at 3.30 P.M., and lasted till hundreds of tapers lighted up the shrine of Bethlehem, leaving the rest of the church, in twilight gloom, filled by a picturesque audience of not less than two thousand persons, chiefly of the lower class of population, in all attitudes and in rapt attention. The preacher was the Rev. D. Rinaldo Deggiovanni, apostolic missionary, one of the notable orators of the church, and prior of St. Mary of Consolation, a dark young man, of middle size, in the black robe of the seculars, girt tightly round the middle, and leaving him free to traverse the platform, which he preferred to the pulpit, and to use all the skill of dramatic action, which he employed to perfection. Sometimes he paced it in its length, poised himself on its edge, beseeching those nearest him, drew himself up, and appealed to God or the Virgin, apostrophized the cradle at one time, the crucifix at another, exhausted himself in stormy passion, and threw himself into the chair till he and the audience recovered, and then commenced slowly again while he sat, started to his feet, and wrought his way to another climax. The sermon, which lasted more than an hour, was on the Pontificate of Rome, and there was great tact shown in the way in which he sought to enlist sympathy for the Pope without exposing himself to the charge of sedition. "The Vicar of the Infant of Bethlehem" was the favourite appellation, varied occasionally by "the aged prisoner of the Vatican." He spoke first of the duration of his throne, while others had perished. Assyrian, Greek, Roman, where were they? while his remained; and now to demonstrate it to this age, the man who three short years ago was master of Europe, but who deserted the Church in its crisis, was being laid in his sepulchre in a foreign land. He numbered up the sects in long array that had opposed the Church—Arians, Pelagians, Donatists, Albigenses, Lutherans, Calvinists, ending with Evangelicals. He enumerated the dis-

putes of councils that had been hushed at last when the Vicar of the Infant of Bethlehem spoke, closing with the greatest, the Immaculate Conception and the power of Infallibility. It might be said there were unworthy popes, but the authority lay not in the man but in the office, and even as to men where had there ever been such an array of heroes, saints, and martyrs? Of above two hundred and fifty, not more than five or six had fallen short of their position; and was not this proof of a divine hand? To whom was Europe indebted but to the Pontiff of Rome for civilisation, for schools, and universities? Who but he had given to this city all the attractions of art and literature that drew to her the nations of the earth, and what benefit would the citizens of Rome derive from it, if by their ingratitude they compelled the Holy Chair to seek for its utterances another centre? Towards the close he held up a tract which he said had been given to him by an old woman, and which had the title "Come to Jesus." She had received it from some of these English Protestants who were doing so much mischief, and telling simple people that they could come to Christ and be saved without priests, or fasting, or prayers. By what means he wondered were they then to come? These English Protestants, he continued, did not know the harm they were doing, but let them go back to their own country and meet Catholicism there, where it was returning to its old seats, and let us pray for the conversion of England. The sermon finished by a vehement appeal with outstretched arms to the Virgin, who held the infant Christ in her arms, to interpose in this crisis of the Church's history. "Cause Him," were the closing words, "Blessed Virgin, cause thy Son to listen."

The sermon was very complete as a rhetorical effort, and was evidently listened to by the dense audience with deep interest. It did not, however, appear to produce much practical effect, if one might judge by the way in which the pecuniary appeal was responded to. It was in behalf of the restoration and adornment of the altar of St. Andrew, which had fallen into disrepair, but though the collecting bags were shaken in the faces of every one around me, I scarcely saw a single soldo cast in. It may be this is no test, for the difficulty of inducing Italians to part with money for any public object is confessed by all. Yet they are admirers of the powers of speech, and where sermons are advertised, especially if there is any attraction in the

speaker, there is sure to be an audience. One can see still the shadow of that power which was wielded by a Hortensius and a Cicero. It is a ground of hope for this country when divine fire shall go forth with winged words. I could not help feeling sad at heart for the hundreds round, while the orator ran nimbly over the ages and councils and schools, and wrought himself into frenzied passion about the wrongs and insults heaped on the martyr Pope. It was not merely the utter absence of reason or argument, and the low estimate his appeals set on their understanding, but the entire want of any attempt to touch the heart or conscience, or to deal with his audience as men and women possessed of souls. The whole effort was to build up through the pontificate an external wall round them, and to cut them off as much as possible from every influence that would bring them into direct and independent contact with God and his truth. It is the tendency of the system in all its parts, and it has brought about that pupilage of Roman Catholic countries which shows itself so much in political and civil life.

But it is time for me to leave this, which was meant to be merely introductory, and to pass to some account of the meetings that have been held by the Protestants of Rome in the beginning of this year. They took place, as you know, in union with the Week of Common Prayer, which is now held so generally by Protestant Christians throughout the world, and nowhere, perhaps, with so much enjoyment and profit, as where they are separated from the great body of their brethren. The services occupied a week, alternating generally between the forenoon and evening, and the subjects of address and prayer were those recommended by the Council of the Alliance, adapted to the special circumstance of this place and time. They were held in the large room of the Rev. Mr. Van Meter, not far from the Piazza di Spagna, which will hold above one hundred, and which was always well filled, the attendance and interest continuing unabated to the close. Ministers and members of all the different Protestant Churches joined in them, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Congregationalist, Baptist, and Methodist, and whatever little mannerism there might be in the tone caught in the particular family, the spirit was one of the most marked unity, and it would have been impossible from anything in doctrine or sentiment to have said to what section of the Church of Christ any one speaker belonged. I see that the *Tablet* has been speaking of the

jangling mixture of the Protestant sects in Rome, and the discord among them; but it is their acknowledged presence there, and specially this peaceful union in prayer, that forms the great grievance. One could not but recollect the time, not long gone by, when English tourists were watched by the papal spies in the street and hotel, when the possession of a Bible subjected its owner to serious trouble, and when the smallest meeting of Christians for prayer was a criminal offence. The great wrong felt by the prisoner of the Vatican is, that he is deprived of the power of persecution, and one of the strangest things felt at present by Protestants in Rome, is this sense of freedom in the old home of the Inquisition. The cluster of Protestant churches to be found outside the gate at the Porta del Popolo is one of the remaining signs of the past times of restriction, when service even in English was thrust out of Rome, and driven to occupy secluded spots, with the constant threat of prohibition hanging over it even there. One of these churches, the Presbyterian, was granted to the Italian Protestants for their meetings during the week of prayer, as no place could be found by them, in Rome itself, commodious enough for their gathering. They assembled here for six evenings, from Monday to Saturday, and the same harmony was seen and felt as among the English-speaking communities. There were never less than two hundred, and sometimes considerably more, and the services were conducted by the different ministers and evangelists, whilst members of the churches joined also in prayer. I was present at two of these meetings, and it was deeply interesting to hear the thanks they gave to God for the new position in which they stood to Him, not only as free before men, but in the liberty of Christ's gospel. I observed that many of them joined in singing the hymns without book, though they had it at hand, which showed an acquaintance with the contents, and was a test of attendance on ordinances, for the knowledge they possess has been gained by most of them in two years. The Protestants, as might be supposed, have been drawn almost entirely from the class of the population that can read, though most of them are in humble rank in society. Another thing I remarked as being in contrast with the Roman Catholic churches, was that the men were more numerous than the women. This is usual in the Protestant Italian meetings. The women remain longer attached to the Romish Church, and are often a source of difficulty to the Protestant husband, but when

they once embrace evangelical truth they are the most zealous. The opposition these converts have sometimes to meet among their friends is a good test of their sincerity, for the saying of the Saviour holds good, that "a man's foes are those of his own household."

On the week following that of prayer, two meetings were held in the large room Vicolo d'Alibert, at which the labourers among the Italians in Rome gave some account of their work. These meetings were well attended, and a few of the particulars given may be interesting to you, remembering, as before mentioned, that all these agencies have been in operation for little over two years. M. Ravi, Presbyterian minister, has been twenty months in Rome, and has generally about eighty hearers, as many as the place will hold. About forty have formally left the Church of Rome, and give evidence of having received the gospel truth. Interesting facts regarding some of these were given. He preaches four or five times a week, and has schools and classes at work. MM. Ribetti and Meille, Waldensian, have two localities for preaching, and four regular services. In the one, Via Sodderini, near the Corso, they have above a hundred of an audience; and at their communion, lately, eighty sat down in fellowship. The greater part of these were Romans who have joined the Church since freedom entered. They have three day-schools attended by more than one hundred children, and a Sabbath-school attended by sixty. Mr. Cote, of the American Baptist Church, has no locality as yet in Rome, but preaches in Mr. Van Meter's school in the Trastevere, and visits the villages and towns around Rome. He gave some details that showed an awakening of the attention of people to Bible truth in some of these places. M. Gavazzi said he was not a local, but a travelling evangelist. He preached from time to time in Rome, and they had a regular labourer, M. Conti, at their locality, 9, Via di Corallo. They had seventy-five converts from the Church of Rome, and had added five during last month. They have female readers of the Bible, and a sewing society for assisting the poor in household work. They have day-schools, with a hundred and ninety pupils, and a Sabbath-school with about eighty in attendance. M. Sciarelli, of the Methodist Church, has at his regular worship fifty, and at his meetings of evangelisation a hundred and twenty, the latter being directed more to those who are feeling their way to truth either from the Church of Rome or from materialism.

This kind of service is in use also by the other evangelists, and is useful, indeed indispensable, in the state of mind of many of the people. There are fifty-eight regular members in the Methodist Church, and different agencies at work, which they hope to make greatly more efficient when the new property they have acquired, at a price of £10,000, is fitted up. Mr. Wall, of the English Baptist Church, has not yet secured a fixed place, but preaches in the tent belonging to Mr. Van Meter, in a small garden in the Via Laurina, off the Corso. He has above a hundred regular hearers, and very interesting classes of young men and women. At a meeting on the evening before, twenty came to converse with him as inquirers, several soldiers among them. A young Italian, in connection with no society, and on his own responsibility, has been meeting with soldiers to read the Scriptures, and has a class of thirty-five. Some very interesting statements were given by Mr. Wall and others, illustrating the peculiar state of mind among many of the people just now, struggling out of Romanism, and ready to stumble into materialism, from having lost faith in the priests. They look with jealousy on any one who speaks of religion as if it were an attempt to fasten on them the old fetters. Besides these agencies, there are the schools carried on by Mrs. Gould, including above a hundred children; and those of Mr. Van Meter, which had nigh three hundred, till they were closed lately by the government, on the ground that some regulations had not been complied with. The difficulty has been obviated in regard to one of the schools, the most important in the Borgo Vecchio, near St. Peter's, and there is good hope that the others will be re-opened in due time. The government requires a certificate of fitness from all who engage in secular teaching, but on the religious question they observe neutrality, and, so far as I can see, are equally just to all parties. The great difficulty, however, in establishing evangelical schools is the procuring men and women who are capable of teaching the secular branches, and who will, at the same time, infuse a Christian spirit into all the instruction. This is a question for time, wisdom, and patience, but it is worth them all. As it is, upwards of six hundred children are now in Protestant schools, and are obtaining not only the ordinary elements of a good education, but an acquaintance with Bible truth of the most important kind. I have been present at a number of them, on examination and on ordi-

nary days, and remarked the care bestowed both on the mind and heart. They are taught to repeat such portions of the Scripture as the parables of the good shepherd, the good Samaritan, the prodigal son, the sermon on the Mount; and these carried into their homes, will spread the knowledge of the gospel, and awaken the desire for the entire New Testament.

Besides the meetings on Italian evangelisation, we had one on the Jewish mission in the Ghetto, when the Rev. Dr. Philip and the Rev. Mr. Burtchael gave some account of their work there. There are five thousand Jews in that part of Rome, most of them in a condition of the most abject poverty. The long persecution of ages was lightened by the present Pope, and has entirely ceased with the entrance of the Italians. No part of the population of Rome welcomed the flag of Victor Emmanuel with more enthusiasm than the poor Jews. There was a tax which had been imposed on them by Vespasian, the equivalent to what they had been accustomed to contribute for their own temple, and during all these centuries they have had to pay it at the Capitol till two years ago. Now at last, for eighteen hundred years, they are on the level of their fellow-citizens in political liberty, but it will require much labour and Christian sympathy to raise them from the social degradation into which ages of oppression have sunk them. They receive visits kindly, thought is being stirred, but schools provided with some industrial department are necessary, and the difficulty is the same here, as elsewhere, to procure building ground at a possible price. Most of the property in the Ghetto and neighbourhood is in the hands of cardinals, religious houses, or princes under their influence, and there is almost no means of leasing a small place. Yet the surface of Jewish prejudices is softening, Rabbinism as a system is dead, and the question turns upon the Bible with those who have any faith in the religion of their fathers.

I had intended in this letter to give you some account of the Protestant publications in Rome and Italy, which are now considerable; also of what is being done by the Bible and Tract Societies, and the religious tone of Italian literature in general. But I must defer this. From what I have said, you will see that there is a good deal of work going on with some measure of result. Sometimes I fear that a false impression is created unintentionally in enumerating all the agencies, for, after all, they are little in the midst of the mass of

indifference which prevails. I say *indifference*, for this is the great evil to be feared in the future. The fire-damp of a false religion is followed by the choke-damp of materialism. One of the worst things about Romanism is, that it corrupts in so many the religious appetite, vitiates it so much, that it becomes unfitted for the most wholesome food. In multitudes the capacity of faith seems burned out, and only dead ashes are left. If the mother of all the churches, they say, is false, what trust can we have in those which have sprung from her? Religion is an invention for the benefit of interested parties, and we have had enough of it. Others again say that positive forms of Protestantism are good for the northern nations. We see that the Teutonic races and North America have grown strong by them, but they are unsuited to the taste of southern races. How long it may take for the tone of religious feeling, so terribly abused, to recover, we cannot say. There is, as yet, no general awakening in Italy as a whole, nothing even approaching to what took place at the era of the Reformation, when almost every town had its sympathizers with the gospel, and its earnest students of the New Testament, when men like Michael Angelo, and women like Vittoria Colonna, loved it in their heart. The movement was then quenched in blood, burned out in the fires of the Piazza dei Fiori—the Smithfield of Rome—or buried in the dungeons of the Inquisition, worked here, as in Spain, with tremendous energy. In our day, we have one great advantage, the possession of religious freedom, and the prospect, humanly speaking, that the political despotism of the Roman papacy has seen its close. But we have the consequences of the terrible wrong it did to conscience and reason and Christianity, to contend with. Nevertheless, the time of reaction from indifference and religious apathy will also come. Men cannot remain for ever satisfied only with the things they see and handle. The effort to evangelise Italy, though small in result compared with the field, is sowing seed throughout the land that will appear some day. There is evidence that it is laying hold. Here and there, single individuals, and small companies, where they were not expected, come to light as friends of Bible truth, and when God sends the man, or men, whom He keeps in reserve for his great times of spiritual upheaval, they will gather in the fruit of what is now being done by humble but devoted workers in preparing the way.

Yours ever sincerely, JOHN KER.

PERFECT PEACE.

By H. A. PAGE.



LIKE a Dead Sea, lie behind me
 Sinful pleasures of the past :
 My good Master hath inclined me
 To his holy law at last.

Long and patiently He bore me,
 While I wandered far astray,
 Till the briars and thorns tore me,
 And I fell beside the way !

Seemed no sweetness on the token
 He held forth to me the while !
 Though my spirit proud was broken,
 On my face no more the smile.

Sadly rough the ways around me ;
 Desert lands behind, before ;
 Strong the terrors were that bound
 me,
 As a slave, lashed to his oar !

Yet would I make no surrender,
 I would walk my way alone ;
 Heard I oft his accents tender,
 But their might I would not own.

Still my pain pressed keen and
 keener,
 Till I cried in my despair :
 "Have mercy, Lord, on me a sin-
 ner—
 Poor and bleeding, torn and bare !"

Then He touched me with his finger,
 Saying, "I will make thee whole :
 Arise, arise, no longer linger ;
 Rise, press onward to the goal !

"Still the rocks and thorns may
 wound thee,
 Bleeding feet make heart to fail,
 But a peace complete is found thee,
 'Anchor fixed within the vail.'"

Honey on the rod I tasted,
 Joy stole on my heart anon ;
 Thought of all the strength I'd
 wasted,
 Made me eager to atone.

Storms, I know, are still before me,
 Seas of trouble run not dry ;
 Faith is mighty to restore me,
 Though the waves swell moun-
 tains high.

CUTHBERT OF LINDISFARNE.

PART III.

WHILE Cuthbert was seeking communion with God amidst the loneliness of Farne, a formidable plot to withdraw him from his solitude was being concocted at Twyford on the Alne. Wilfrid having been uncanonically deposed from the see of York, a synod of bishops, robed and mitred, and presided over by Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury, met to dispose of the sees of Hexham and Lindisfarne, parts of the deposed prelate's diocese; and it was unanimously resolved, with the concurrence of the king, to elect to the bishopric of Hexham Cuthbert, erewhile the missionary prior of Mailross and Lindisfarne, now the renowned anchoret of Farne. In disposing of these dioceses, the archbishop, as well as the king, acted in direct defiance of the decree of the Bishop of Rome.

Vainly was messenger after messenger dispatched to Farne to require the presence and concurrence of the bishop elect. For never limpet clung more closely to the rocks of Farne than did this hermit to his solitary cell, endeared to him by the struggles and the victories of nine quiet years. But the synod of Twyford was by no means discomfited. Scarcely had the last messenger brought Cuthbert's final refusal, when King Egfrid equipped his royal bark, and sailed for Farne with many of the nobles of his court, Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury, an imposing array of mitred prelates, and the Abbot of Lindisfarne in dark coarse clothing. The hermit, who for some years had scarcely been seen by men, came down to the landing-place to receive the august visitors. His face and form were worn by fasting and vigils, his figure was somewhat bowed, though he was hardly in middle age, and his whole appearance bore traces of feeble health and prolonged austerities. His coarse garment of undyed wool had been worn all too long, and his sandals had not been removed for six months. Then there was King Egfrid in his royal robes, embroidered with gold, and with the crown upon his head, the prelates in all their ecclesiastical splendour, and the attendants gorgeous in those richly ornamented and brightly coloured garments which the Anglo-Saxons loved. Nothing removes this incident more completely into the sphere of a simpler religious age, than the fact that this brilliant assemblage fell down as one man at the feet of Cuthbert,

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beseeching him with many words and abundant tears that he would reconsider his determination. He resisted, with weeping and urgent entreaties that he might be left to his solitude, and surely the *nolo episcopari* never came from truer lips! But persuasions so influential, backed as they were by the solicitations of the community at Lindisfarne, at last prevailed, and on Easter Sunday, 685, he was consecrated Bishop of Hexham, at York, by Theodore and six assisting prelates. Soon afterwards, however, he effected an exchange with Eata, Bishop of Lindisfarne, and once more found himself among his beloved monks in the sea-girt monastery of Holy Island.

The bishopric of Lindisfarne still continued to be mainly a missionary bishopric, dealing chiefly with a population of conquered races, including the Britons of Cumbria, a province which had recently succumbed to the Northumbrian arms. The needs of such a people rekindled the old evangelistic fire in Cuthbert's breast, and we know not which is worthiest of our admiration, the athletic monk who in the enthusiasm of youth re-conquered Northumbria for Christ, or the feeble-bodied recluse of Farne, coming forth from his congenial retirement to lead the toiling life of an itinerant preacher to newly-baptized barbarians. Cuthbert retained the simple dress and habits of the cœnobite, scorning the worldly pomp with which Wilfrid and others had already surrounded the episcopate. No obstacle frustrated his intention of preaching in every corner of his diocese. He spent two years in itinerating, baptizing, confirming, instructing, preaching, giving alms, crowds hanging upon his words, and fame, not content with celebrating his almost superhuman labours, attributed to him the possession of miraculous powers. He seems to have been very familiar with the New Testament, and to have drawn his chief inspiration from its unsullied spring, and it is not wonderful that the words of St. John, read with the good Baisil many years before on the banks of the river of death, were continually on his lips. The parochial system, introduced into England by Theodore, was yet in its infancy, especially in the north; so the converts were altogether dependent on the ministrations of itinerant monks. As the chief pastor, Cuthbert followed the sheep as of old, sometimes

on horseback, oftener on foot, fording rivers, crossing bogs, climbing hills, and scaling cliffs, penetrating forests, seeking souls for Christ everywhere. There was no hamlet so obscure as to be unvisited, scarcely a dwelling too isolated or difficult of access to be reached by the untiring evangelist. Of the many hundred discourses delivered during his episcopate, we have unfortunately no record. But Bede describes his eloquence as a torrent, and its results testify to its power.

But another source of power lay in his large-heartedness, sympathy, and tenderness. The hermit, who in his deepest seclusion never refused consolation and counsel, was brought as the bishop into direct contact with the lives and woes of men. In the various accounts which have come down to us of his intercourse with all classes, from the nobles of Egfrid's court, who knelt before a higher nobility than their own, to the thralls who fell with superstitious reverence at the feet of the "saint," the feature on which we linger the most lovingly is the intensity of the tenderness and sympathy of that altogether human heart. The memory of the anchoret might have perished, but that of the loving man who had an ear for all sorrows and difficulties, whose genial presence enhanced the domestic joys he could never know, whose active sympathies lightened the woes he could not remove, and who sent none empty away, abides in the freshness of perpetual youth in the northern counties of England. There is a great beauty about Cuthbert's character. He was unworldly in the highest sense of the word. For himself, as for others, his highest aim was personal sanctification. Everywhere in that troubled day he appears as a mediator, a healer, a peace-maker. While the development of the essentially Roman spirit produced Wilfrid, Cuthbert, though he had much in common with the early solitaires of the Thebaid, and with the austere ascetics who followed the rule of the great Abbot of Iona, was the representative of the distinctively Christian spirit. He was a man of prayer and solitude and intense mortification of the flesh. But the evangelistic spirit was stronger in him than the ascetic spirit, as is seen in his acceptance of the bishopric. For it was not to enter into the great strife of the day that he left Farnes, not to range himself among Wilfrid's friends or Wilfrid's foes, but to preach the gospel and seek Christ's lost sheep. He was a true Englishman, alike in his virtues and failings, he grew out of our

native soil as a man of the people, he spoke with the unpolished accent of Northumbria, he had tilled the ground and kept the sheep, he knew the hopes and the sorrows of rustic life, his hands were hard with manual labour, he was not indebted to Italy for learning or polish, he practised with true English sincerity every precept that he taught, and preached the sternest truth with a boundless charity. His unfeigned piety and humility, his simplicity of manner and unostentatious deportment during his brief episcopate, entitle him to profound respect. Not all the varnish with which his character has been overlaid by his biographers, nor the absurdities attributed to him by the credulity of later periods, have been able to conceal the purity and brightness of his piety, which, amidst the darkness of that age, burns and scintillates like a light shining in a dark place. That for eight centuries he was the most popular of British saints, and that the ruthless iconoclasm of the sixteenth century defaced, but was unable to destroy his memory, are testimonies not to be either overlooked or despised.

When two years of his episcopate had expired, his health gave way under exposure and over-fatigue, and feeling that he must shortly resign his diocese, he set out on a last visitation, the earnestness with which he exhorted men to repent and believe being intensified by his own approaching departure. On this, as on every other occasion, crowds flocked to hear him, and the sick were everywhere brought to receive his blessing. One of his last public acts was the consecration of a church at the great monastery of Whitby, where he was the guest of the Princess Elfreda, the abbess who had some years before obtained an interview with him on Coquet Island. Both knew that this was their last meeting, and the beautiful abbess somewhat exhausted Cuthbert by her urgent hospitalities, and "her eager and pious curiosity, anxious to know and do everything." As they dined together, and she, woman-like, pressed him to eat of every dish, he became abstracted and dropped his knife, upon which she remonstrated, when he laughingly replied, "I cannot eat all day; you must give me a little rest." During the consecration, she rushed up to the bishop in breathless haste to ask him for a memento of a monk whose death she had just heard of, and it appears that her youth and earnestness were an excuse for the ill-timed request. At Whitby, oppressed by Elfreda's hospitalities, his episcopal duties, and the grow-

ing feebleness of his health, he became sleepy at the times which he usually spent in devotion, and it was noticed that he used to stand several hours in the water to ensure wakefulness enough to enable him to commune with his God. But disease gained strength, and feeling death approaching, he paid a last visit to Verca, abbess of Tynemouth, a holy woman for whom he had a great esteem. He was received magnificently, but his sufferings and evident feebleness so impressed his friend that she presented to him as the last pledge of friendship a piece of fine linen for his shroud. Nor was the singular gift thrown away. He then resigned his bishopric, and after celebrating Christmastide with the beloved monks at Lindisfarne, retired to Farne. As he left the Holy Island, the monks crowded into the sea round the boat, inquiring earnestly when he would revisit his cathedral, Walshead, an aged man, asking him definitely, "When may we look for your return?" "Then," replied Cuthbert, "when you shall convey hither my dead body." So retaining no token of his office but his pastoral staff, he tore himself from the brethren who pressed into the sea with many tears to receive his parting blessing, and went forth alone to die.

It was the depth of winter, and the frequent storms often rendered Farne inaccessible. Cuthbert only lived two months. Stretched on a bed of stone, dressed in the coarsest clothing, emaciated, tremulous, exhausted, untended, the fierce winter winds penetrating almost unchecked into his cell, suffering from a most painful malady, while the furious surges made discordant music without, he tasted supreme joy in the presence of his God. No fears, born of error, disturbed his holy calm. His feet were on the rock, and He who in all ages has been with His sheep in the wilderness led him beside the waters of comfort. On the 27th of February, 687, Cuthbert was attacked by the serious illness which in three weeks carried him off, and from this date we have touchingly minute details, Bede having taken down the narrative from the lips of Herefrid, abbot of Lindisfarne, evidently a careful as well as a loving recorder of the events.

Herefrid happened to visit the island on the very morning of the attack. He went with the object of receiving Cuthbert's exhortation and blessing, and on arriving at the cell made the usual signal. A groan was the reply, as Cuthbert feebly advanced to the window. It was known that he had suffered from a tumour ever since his recovery from

the plague at Melrose, and Herefrid asked him if he were experiencing a relapse of this malady. His answer was so far dubious, that the abbot believed that it was "his old infirmity," and as the tide was favourable, he was preparing to quit Farne after craving a blessing upon himself and his brethren. But Cuthbert's further words filled him with uneasiness. "Do as you say—embark and return home in safety, and when God shall have taken me to be with Him, bury me in the front of this, my oratory, close under the eastern side of the cross which I have carved with my own hands. You will find on the north side of my dwelling a stone coffin hid in the ground, the gift of Cudda, the venerable abbot. In this place my body, wrapped in the linen which I have kept for my shroud out of love for the Abbess Verca, the friend of God, who gave it to me." On hearing this, Herefrid begged Cuthbert to allow some of the monks to remain to attend on him, but he refused, as he desired to be left alone with his God. He requested his friend, however, to return before many days. So the abbot and his monks sailed back to Lindisfarne with heavy hearts, and after they had fully detailed their grievous tidings, they resolved to unite themselves in ceaseless prayer. By night and day were supplications made by hearts smitten with a common grief, and tear-dimmed eyes all through the short day were turned to Farne, where the beloved bishop lay on his bed of stone, unsustained save by the everlasting arms. Through five dreary days of storm the monks prayed, watched, and waited, and when the gale moderated, some of them sailed for Farne, where they found Cuthbert not in his cell, but in the guest-chamber at the landing-place, almost speechless with exhaustion. Only Herefrid remained with him. After bathing with warm water one of his feet, which was in much pain, he supported him tenderly, and administered to him some warm wine, which enabled him temporarily to rally. Herefrid then told him that he perceived his dying state, and remonstrated with him in the most pathetic terms for not having suffered himself to be tended by some of the brethren. Cuthbert, in reply, only spoke in glowing words of the divine presence and consolations vouchsafed to him in the five preceding days, and added that he had dragged himself down to the place where he then lay in order to be nearer visitors from Lindisfarne. On Herefrid's marvelling how he had sustained life during this period of five days, Cuthbert drew from under the coverlid

five onions, with the half of one of which he had moistened his parched and fevered lips. His own desire was that he should be buried in Farne; but, at the earnest request of the clergy, he yielded his own choice in favour of the cathedral church.

He was now left in peace, but his strength failed rapidly; and, feeling that the time of his departure was at hand, he desired the monks to carry him to his oratory. At nine the next morning the mournful procession set out from the guest-chamber, the brethren bearing Cuthbert's emaciated form tenderly across their arms. At the door of the oratory they paused: none but himself for many years had crossed its threshold. Here they entreated him that some one of their number might enter with him to minister to his necessities, and looking round on his sorrowing bearers, he selected the aged Walhstad, who, two months before, had inquired so earnestly when he would return to Lindisfarne. He had formed many warm friendships. His genial nature was utterly uncorroded by his ascetic habits, and he not only possessed the fascination which made men love him, but the power to love in return. Even the near prospect of being forever with the Lord failed to dull his warm human affections, or rendered him indifferent to the solace of Christian companionship as he went forth into the Unseen. His friendships had nothing of the sickliness of the later cloister atmosphere about them: they were manly as well as tender, cemented by wholesome co-operation in manual labour as well as in devotional exercises and energetic evangelism. So when he came near the shining presence of the Love ineffable, the human love inexpressible and imperishable, surrounding him with all tender ministries, became yet more precious.

For many hours after he was laid on the floor of the oratory he suffered severely from intermittent pains, and grew weaker with each attack. At three P.M. he sent for Herefrid, who remained till all was over. During the brief intervals of relief from pain, he gave the abbot various counsels and farewells to the Lindisfarne brethren, one of which, through a series of marvellous circumstances possessing all the authority of history, led to the foundation of Durham, with its magnificent endowments. The dying man spoke with difficulty, but with extreme conciseness, insisting upon holiness, the preservation of Catholic unity, peace, humility, brotherly

love and hospitality, alluding energetically to the sin of schism.* After this great effort Cuthbert spoke little, the paroxysms of pain became more violent and the intervals shorter. Later, he lost the power of speech, and at midnight, after receiving in assured faith "the most Holy Communion of the body and blood of Christ," he breathed his last in the arms of Herefrid, raising his eyes and hands to heaven. Herefrid at once communicated the news to the monks who were waiting outside, whereupon one of them went up to the eminence on which the lighthouse now stands, and waved a lighted torch, the preconcerted signal which was to announce to the monks of Holy Island that the longing soul had passed into the heavens. A monk on the watch-tower of the abbey saw the red gleam flicker over the dark sea, and ran with the tidings into the church, where the brethren were singing the 60th Psalm. While the monks at Lindisfarne were spending that night and the next day in solemn services, strangely marred by outbursts of weeping, the abbot and the brethren in Farne wrapped Cuthbert's body in the shroud woven for him by the abbess Verca, clothed him in the robes of a priest, and placed the sacramental elements upon his breast, and sandals upon his feet, that he might go forth to meet the Lord.† The following day being calm, they conveyed the corpse to Lindisfarne, and buried it in a stone coffin on the right side of the altar, with much weeping, and all fitting solemnity. Cuthbert died on March 20, 687, being, as is supposed, nearly fifty years old. At once type and outgrowth of his age, it was with faith marred by superstition, with trust alloyed with trembling, but yet withal with a boundless love and devotion centred solely in Christ, that his spirit passed from the cold mists of the morning twilight into the full noonday of "the Light which no man can approach unto."

ISABELLA L. BIRD.

* Gasping for breath, he faintly spoke these words into the ear of Herefrid, who was supporting him:—"Hold no communion with those who withdraw from the unity of Catholic peace by *practical ill-doing*, or by the illegal celebration of Easter. Know and remember that if necessity shall ever compel you to choose one of two misfortunes, I had much rather that you would dig up my bones from their grave, and, taking them with you, sojourn where God shall provide, than that you should on any account consent to the sin of schismatics, and have your necks under their yoke."

† The learned Mr. Waring supposes that was a Christianized relic of the death-shoes of Pagan burials. In the Gilsarumar Saga, on the death of Vestein by the hands of Thorgrein, when the burial draws near, Thorgrein approaches the corpse, saying, "It is the custom to furnish men with death-shoes, to tread their path to Valhalla. This office I will render to Vestein."

OUR DISTRICT.

By A RIVER-SIDE VISITOR.

VII.—THE BUTTON-HOLE QUEEN.

PASSING along one morning, I saw, standing at her door, the woman whose conversation with me I recounted in describing the life of that spot of Our District known as "Button-hole Row."* She was stitching away as usual, or rather, *not* as usual, for it was something unusual in her air that caused me to stop and speak to her. Generally her manner was bright and cheery, her every movement active, and her eyes noticeably clear and steady for a button-holer; but now she seemed jaded, downcast, and heavy-eyed; and though she plied her ever-busy needle with what to a stranger would have appeared a marvellous rapidity, it was easy to see that she worked slowly—for her. Having returned her "Good morning," I observed, in a friendly way, that I was afraid she had been overworking herself, and that she should be careful of her health, and particularly of her eyes—weakened and failing eyesight being the most prevalent complaint among the button-holers.

"Well, I do feel a bit out of sorts this morning," she answered; "but it ain't as you think, though thanking you kindly all the same, sir. I wouldn't go to overwork myself that much, not in a regular way, not from laziness sake, or being afraid of work, but because I know the value o' eyesight too well to go taxing 'em any more than I can help. I'm only a bit heavy-eyed for want of sleep; my eyes are as strong as ever they were; and, though there's some as wouldn't be of that opinion if they were as poor as me, I often think I have a deal to be thankful for when I look round and see how the hand of affliction is laid on some. Poor Mrs. Johnson! Just see how she's placed; it's heart-breaking only to think of it."

I remembered that George Johnson was the name of the youngest of the two sickly men whom I had noticed engaged in the feminine occupation of button-holing on the occasion of my first visit to the Row; and on the kind-hearted but voluble seamstress coming to a pause, I asked—

"Is her husband much worse, then?"

"Oh yes, sir," she replied, shaking her head; "he's as bad as he well can be, to be alive at all; though, being consumption, he don't think so, and she, poor thing, tries to

believe for the best. He keeps saying as it's only weakness, and that he would get better if he could only get home to Herefordshire, where he come from; but, bless you, sir, the only home he'll ever go to will be his long home, and he'll go there soon; and, seeing how poor they are and that he can't work, I don't know but what it'll be a happy release, if only he's fit to go. Not as I say he isn't fit; I believe he's always been a steady, decent man; but all the same even the best, I suppose, have but one way to make their peace, and would like to ask Christ to take them to Himself when the hour of death comes. I sat up with him all last night, and I had my thoughts of speaking to him about making ready for the great change, but when the cough left him breath enough to speak he talked so confident like about doing this and that when he was better, and about going back again to the green, pleasant country, as he called it, that I hadn't the heart to damp him; and beside there was the wife, poor thing, to think about, and she was heart-broke enough already. She was fairly worn off her feet, and so I forced her to let me take her place for that night, but bless you, she couldn't sleep, she was that anxious about him. They've only the one room themselves, and so I wanted her to go to my bed, but she wouldn't hear of such a thing, and, though to please me, she lay down in her clothes on a bit of a bed that I got together for her on the top of a box, and closed her eyes, I knew that she was listening whenever he spoke, and that she would have heard anything I had said to him. It would be the truest kindness to tell him the truth, though; for you may take my word that the only country place he'll ever go to in this earth is the cemetery, and that when the fields are green again the grass will be growing over his grave."

"Do you think it would be well for me to go and see him?" I asked.

"That is just what I do think, sir," she answered; "it came into my mind directly I saw you coming. I thought that as I hadn't spoken myself, the least I could do was to ask somebody else to speak; it's a serious thing, a man dying, but not knowing it, and all his thoughts and talk of this world."

"It is a serious thing," I agreed; and

* See SUNDAY MAGAZINE, September, 1872.

then, without further delay, I proceeded to the house in which the Johnsons lived. Their room was a back one on the ground floor, and Mrs. Johnson herself answered my knock. She looked very thin and wan and grief-stricken. Though little more than thirty, trouble and want had already bowed her frame and streaked her black hair heavily with grey. She seemed much more fit to be on a sick-bed than attending on one night and day; but I felt that she would have considered this no time to have spoken of *her* looks of illness, and therefore I merely observed that I had heard her husband was very ill, and thought that I would look in and see him, if it would not be putting them to inconvenience.

"Oh no, sir," she answered promptly; "you know well enough what very poor folks' homes are like, and if you don't stand on ceremony, I'm sure we needn't. George will be glad to see you, he's very dull, poor fellow, and is glad for any one to come and talk to him a bit; not as I'm saying as no one has come to see him, for our neighbours have all been very kind to us, both in that way and other ways, God bless them all for it."

As she spoke she led the way into her room; and though, as she had said, I knew well enough what the homes of the poor were like, I was struck with the unusual sadness of the picture presented by this home. One lying in mortal sickness in it, ghastly and wasted from disease, might well make *any* room look gloomy, while this sick chamber was dark, dirty, and dilapidated in itself.

"Here is Mr. — come to see you, dear," said the wife, as her husband languidly turned his head towards the doorway as I entered. "Take the chair, sir," she added, in the same breath, indicating the only chair in the apartment, and at the same time seating herself on an old trunk, which, with a deal table and the bed, made up the whole furniture of the room. There were medicine bottles upon the mantelpiece, and the wife, while resuming the button-holing, kept an eye upon the making of some beef-tea that was simmering in a battered saucepan, which had been made useable by an old chair-leg driven tightly into a hole to serve for a handle. The sick man was propped up in bed, with a view to relieving his painfully laborious breathing. His deeply sunken eyes and cheeks, the deadly pallor of his countenance, and the cold sweat standing like dew on his forehead, showed but too conclusively to any one used to reading such signs that he was dying. But he was dying in harness! As he lay there, he

was working as busily as his ebbing strength would allow him—feathering or "flossing out" long bands of dress material, to form the trimming, technically known as *ruching*. The wife noting my look of surprise at this, hastened to explain—

"It's not with my will he's doing it, sir," she said; "he's not fit to be doing anything, but he was that anxious to be doing something to earn a few ha'pence, that he made himself worse with worrying over it, and so to please him the Queen got him this ruching to do, as being the lightest thing she could think of."

"The Queen!" I exclaimed, looking at the woman in amazement.

"Yes, the Queen—our Queen," she answered, evidently surprised, in her turn, at my being surprised. "Why, you know Mrs. —, as gives us our work," she went on, with a tinge of impatience—"the Button-hole Queen, as every one calls her hereabout; and a Queen she deserves to be as far as goodness goes. I don't know what would have become of many that work for her, if it hadn't been for the help she's given 'em in times of need; and I'm sure her kindness to us since George has been so ill has been more almost than you would expect from a sister, let alone a stranger—not as she'll be long a stranger to any one that is working for her regular, especially if they are in distress. There is never a morning passes that she don't come in to see George, and she never comes without something in her hand; in fact, I thought it was her when you knocked: it's just about her time for calling."

The woman spoke with a fervency of heart-felt gratitude that any one might well have been proud to have inspired; and, catching something of her spirit, I answered that I had heard of the kindness of the lady of whom she spoke, even though I had not happened to hear that she was known as the Button-hole Queen. Then, remembering the special purpose of my visit, I turned to the man, and gently asked him how he felt.

"Weak, sir, dreadfully weak," he replied, speaking with an effort; and even then in a faint, hollow tone. "But there's not much else beside weakness the matter with me now," he went on, "I haven't anything like the pain I used to have. I only want pulling together now, as you may say; and what with the nourishment the parish allows me, and the tasty, strengthening things the Queen brings me, I hope to be on my legs before long, and then I shall soon be myself again, especially if I can manage to get down to my native place, as I shall try to do."

It was easy to see from his manner how true were the words of the kindly and thoughtful seamstress who had suggested my call. It was evident that he dreamt not of death, though its icy hand was already on him. Seeing him thus, I shrank from the task I had tacitly accepted. But reflecting how cruel a kindness it would be to leave him undeceived, I nerved myself to enter upon it, and did in part fulfil it—but only in part. He was young; and hard as the world had been to him, little of happiness and much of suffering as he had experienced in it, the love of life was so strong in him that I scarcely had the heart to, as it were, pass sentence upon him—to tell him that he must die, that his hours were numbered, his last sands of life running out. But even under my guarded talk he became painfully excited, and with bated breath and look of haggard entreaty, asked, "Do you think I *won't* get better, then?"

"Your getting better or not getting better," I answered gently, and avoiding the eager glance with which he regarded me, "is in the hands of God. It may be his good will to take you from this world, and in case it should be, you should turn your mind to getting ready to go."

This was the utmost I felt justified in saying at the moment, though I hoped to be able to speak more pointedly on the occasion of a second visit, nor, greatly as he was distressed by what I had said, did I regret having spoken, for I could see that he had in a measure at any rate realised the danger he was in. But I then asked him if he would let me read to him a chapter from the New Testament, choosing the 3rd of John. I explained what was meant by coming to Christ—that whether well or ill, strong or weak, it was wise in us to do so at once. Even as I was preparing to go his excitement was visibly subsiding, and in a comparatively collected tone he asked, would I look in again, and read another chapter.

I was turning to leave the room when there came a low but firm knock at the street door, and the next minute, bearing a custard pudding in her hand, there entered a woman whom I instantly guessed to be the Button-hole Queen. From what I had heard of her good deeds, I had imagined her a woman with soft kind eyes, an ever-smiling face, impulsive in action, bright and cheery in manner. But this woman was of a very different stamp. She was tall, and though shapely of limb and comely of feature was somewhat masculine looking. The general impression she gave was rather that of an able and

pushing woman, than of a specially good-natured one. There were touches of both sadness and sternness blending with the thoughtfulness that seemed to be the characteristic expression of her face; the squarely cut chin and tightly closing lips told of firmness of character; and her piercing blue eyes were of the hard glittering steely-blue order, and not the deep melting blue that would have suited the sort of woman I had imagined. She looked about five-and-forty, though perhaps the circumstance of her once black hair being now for the most part iron grey caused her to appear a little older than she really was.

Giving a quiet self-assured nod by way of reply to my softly-spoken good morning, she turned to the sick man, and, in a voice that was softer and kinder in its tone than I expected, now that I had seen her, asked—

"How do you feel to-day, Johnson?"

"Weak, still very weak," he answered faintly; "but I've hardly any pain now except just when the cough takes me."

"Well, that's a deal to be thankful for," she said; "your sufferings were very great."

"They were," he replied, and it was evident from the expression that came into his face that he was about to add something about the comparative freedom from pain being a good sign, when she hastily asked—

"What does the doctor say?"

"He doesn't say anything particular," said the wife, taking up the answer. "He just orders him nourishment, and says he may eat or drink anything that he fancies."

Turning her head for a moment the Button-hole Queen stole a glance at me—a glance which said as plainly as a look could, I'm afraid there is no hope here, and in the same way I replied that I feared not.

While this had been going on the dying man had begun to work at the ruching again, and seeing this on turning to him, she laid her hand on his, and shaking her head said—

"You mustn't make labour of this, you know. I only got it you to amuse yourself, as you may say."

"Oh, a child might do it as far as strength goes," he answered, with a faint smile; "and after all it brings in a few ha'pence."

"Don't trouble yourself about the ha'pence, now," she said, with just a touch of authority in her tone—"that can be made right; and you, Mrs. Johnson, don't let the collars interfere with your nursing or getting a little sleep. I can always let you have the price of two or three gross in advance, and you can work it off by degrees, after—some other time.

"I've brought you a little custard," she went on, turning to the man again, without giving the woman time to answer: "do you think you can eat a bit of it?"

"I think I can," he answered feebly.

"Or is there anything else you fancy better?" she questioned. "An egg beat up in a drop of brandy, or anything of that sort?"

"No, thank you," he murmured, a slight smile flitting across his countenance, "the doctor's order gives me brandy, and I'd sooner have the egg in the custard."

"Very well," she said, "I'll leave you now," and then turning to the woman, she added, "If you find you do want anything else send round; you needn't distress yourself about the work for the next week or two."

I followed her out, and as soon as we were clear of the threshold, she exclaimed—

"I suppose he *is* dying."

"There can be no doubt of it," I answered.

"Have you told him so?"

"Well, not in so many words, but I have hinted at it in a general way."

"It's been in a too general way then, I expect," she observed. "They tell me it's very often so with consumptive people; they think to the very last that they'll recover, and the more so the nearer they get to the last—don't you think he ought to be told plainly?"

In reply I told her how I had been led to enter the house, and what had passed there previous to her arrival. I added that I would see the doctor in the course of the morning, and that if he confirmed my views as to the state of his patient, I would, on returning to Johnson's home later, tell him plainly how it was with him; but I confessed I really had not had the courage to tell him on first seeing him—he seemed to cling so fondly to life.

"That's how it is with me," she said, in a softer tone than she had hitherto spoken in. "I try to do my duty as far as I can in other ways, but when it comes to that I flinch. If I hadn't met you in the house though, I would have sent a clergyman, or some one, in the course of the day." She paused for awhile, and then in a musing tone went on—"Well, of course, life is sweet; but all the same it seems wonderful to see how strongly the very poor will want to live when it comes to the point. They know they die faster than others, and when they are well they'll say there isn't much for them to live for, and when their neighbours are ill, they'll say that death'll be a happy release for them; but when death *is* staring them in the face, how most of 'em will fight against the idea of it!

Is that your experience?" she concluded, turning her hard blue eyes upon my face.

"Not an invariable experience," I answered, "though I have seen many instances of it."

"Well, taking it at that, don't you think it strange that you should see many instances of it;—how do *you* account for it?"

The manner in which she emphasized the *you* suggested that she had views of her own upon the subject, but was desirous in the first place of hearing mine, and convinced by this time that I had fallen in with an original, I yielded to her humour.

"The point has not struck me as it seems to have done you," I said; "but speaking on the spur of the moment I think that the instinctive love of life and fear of death sufficiently account for the feeling you consider so strange, and I doubt not the feeling would be found equally among rich and poor."

"No! not equally," she exclaimed; "not so much among the rich as the poor, that's what looks to me the surprising part of it. Wouldn't you think, now, that the rich would be the most loathe to leave this world?"

Again I pleaded that I had given no especial thought to the subject.

"Well, I have," she said; "I've thought about it, and I've spoken about it to many, and doctors and others who ought to know have told me that the rich who have known all this world's goods will often leave them without a sigh, while the poor who have never enjoyed the good things of this life, grieve to be taken away from its hardships. They accounted for it," she went on, "by saying that the rich had learned by experience that all is vanity, while the poor still wished to live in the *hope* that a share of the good things that seemed so bright at a distance, might yet fall to their lot."

"There may be something in that," I said, scarcely knowing what to say at all.

"I dare say there's a good deal in it, if you only look at the matter in a worldly light," she said; "but I look at it in another light as well, and I have quite another opinion as to the chief cause of it, so far as regards the very poor, that is."

"And what may your opinion be, then?" I asked, with something of her own bluntness.

"That they have not enough of sweet religion in their lives," she answered promptly, but gently and solemnly. "Not that I look upon them as heathenish, or would speak hardly of them in the matter," she went on; "the Lord forbid, knowing as much as I do of their trials, and struggles, and sufferings. The flesh is weak and its cravings strong;

when it is so hard a fight to supply its barest wants, things spiritual are but little thought of. To the poor seeking for bread, and not finding a sufficiency of it, I believe it does—as they often say—seem like offering them a stone to talk to them of religion as the remedy for their

trouble. I don't say it as blaming them, but as grieving that it should be so. It is right to do what else we can, but if we could but give them true religion, with all its comforts and consolations, it would be the grandest thing of all—it would make them happier in



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their lives, and resigned, and more than resigned when the time of death came."

"It would indeed!" I assented.

"Then death would lose its sting," she resumed, "and none would need to shrink

from telling them that their hour was come. They would know then that though called to pass through the valley of the shadow of death they need fear no evil, that their Lord would be with them in their journey to his

mansions in the sky. In their hardships they would then find comfort in their Saviour's love, and in the hour of death see him waiting for them beyond the beautiful river. I have known one or two who were religious in that way, and though they were wretchedly poor, oh, how much happier they were than those around them who had not the hope and comfort that their religion gave them!"

She had been speaking in a low, earnest tone, and gazing before her in the unobservant manner of one lost in thought; but at this point turning her piercing eyes upon me again, she concluded by asking—

"Don't you think I am right? I ask you because you see more of the poor even than I do; don't you think that a want of religion—religion in its best and most comforting sense—is their greatest want?"

"Rightly considered, it is undoubtedly their greatest want," I answered; "but at the same time we should not forget that they have other wants, very pressing wants some of them, and calculated to stand in the way of their attaining to this religious feeling."

A slight smile flitted across her face, and, shaking her head, she said—

"Ah, I see you think I am too enthusiastic. I do speak warmly on this subject, I know, because though I think a deal, it is seldom I do open my mouth about it; only when such a sight as that poor dying man brings it home to me. All the same I am practical—there are not many better business women than I am, though I say it that shouldn't, and I have been no worse a business woman since I have known the happiness of true religion. I don't lose sight of the fact the poor have other wants, but the hymn tells us that

'Religion never was designed
To make our pleasures less;'

and I am one of those who believe that it was never designed to make us less capable of earning our daily bread. In my opinion it not only makes you more fit to live, but better able to make a living—gives you strength and comfort for this world, as well as hope for the world to come."

During this conversation we had walked out of Button-hole Row, and a little way down the main street; but as she said the last words she came to a stand-still, and merely giving a nod by way of reply to my remark, that I fully agreed with her, she pointed to the house opposite saying, "This is my place, if you'll step in I'll show you such a little hive as you don't see every day."

That the Button-hole Queen was a cha-

racter was evident. Even in the short time I had been in her company I had seen enough of her to make me desirous of seeing more; and I promptly availed myself of her offer.

"Come along, then," she said, leading the way; and the next minute we were in the house. Truly enough I did find it such a hive as I had never seen before, and such a hive as was not to be seen every day. The apartment that in an ordinary private house would have been the parlour, was turned into a workroom. A narrow deal workboard upon tressels extended the whole length of the room, and seated at it, I counted sixteen children, fourteen girls and two boys. The girls were busily button-holing; while the boys, both of whom I noticed were lame and sickly, kept the sewers supplied with relays of ready-threaded needles. The oldest child did not appear to be more than twelve, and one or two of the younger were certainly not above half that age. The majority of them looked clean, and comfortable, but in a few instances they were woefully ill-clad, and if one might judge by their pinched faces woefully ill-fed also.

"Those are a young set of heads now," she said, when I had finished my survey.

"Very young," I said; "in fact too young; for, speaking without the slightest intention to reflect upon you, I think it a sad sight to see so very young children working at all."

"It is indeed a great pity," she assented, with unmistakable sincerity, "but it is the least of two evils. If they were not here they would be in worse places, poor little things; in the streets, or crouching in some miserable room for want of sufficient clothing for even a gutter child. That was the condition in which I found some of them, and of most of them I can say that their lot has been a very hard one. They are badly enough off even now, but they would be worse if it wasn't for the bit of work I give them."

"I have no doubt you employ them with a good motive," I said.

"Well, I do, though I say it," she answered; "but understand me, it is a business affair. I am one that thinks that the best way to assist the poor is to help them to help themselves, and taking these children to work is doing that. It helps both them and their mothers, for they are mostly widows' children. I only pay them what they earn at the usual piece-work prices, but, believe me, I wouldn't grind their young bones to make my bread; it's of their bread I think, for there isn't one of them that wouldn't sometimes be without a meal if it wasn't for the trifle they earn here. I could make more money with less trouble

by having young women for my indoor hands, but for the reasons I've named, I have had children for the last two or three years. I have two sets of them—one morning, one afternoon—each set coming here to school the half of the day they are not at work."

"Ah, I'm glad of that!" I exclaimed; "for if the work does not prevent them from getting a little education it loses half its hardship."

"Oh, I see," she said, with a slight smile, "I ought to have mentioned this first: I see what you've been thinking, and you're right. It would be curious friendship to keep such children at work all day, but there being half-timers here, so far from preventing them from getting a little learning, is about the only chance that most of them would ever have had. Their mothers have not been educated themselves, and don't know the value of it, and they think it hard that I should insist upon the children being sent to school; but I do—I make it a rule, 'no school, no work.' An old lady a few doors off who keeps a school and really brings children on in their learning, takes my large family, as I call them, on the principle of a reduction on quantity. She lets them go half-time at a penny a week all round, and every child is stopped that penny a week, and every girl another penny for the threaders. After paying that, they'll take home from one to three shillings a week, according to their age and quickness with the needle; and, as I told you, I keep a look-out to see that they reap the benefit of it. If I notice a pair of boots very bad, or a frock too thin or worn for the season, I just drop round and give the mother a hint, and it generally has the desired effect. I know pretty well how each family is situated, and ask the mother to do only what I know can be done by trying, and where it is necessary I advance a trifle and stop it out of the child's earnings, at threepence or sixpence a week. I would rather see the children at school all day, but, as I said, they wouldn't be at school if they were not here. My out-door hands mostly have their children helping them in their own houses, but the mothers of these young hands are often out all day charring or washing, so that this place is a sort of home to the children."

Though her manner was somewhat melancholy and at times a trifle hard, it was impossible not to admire her thoughtfulness, and it was with the utmost sincerity I remarked that it was no flattery of her to say that she was a blessing to the neighbourhood.

"Well, in a small way, I am sometimes a means of good," she answered unaffectedly;

"but if those who benefit by it only knew it, it's not me but another they've got to thank."

She spoke in a tone that courted question, and so I put in—

"May I ask who the other is?"

"I'll show you if you'll just come to my room," she answered; and as she spoke she led the way to an adjoining apartment, furnished as a sitting room.

"There! that is the one that any I do a good turn for have to thank!" she exclaimed, pointing to an enlarged photographic portrait of a pretty-looking, gentle-faced girl, which, handsomely framed, formed the chief pictorial ornament of the room. "My daughter," the 'Button-hole Queen' went on, regarding the portrait with a look of intense affection; "she's in a better place now; she was only eighteen when she died, but before she went, she taught her mother to be a Christian, and to understand what our duty towards our neighbours really meant. Before that change, I was a hard one. I used to grind them down, taking advantage of their necessity. So that they worked cheaply I didn't care whether they lived or died, and if they talked much about their distresses, I took the work from them. Many a bruised spirit I wounded in those days; I was strong, and pushing, and successful myself, and instead of pitying those who were weak and helpless, I felt contempt for them, and showed it; but Agnes altered that, thanks to her, and with God's help I conquer myself in those things now, and, in the strength of Jesus, try to bring them to see things in a better light."

She paused for a moment to ask me to be seated, and then, without question or remark on my part (for it was evident she was on a subject she loved to talk about), resumed "the story of her life" as the Button-hole Queen. "My husband when I married him," she went on, "was a well-to-do tradesman. His father had made the business and had just left it to him; but though as good and loving a husband as ever breathed, he was no business man. Things went bad with him, and after struggling for five years, he became bankrupt, and our very beds were sold from under us. The trouble and shock was too much for him, and he died a few months later—more of a broken heart than any bodily illness. I was left penniless, and with my little child as well as myself to look after. Under any circumstances, I wasn't the sort of woman to sit quietly down under trouble; but when I used to look at my child it gave me double courage and confidence. I said to myself that I

would be both father and mother to her, and that she should want for nothing. I had a slight knowledge of the collar business, and knew a manufacturer in that line, and I asked him for work at the button-holing. He gave it me, and as I got on he gave me more, and I got some from other firms, and so worked on and on until I had that much work that in the busy season I had as many as three hundred hands working for me. I worked hard myself, and as I told you made the most I could out of my hands. I was able to keep a nice house and to dress Agnes well, and gave her a good education. I kept her at school till she was nearly sixteen. Then I apprenticed her to a West-end milliner and dressmaker, paying a large premium, meaning in time to set her up in business for herself—but it wasn't to be. She was always delicate, and sometimes when she came home on Sundays she used to look quite ill; but when I spoke to her about it she always put it off lightly. It was only when it was too late that I knew she had been worked the killing long hours that milliners' girls are worked in the season. I was under the impression that my child being a premiumed apprentice was exempted from working such hours, as by rights she ought to have been; but her mistress was one of my own stamp; she went on the plan of grinding the most out of everybody, and so made Agnes work as long as the others. She got through the first season without breaking down, but the second was too much for her. One afternoon a cab stopped at my door; and a man—a doctor—coming out of it, told me that my daughter had been taken suddenly ill, had burst a blood-vessel, and that as she begged to be taken home, and was sufficiently recovered to bear the removal, he and one of the hands from the shop had brought her. I was at the cab before he had well finished speaking, and there my poor Agnes lay back, propped up with pillows, and with a face as white as death, except one or two spots where it had been flecked with her own blood. She smiled when she saw me, and then we carried her in; and when the others were gone she clung round my neck, and, laying her pretty face on my shoulder, whispered, 'Mother, my own mother, I've come home to die!'—and she had, though she lingered for three months."

While speaking, she had striven hard to suppress all outward signs of emotion, but her feelings proved too much for her. At this point her voice failed her, and tears gathered in her eyes. It was but for a

minute's space, however; recovering herself by an effort, she went on: "I had always kept her regularly at Sunday-school and church; and with her the seed had fallen in good ground. She had been led to remember her Creator in the days of her youth, had come to feel happy in her Saviour's love while yet a child; and so when at an age, at which the world is generally dear to us, the hand of death was laid upon her, she did not fear to go. Sometimes when she would notice that I was more downhearted than usual, she'd say in her sweet way, 'Don't fret, mother, I would like to have stayed with you a little longer, for I know you'll feel lonely when I'm gone, but remember, I shall only be gone before. You know what the dear old hymn says:—

" Here we suffer grief and pain,
Here we meet to part again,
In heaven we part no more."

That is how she would talk: and one day, among other things, she said, 'Perhaps it is all for the best, mother; this is a hard world, and though, thanks to you, I've been very comfortable and happy in it so far, if I was left after you, I might be in great misery. Look at your hands, what hardship some of them must have to endure.' She was getting very weak at this time, and when she had said so much she lay back exhausted, but after a while she opened her eyes again, and with a pleading look in my face, said gently, 'Be kind to your hands, mother.' 'Kind to them!' I said; 'I always pay them what they earn. I don't see what more I can do. I suppose I give them about as much as others; and in any case I don't well see how I'm to give them more without robbing myself; you know how badly the work is paid first hand.' 'It wasn't altogether about the pay I was thinking,' she made answer; 'a kind word to them or a little thoughtfulness for them may sometimes give strength and comfort to those who are broken in spirits. And remember, mother, how our dear Saviour did for the poor people when He was here on earth. Our works can never save us; but Christ accepts our service, and helps us to serve Him more and more.' Once or twice afterwards she spoke in the same strain; but it was not till the morning of the day on which she died, that she fairly conquered me. It was very near the end, and she could only speak with great effort, and in whispers; but getting her arms round my neck, and looking straight into my eyes, as her own were growing dim, she said earnestly, 'You will have thought for your hands, mother, and be good

to them; now, won't you, for my sake? I shall go all the happier if you do, and you will feel all the happier, and be none the poorer; you will promise me now, won't you?" I couldn't speak the promise, my heart was too full, but I looked it, and with the Saviour's help I have tried to keep it. She understood me, and sank back, with a smile on her face; and all that she ever said after was a few words of prayer, and 'Good-bye, mother, we'll meet again in heaven!'"

Again the emotion of the Button-hole Queen was too much for her, again utterance failed her, and this time the tears rolled down her cheeks unchecked. Her grief was not violent or bitter, the memories that evoked it had much in them that was sweet and comforting; and so I remained silent until she was once more sufficiently composed to speak. When she had dried her eyes, she quietly resumed her narrative.

"When I was left alone I became more civil with my hands, and kinder, as far as words went; but it was not till one Saturday night about two months after my child's death that any real good came of the lesson she had impressed upon me. I had had a hard, worrying day, and was in an irritable state of mind, when my servant girl came to tell me that a woman I had given work to for the first time that week, had come to ask if I would pay her for the collars she had sent in up till then. My plan with my hands was to give the work out three gross at a time, and pay when it was all brought in, but this woman had not sent in quite one gross, and my promise to my dead child not being in my mind at the moment, I said to the girl, 'Tell her I can't be bothered, I'll pay her as I pay my other hands, when she sends the batch of work in; and if she doesn't like that, she can give up the work altogether.' The girl took the message, and the woman went away. I thought no more about it; but going out directly afterwards, and walking sharp, I passed the woman in the street, and as I passed, I caught a sound that told me she was crying bitterly; then my promise flashed on my mind and pricked my conscience. I spoke to the poor thing, and as well as her sobs would let her she told me her story. She was a widow with three young children. She was wholly dependent upon herself, and was not strong; one of the children was sick, the other two were hungry, and she had no food in the house; and made desperate by her position, she had come to me to try and get money wherewith to obtain a little medi-

cine for the one child, and a little bread for the others. I thought of my daughter's words, 'Be good to your hands for my sake,' and I acted at once. Could she describe her child's illness? I asked, and she answered that she could. When she had done that, I said, 'Very well then, come along,' and we turned into a chemist's and got some medicine, and as we went further we bought food, so that when we got to her house we were not empty-handed. She had spoken but too truly! The children were actually starving, and I shall never forget the look that came into their faces as their eyes fell on the eatables—for at that time I had never seen such looks before, though, more's the pity, I've seen the like often since. I made her eat a bit herself too, and giving her a trifle of money, and promising to send her some of my Agnes's clothes to make down for her little girls, I left her, she following me to the door, and, with tears in her eyes, and her heart that full that she could hardly speak, crying out, 'God bless you and reward you for your kindness to me and mine!' For the first time I felt the happiness to ourselves of being the instruments of good to others."

"These poor creatures are grateful for very little, sir," she said after a pause, "for even a word of kindness or sympathy, and in the way that seems best to me, I do what I can, and though that is but little, I'm glad it does bring me the good wishes of the poor, for I believe those wishes do bring a blessing with them. Since I have come to live in the same neighbourhood as my hands, and to have a little Christian regard for them, health nor strength have never failed me, and work has never been slack, and I believe I am quite as well off as I should have been had I continued to act in the old fashion, and I know I am much more happy and contented."

"I can fully believe that," I said.

"Understand me, sir," she resumed, "I am saying all this because I love to speak of the dear child whose portrait you see. I do not speak as boasting of any little good I may be the means of doing; the Lord—who enables me to do it—forbid that I should. Looking at myself as an instrument in the matter," she continued, "I often ask myself very anxiously whether I am doing the best in my power."

"Your experience should be a good guide on that point," I said.

"Well, it is by that I go," she said. "To a stranger the best way of helping my hands might seem to be to give them a higher

price for their work; but as I already give them the highest rate of pay in the trade, that doesn't lie with me except to a very limited extent, the little more that it would be possible for me to give if I only left myself a bare living, if added to the little all they get now would still not make up enough for a decent living; all would go then as it goes now, for the common necessities of life, and when sickness or any emergency arose they would still be without anything to fall back upon, while I then would not be able to help them. That is why I mostly reserve what help I can give for special occasions. It's being cruel to be kind, as the sayin' is; seeing them half-starved every day, in order to save them from being wholly starved in the day of trouble."

"I think your hands are as much indebted to your good judgment as they are to your kindness," I said, filling up a pause.

"I hope so," she said, simply, with no shade of boasting in her tone, "for I do try to be thoughtful for them. I know, too," she added, "that I am only one,—and a very humble one—among many who do take thought for the poverty-stricken; but for all that is done for them in the way of kindness,

the lot of the very poor is a terribly hard one in this world, and that is why I say that the consolation and comfort that lies in religion would be such a blessed thing to them—speaking of that, you won't forget to see Johnson again?"

The last words were uttered in a tone that sufficiently indicated the view of the speaker, that the conversation having come back to the point from which it had started, might as well end. Tacitly accepting this view, I took my leave of the Button-hole Queen, simply remarking that I would see Johnson again. I did see him a few hours afterwards, and as gently as I could discharged the painful duty with which I had charged myself—read the Scriptures to him, which calmed him wonderfully, and told him how Christ had borne all our sins on the tree, so that our sufferings might be lightened and our souls drawn to Him. It was well for the poor fellow that such duty was discharged towards him, as two days later he died—we have reason to hope in peace.

A good deal might be said in the way of moralising about The Button-hole Queen, her ways and opinions, but I think readers may be safely left to draw their own moral from it.

MUSIC FOR THE BLIND.

IN the United Kingdom there are thirty thousand blind persons. The institutions which receive many of them, for careful training in industrial arts, and for such amount of musical development as has hitherto been attempted, enable very few to earn the entire cost of their support, and only one per cent. to maintain himself or herself by the profession of music. In Paris thirty per cent. of the blind earn their living as pianoforte tuners, graduating at their institution, and obtaining incomes which vary from £80 to £150 a year.* This single statement is surely enough to show that some better means of education than has hitherto been attainable by the blind is needed in England. The need is now supplied—that is to say, the beginning is made; it will be a national reproach for ever, if funds cannot be found for maintaining and developing it.

The "Normal College for the Blind, 5, Paxton Terrace, Upper Norwood," has

* Thirty per cent., also, are professional musicians, but I do not know what incomes they earn.

been just a year at work among us. Its work proceeds on the assumption that among blind persons there are many capable of receiving a thorough intellectual education in the highest sense of the words. A thousand devices of loving ingenuity neutralise the one physical disqualification. The mind, addressed through all channels but one, responds, how readily, how gratefully, and with what delightful results, they who choose may now judge for themselves. There is no limit to the area of instruction but the capacity of the student, and that capacity is found to enlarge by cultivation, just as it does in the case of those who see. Neither music nor any other art can be practised with aught save the lowest results by those whose mental faculties are sluggish, imperfect, or unexercised. Idiots are sometimes born with the finest musical organization, physically considered, but they never become musicians. They astonish you by their faculty, but it is for ever fruitless; for it is a body without a soul. Therefore it is intended that these students, through whom it

is hoped that the public will one day learn of how much the blind are capable, should be completely educated in other things besides music. And after only one year's training it is found that their musical performances (to speak of nothing else) have a refinement, and promise a completeness, which you would vainly seek among those similarly afflicted who have been trained on the system hitherto practised in England. A short account of one afternoon's visit to the institution may help to give some idea of what it is doing.

We were ushered into a school-room containing forty-one students—as many, alas! as, with its present poor accommodation and small funds, the institution can receive. Applications are constantly refused for this sad reason. The principal, Mr. Campbell, told us with regret how he had very recently been forced to reject two most promising applicants. Sir Rutherford Alcock, who presided at the meeting, briefly recapitulated the objects and hopes of the institution, and after a few modest words from the principal, who told us that he did not profess to do more than show us the beginning of a system which had been working a very short time, and which was, he hoped, improving every day, the examination of the pupils commenced. It was conducted chiefly by two young lady-teachers, thoroughly trained, the musical part being entirely left to Mr. Campbell. First came a lesson in physiology, not perhaps specially interesting in itself, but showing quite unmistakably the power of the scholars in following out a subject intelligently, and remembering a series of facts with perfect accuracy. Then we had an exhibition in arithmetic, which was really astonishing. Complicated sums in Proportion were solved aloud, step by step, with just that slight hesitation as the pupil repeated the terms of the problem, and arranged his attack upon it, which must have convinced the most incredulous listener that it was genuine mental work at the time, not mere remembrance of what had been learned by rote. As for the lengths of multiplication which were wound off in a minute, they literally made one giddy. Then followed a most excellent examination in geography, not quite of the conventional type, but introducing the historical associations of the places named, as well as their “products and governments.” During this lesson, a bright-faced little fellow about ten years old (it was strange to see *how* bright and expressive many of these sightless faces were), knelt on a chair at the table and followed the answers

with his fingers on an embossed globe, finding every place as it was named. Mr. Campbell interrupted the lesson to remind this pupil that he had, some days before, “taken a ship” half round the world to oblige him; did he think he could take one from Liverpool to Yokohama now? Well, he thought he could; and he began at once; passing rapid little fingers from point to point, naming land and water as he passed, and bringing his vessel safe into port at last, to the evident satisfaction of his fellow-pupils, who followed the proceeding with close attention and constant smiles of approval. Afterwards Mr. Campbell told us that this boy had been, only six months ago, a gutter child in the streets of Liverpool, absolutely without education of any kind. He has unusual talents, and is to be trained as a teacher.

The exhibition began and ended with singing, and was interspersed with performances on the pianoforte. There were some remarkably sweet voices, and I think there can be no doubt that the part singing is already superior to what is generally heard at the age of the performers. I cannot but believe that the highest musical development attainable under any circumstances is within their reach. Exceptionally fine voices may furnish hereafter first-rate solo singers; average voices may give us glees, quartettes, choirs, as good as any that we possess elsewhere. It is impossible to estimate too highly the advantages of complete training in this respect. Perhaps, however, the instrumental achievements were even more interesting because they implied a triumph over greater natural difficulties. Some of the younger pupils played short pieces with great intelligence and correctness. One girl, about sixteen years old, promises to be a very brilliant executant. Mr. Campbell told us that she has been not quite a year under his instruction, and her progress is now so rapid that it can be observed from day to day. “I promise you,” said he, “that in three years she shall play with the Crystal Palace Orchestra.” In order to give an idea of the manner in which musical knowledge is imparted, Mr. Campbell dictated to his class in our presence the first phrases of a new piece. There is an ingenious and peculiar system of notation by pricks on a tablet of stiff paper placed in a frame, each prick causing a raised mark on the surface which can be easily felt by the finger. Six such marks variously arranged suffice to represent all the notes of the scale, and to indicate their value in time. In dictating the bass, the lowest notes only are

named, the chords being described by their intervals, reckoned from the lowest notes, upwards. In the treble the process is reversed—the melody is dictated, and the intervals of chords are reckoned downwards from the melody notes. When a passage has been pricked out in this manner, the pupil is summoned to the pianoforte, and it is found that she can play accurately what she has written, using first one hand and then the other on the keys. Then comes the work of the ear in noting and remembering sounds, but, as it has been preceded by the mental process, it is not the sole agent, and by this means it is ensured that music shall be understood as well as executed. Much sympathy with Mr. Campbell's efforts has been shown by the musical profession. Several great firms have given or lent instruments, and Madame Schumann, herself a member of the council, frequently plays to the pupils. They are also allowed to attend the rehearsals of the Crystal Palace Orchestra.

Mr. Campbell, speaking with a controlled enthusiasm, which irresistibly conveys the idea that he will do whatever he promises to do, told us that they would be made acquainted with the best work of the greatest masters; that nothing shallow, and nothing merely mechanical, would be allowed in their musical training, but that mind and taste would be incessantly cultivated while the hands were acquiring power and facility. What has been already achieved makes the future sure. No one on hearing the per-

formances of these children would feel inclined to say, "These are very good, considering—." They are good absolutely. And what can I say, in conclusion, of the wisdom and tenderness which pervades the whole system? We were told of incessant vigilance over health both of mind and body. No study is pursued for more than three-quarters of an hour consecutively; then follows a quarter of an hour's rest, lest the mental strain should become injurious. Games and recreations of all sorts are shared by teachers and students, and many slight caresses and gentle touches supplied, as we saw, the place of glances of affection. In truth, we were so deeply moved that we did not know how to express what we felt. The spectacle was profoundly pathetic, but the tears, which it was almost impossible to restrain, were tears of real joy. Looking round upon this band of earnest, hopeful, happy workers, who could help thinking of what they were and of what they might have been, in sharp contrast with what they are and what they may become? We know the terrible denunciation against those whose light has been turned into darkness; surely there must be a special blessing for those who out of darkness bring forth light. The human teacher cannot, it is true, say to the blind, "Receive thy sight!" but he goes as near to his divine Master as he can, the development which it is his privilege to effect is almost a new creation, the work is itself little less than divine.

M. B. SMEDLEY.

DE PROFUNDIS.

I WANDERED far from Wisdom's road,
Her warning voice forgot;
In sin and shame I madly sowed,
And hoped the seed would rot;
But now my wiser spirit reaps
The harvest, in these joyless deeps.

Yet, blessed be His Holy Name,
He gives me strength to bear
Each throe that wastes this mortal frame,
Each daily cross and care;
The sinner's Friend, who never sleeps,
Walks with me in these joyless deeps.

Then, Lord, forbid that I should shun
One billow of the sea,
Till, when Thy work of grace is done,
And I am meet for Thee,
My way-worn soul no longer keeps
Her vigils, in these joyless deeps.

GEORGE S. OUTRAM.

Seen through their gloom this world is vain,
And all her treasures nought;
The grave is sweet, and death is gain,
Beyond all human thought;
Through storm and cloud the glory peeps,
Whilst yet I buffet with the deeps.

And what says that bright spirit band
Whose tears the Lord has dried?
"We waded to this promised land,
Through waters dark and wide;
To these high city towers and steepes,
He led us, through the joyless deeps."

THE EDITOR'S ROOM.

I.—NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE LIVES OF OUR SEAMEN.

THOUGH slavery and the slave trade are both abolished, at least in British territory, it would appear that there is still a loud call in other departments of philanthropy for the spirit that struggled in that cause "against the stream," and that in one very important case, the man has come out who is to head the struggle. In the first place, let us say that the best thing a man can do, on some occasions, to help his cause, is to make a blunder. Whether Mr. Plim-soll, M.P. for Derby, has really been guilty of doing a wrong to some of the gentlemen on whom he has reflected in his "Appeal for Seamen," is a question which the law courts will have to decide, and with which we do not meddle. But it is certain that his efforts in parliament during the last few years to reform the merchant-ship service, and to protect the lives of British sailors, attracted very little attention, and it is probable that they would have been equally unheeded for the future, but for the blunder by which he made himself liable to the penalties attached to a breach of parliamentary privilege. Having in his book made statements which were interpreted in this way by certain of his brother M.P.'s, it became his duty to rise in his place in the House of Commons, and, with a manliness and a modesty that attracted general admiration, express his regret for his unconscious violation of parliamentary rule. Besides running the gauntlet of parliament, he is to be prosecuted at law for having issued the statements complained of; but the public conviction is so strong that he is heartily and honestly endeavouring to do a good turn to the British seaman, that a defence fund has been got up in his favour, though not at his request or even with his will. But the interesting thing is, that the public are now thoroughly interested in the cause to which for several years he has been trying to rouse attention. The newspapers have taken it up, and it has become one of the themes of the day. It is perfectly wonderful how much more interesting a man becomes when he requires to fight for his life. It is a happy thing that in the millennium there will be no abuses to rectify, and no respectable sins to put down; it is difficult to see how, if there were, any one would be able, without either suffering a persecution or a prosecution, to rouse attention to the evil.

It turns out that Mr. Plim-soll has had a singular career. The reason he knows so well about British seamen is that he has lived with them and shared their lot. For months and months he lived in one or other of Lord Shaftesbury's model lodging houses,—lived on 7s. 9½d. a week—and there met with many a workman and seaman, out of work, out of means, and out of heart. One thing that greatly interested him was the kindly consideration of workmen for each other in these circumstances. A man

with a small enough morsel for his own meal, would share it with one who had none; and a heart low enough on its own account would throw out a ray or two of hope and comfort to some one who was even more inclined to give up the battle. The references to "the old woman," or "the kids" at home, often showed a manly tenderness that made want of employment—for the times were hard—very difficult to bear. Mr. Plim-soll learned to respect and love such men, and remained voluntarily with them for a time to know them better, and to think how he could help them. And now on the floor of the House of Commons he is struggling to get justice for the seaman. The facts which he proceeds upon are very sad and awful. Of the hundreds of British seamen that are lost every year at sea, there seems no reason to doubt that at least a half perish through the effects of sheer and shameful greed. Vessels are often sent to sea in an utterly unseaworthy state; or they are overloaded, and cannot fail to founder in the first gale; or they are so leaky and crazy that they go down even without a gale—and this because the owners for greed refuse to take the steps necessary for the protection of the men, or because the underwriters, who each insure for small amounts, do not care about contesting claims in suspicious cases. Of course it is but a section of shipowners or ship-dealers to whom this remark applies. Many are most eager to promote the safety of their seamen, and a few are not only most careful of their temporal safety, but deeply concerned about their eternal salvation. There are shipowners and shipowners. The Board of Trade has had, from time to time, to punish and pillory certain neglectors of the common duties of humanity—and many more who equally deserved the treatment have had to be let off. Many a man, it is said, could unfold a tale whose lightest word would harrow up the most phlegmatic soul, but he is restrained by the fear of a prosecution for damages. If only due precautions were used for the safety of vessels, and all in charge maintained a constant sobriety, shipwrecks would occur very seldom. It is said that for more than twenty years the Cunard Company have never lost a ship nor a life. Who does not feel warmly for the British seaman, and earnestly desire that the effort now making on his behalf may be crowned with success?

CO-OPERATION AGAINST INTEMPERANCE.

Among the signs of the times there are several indications that in the cause of temperance there is about to take place a greater combination of forces than has hitherto been common. Ever since the teetotal movement, there has been something like a repulsion between those friends of temperance who go on the principle of total abstinence, and those who do not. The vigorous and persistent efforts of the teetotalers have been of wonderful service; but

hitherto they have tended to make all who were not prepared to join them hang off from the temperance movement, and some of them to feel as if they were unworthy to take part in the cause. Of late, however, there has obviously been more of a disposition to cooperate, where common action is possible. To limit the number of public-houses, for instance, is an object sufficiently definite in a practical point of view, yet such that all real friends of temperance, whether total abstainers or not, may join in it. And this, we are glad to see, many are beginning to do. We observe, for example, from the *Guardian* newspaper, that a Church of England Temperance Society has lately been organized, under the highest auspices, which shows its earnestness on the subject by proposing to raise a fund of £10,000 in furtherance of temperance objects—closing public-houses, opening recreation-grounds, and promoting such other objects as are fitted to lessen the prevalence of our great national vice. In Edinburgh, Glasgow, and other important towns, a very great degree of interest has been awakened in the recent temperance reform that has taken place in the kingdom of Sweden. A gentleman of property in Perthshire—Mr. Carnegie, of Stronvar—formerly a merchant in Sweden, has drawn attention very effectually to a double reform in that country—the reform of the laws regulating distillation, which has produced an immense improvement in the *morale* of the people generally; and a reform in the system of public-houses, which has been carried into effect in the town of Gothenburg. Acting on powers allowed by statute, the corporation of Gothenburg have made arrangements whereby a great reduction has taken place in the number of public-houses. It was thought, and very reasonably, that it was altogether a false principle to give to the managers or proprietors of public-houses a direct interest in the amount of liquor sold by them, and thereby in the drunkenness of the people. Accordingly, a public company was formed, by which the proprietorship of a great part of the public-houses has been acquired. This company contents itself with a moderate fixed percentage on its capital, and pays over all its profit beyond that point to the municipal authorities, by whom it is applied in reduction of the public rates. The managers of such of the public-houses as the society continues to keep open, account to the society for all sales of drink; but are allowed a considerable profit on other articles of consumption. Mr. Carnegie, and other gentlemen acquainted with Sweden, speak of this arrangement as one that has been highly beneficial. The principle is unquestionably sound; to give to a large and ever-increasing body of men a direct pecuniary interest in the spread of drunken habits in the population, is about the silliest proceeding which an intelligent community can adopt. The subject is undergoing a careful investigation in Edinburgh, Glasgow, and possibly in other towns, and there is a strong disposition among the friends of temperance, whether total abstainers or otherwise, to make the Swedish plan, if it be deemed practicable here, a basis for united operations.

MR. FROUDE ON THE SPREAD OF POPERY.

Vid America, we have been getting the opinion of Mr. J. A. Froude on the recent revival of Popery. In writing to an American journal he comments on the fact that while Popery has been losing ground in all the Popish countries, it has been visibly and wonderfully gaining ground in the Protestant. Wherever that liberty prevails which has ever been its great antagonist, wherever that culture of the reason which it has so constantly discountenanced, there it is gaining converts in multitudes, acquiring a power over the public education, getting a good share of the public money, in short proving itself a formidable power. In England and the United States, the two most Protestant countries in the world, this revival has been most conspicuous. Italy and Spain treat Rome with contempt, confiscate her property, and are disrespectful to her officers; Germany, not yet quite free, shakes her fists at her, and vows that every one of her priests and bishops shall obey the laws of their country; the Jesuits are checkmated in Austria; in Protestant countries alone can they work with vigour. What are the reasons of this? Mr. Froude ascribes part to the better organization of the Papists; part to restlessness and love of change in Protestant countries; part to the weariness of people floundering amid difficulties, unable to find rest, unable to find in Protestantism that authority which they crave in connection with religion, and flinging themselves as a last resort into the arms of Rome; and part to that want of absolute truthfulness and honesty which used to be the distinction of Protestants, but now that men sign articles in one sense and explain them in another, has unfortunately ceased to characterize them. As to the Jesuits, they find that the machinery of a free country is less able to deal with them—a government requires a dash of arbitrary power to be able to come down on their peculiar mode of working. As for the Tractarians, they thought to supply to their Church the element of authority which it appeared to want; but, in doing this, they only prepared the way for the passage of thousands of their people to Rome. The case, according to Mr. Froude, is very serious, and it looks as if our children would once more have to conquer their spiritual freedom from the hands of Rome. In his further observations on the subject we shall be curious to see what he says about Scotland; the case is certainly peculiar, for though popery is undoubtedly as active there as anywhere, it has received the smallest possible amount of accession from the native part of the population.

IRISH UNIVERSITY EDUCATION.

Of the bill introduced by Mr. Gladstone for the establishment of a university in Ireland, defeated on its second reading on the 12th instant, we are reluctant to say much in this place, the matter being so entangled with political considerations, which on every account we wish to avoid. The country has shown itself most jealous of any measure which would commit public education in any of its branches to

ultramontane hands; yet ultramontane influence defeated the measure, as if it cherished the expectation of more favourable terms. What has happened will make the country more vigilant than before, and will probably show more clearly how little ground there is for hope of coming to terms with Rome.

II.—GLANCES AT WHAT IS DOING ABROAD.

We have seen so many changes in the present age, that we have learned to look with comparative indifference on commotions that would have terrified a previous generation. The contest in France between Thiers and the Thirty, between the Republic and the Monarchy, between Liberalism and Ultramontanism, that thirty years ago would have thrown this country into a panic, is now regarded with singular coldness. Spain undergoes a change from monarchy to republicanism, and as a republic becomes exposed to numberless risks of anarchy and civil war; yet in this country the whole is regarded with only the most languid interest. We seem to have been hearing the cry of "Wolf" so often that we have ceased to be alarmed by it. Yet, undoubtedly, these changes may come in a very serious manner to effect the progress of the gospel. "Work while it is called to-day" seems to sound in our ears with every report of actual change, and every rumour of change to come. The unparalleled opportunity we now enjoy to preach the gospel and scatter the Bible, is one that ought to be accepted with an earnestness about which there should be no traces of languor.

THE CONFLICT IN SWITZERLAND.

The chief ecclesiastical interest on the Continent is in the battle which is going on between the Ultramontans and the Governments that have spirit enough to contend with them. During the last few weeks, Switzerland has come to the front in connection with this struggle. The opposition of the Catholic population to the Infallibilist decree has come out with remarkable decision in connection with the Bishop of Bâle. The jurisdiction of that gentleman over his diocese, which embraces the seven cantons or half cantons of Bâle, Campagne, Soleure, Thurgovie, Argovie, Lucerne, and Zug, is regulated by a concordat, which requires the consent of the civil authorities to ecclesiastical proceedings within the diocese. The bishop was very quiet for a considerable time after the Council of the Vatican; but summoning courage, proceeded, among other steps, to depose a popular Abbé, because he did not in his teaching accept the decree of Infallibility. This roused the civil authorities, who met in great indignation, and took the strong step of declaring the see of Bâle vacant, in consequence of the unconstitutional proceedings of the bishop. Two of the cantons, Lucerne and Zug, did not go so far as to depose the bishop, doubting whether that was a competent act; but the opposition to the decree of infallibility is intense, and the resistance to the imperious policy of Rome is not less so. The Roman Catholic clergy look upon

the bishop as a martyr; and there are not a few Protestants who are unable to reconcile the action of the civil power to their ideas of toleration and religious liberty.

The collision at Geneva between the civil and the pontifical authorities is of a somewhat different kind. Contrary again to an ancient agreement, the Pope interfered in the ecclesiastical arrangements of Geneva without any understanding with the civil authorities. Hitherto there has been no Bishop of Geneva; but recently the Pope appointed a well-known priest, M. Mermillod, Vicar-Apostolic of Geneva, as a stepping-stone, it was commonly believed, to his appointment as bishop. This step has been so resented by the civil authorities of Geneva that M. Mermillod has been banished from the canton. The inferior clergy, who preferred to give obedience to him, have paid the penalty, in the shape of the loss of a quarter's allowance from the State. Much may naturally be said for the civil authorities, who have acted in this matter in accordance with the concordat agreed on by both parties; but in the Protestant community of Paris, as well as elsewhere, it is said that grave doubts exist as to the expediency and moral propriety of so summary and severe proceedings. Geneva, in its early history, got great celebrity for the vigour with which it espoused the cause of the Reformation. Now, however, her vigour is rather political than religious; and the earnest feeling under which she acts springs more from the sense of personal hurt, than from a burning regard to the interests of divine truth. Everywhere these proceedings have created the deepest interest; for the moral weight of what is done by Switzerland in this cause is quite out of proportion to her territorial magnitude.

IN GERMANY.

In Germany, too, the battle continues to rage—rages in newspapers and periodicals, as well as in fields of another kind. The bills before the Prussian Parliament for repressing Roman Catholicism continues to engage the attention of all. The Catholic clergy have expressed their determination to resist them even to the death. And if they do so resist, the Government is pledged to meet them with the most decisive measures—to suspend and finally suppress them. To all present appearance, this is the consummation to which matters are tending. The great difficulty of the Prussian Government in such a case would be to obtain new bishops in the place of those superseded. There would be one difficulty in finding men willing to accept the situations, and another in getting them consecrated. The Old Catholic movement might supply at least one of these wants, and in that direction the Prussian Government would probably turn.

And certainly in some places the Alt-Catholics are showing a remarkable degree of vigour. In Constance, for example, in the State of Baden, after hearing addresses from Michelis and Friedrich, a plebiscite of the Catholics was resolved on, and out of 1,500 Catholics, notwithstanding the most vigorous opposition of the priests, 657 voted against the Infallibility

dogma. A deputation then proceeded to the Baden Government to ask the use of one of the churches for their worship. This request was granted at once. It is believed that other towns in Baden will speedily follow the lead of Constance, the more especially as the State is fettered by no concordat, and there are no political difficulties. It would appear that in Bavaria, once so keen, the movement has become languid, but that the fire has spread to the district around.

III.—JOTTINGS FROM THE MISSION FIELD.

MISSION CONFERENCE.

An important missionary conference has been held at Allahabad, in India. No fewer than one hundred and eighteen missionaries were present; and to show how many different denominations of brethren are capable of dwelling together in unity, it may be mentioned that twenty-two belonged to the Church Missionary Society, seventeen were American Presbyterian, thirteen American Episcopal, twelve Free Church of Scotland, eleven London Missionary, nine Baptist, four American Board, three Church of Scotland, three United Presbyterian of America, three United Presbyterian of Scotland, and several of other communions. The conference sat for five days, discussing all manner of questions of missionary interest, and in a spirit of great harmony. In India itself, the state of Christian missions, while far from fitted to cause despondency, is not outwardly very prosperous; but a great change is believed to be going on under the surface. Among tribes like the Santhals the progress is much more rapid. "We do not tell our converts to preach," said a missionary; "when they are converted they go of themselves, and say to their friends, 'Come, we have found something good.' People come by whole villages to see the missionary. Many villages have been entirely christianized, and support their pastor, as they formerly supported their priest, by allotting him a portion of land to work. One single man among them has brought no less than five villages to Christ." Medical missions had a prominent place at the meetings of this conference, and the real importance of medical institutions for training up the native converts, or some of them, to qualify them for practice among the natives, was much dwelt on. To those outside it is interesting to ascertain the views of mission work prevalent among those who are bearing the heat and burden of the day; but the main effect of such gatherings must be to quicken and encourage the workers themselves. The judgment of a missionary father, Dr. Wilson of Bombay, is—"The effect of the meetings has been to produce great hopefulness and joy at the prospect of the steady and sure progress of the work of the Lord in India."

AMUSEMENTS FOR NATIVE CHRISTIANS.

The subject of amusements for native Christians has been pressing itself on the attention of mission-

aries, and was recently under discussion at a conference in Calcutta. The question arose from the fact that in the large Christian community of Backergunge, under charge of the Rev. J. Sale, of the Baptist mission, some of the native Christians expressed a desire to take part in the boat-races connected with the festival of the Durga Pujah. There is so much connection between amusements and idolatrous practices, and likewise between amusements and lax moral habits, that the whole question connected with them becomes both delicate and difficult. The conference recognised the benefit of amusement in all wholesome forms, for the enlivening and refreshing of human life. It wisely abstained from directions as to particular cases, laying down general rules and cautions which each missionary must consider in each particular instance. Boat-races, when held in honour of heathen gods, could not be sanctioned, nor when accompanied by impure songs; but the case would be altered if they were held at other times and accompanied by better songs. Miracle-plays, representing the passion of our blessed Lord, corresponding to the jātrās, or plays in which proceedings of the heathen gods were often represented, were painful to witness, and injurious in tendency. But popular musical performances of a different description might be rendered very serviceable in spreading among the Hindoo and Mahometan population a knowledge of Scripture history and truth; and with due care, in aiding to produce an impression on the mind. The conference expressed its opinion, "that great strictness in the prohibition of instrumental music must defeat its own end, and that in all probability it is better not to denounce such music as injurious in its tendency, nor to attempt to regulate it in connection with the exercise of church discipline, as long as the words sung are not tainted with idolatry or impurity."

IV.—OUR MEMORIAL RECORD.

In the preceding part of this Number of our Magazine, we have given full expression to our sense of the loss sustained by the whole Christian Church in the removal of Dr. Guthrie. To that mournful subject we do not return here. We are desirous, however, of giving a niche to an eminent man of science, recently removed, full of years—

PROFESSOR SEDGWICK, OF CAMBRIDGE.

Of his eminence in science we do not need to write. Of the devout spirit in which he prosecuted his researches in geology and the study of nature, his own writings bear abundant evidence. He could never bear, while inquiring into the phenomena of nature, to feel himself "dangling in mid air without a resting-place for the sole of his foot." And from a funeral sermon by the Rev. Robert Burn, M.A., Senior Fellow of Trinity, we rejoice to learn "that his last hours were spent in earnest prayer for sanctification by the Holy Spirit, in submissive resignation to the will of his Creator, and in the firm trust that he was washed from the guilt of his sin by the atoning blood of his Saviour."

AGAINST THE STREAM:

The Story of an Heroic Age in England.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE SCHONBERG-COTTA FAMILY."

CHAPTER XVI.



E traveled for the most part outside the coach, and not through an altogether happy land. A series of bad harvests had raised the price of bread, while

the French war barred our access to the abundant cornfields of the Continent.

The people, often so heroically patient in sufferings they feel to be inevitable, were by no means persuaded that the hunger they had now to endure was inevitable.

The one gigantic imperial form of Napoleon had scarcely yet effaced in the popular imagination the promises of the Republic. England was by no means of one heart and soul in the war, in any class or station. There was a suspicion in many minds that we were starving ourselves to enslave our neighbours. From the commencement, not only Mr. Fox, but Mr. Wilberforce, courageously abandoning his party, had been against it; and by this time the majority, enlightened by the failure of our large subsidies and our little army on the Continent, and not even consoled by our splendid successes at sea, were brought round to his opinions.

Moreover there was another gigantic imperial power rising not before the imagination, but before the eyes, and in spite of the hands, of the people; the power of Steam.

Against this the people had dashed themselves again and again in blind fury, in what were even now beginning to be the manu-

facturing districts in the north, burning the machinery, and hunting the inventors out of the country; poor human hands and hearts wounding themselves like children in vain assaults against the impassive irresistible force of material progress!

Our way, however, did not lie through these more disturbed districts, but through the agricultural lands of the south.

It was not so much riot and ruin that we saw as quiet uncontenting misery; hollow-eyed, hungry faces, feeble bent forms that should have been those of strong men, and worn old faces that should have been those of children. Misery, hunger, starvation; patient, not through hope, but through hopelessness.

In one town indeed through which we passed, we found broken windows in the bakers' shops, and men still hanging about in muttering groups, the sullen remnants of a mob recently hindered from burning the flour-mills.

The bewildered magistrates had met, and having consulted how to compel a reduction of prices, had felt the bakers and millers too strong to be assailed, and had therefore valiantly directed their attack on the market women, who were solemnly and severely commanded to sell their butter at tenpence a pound!

The Government mode of relief was scarcely less blind than that of the mob. Whilst the mob attacked the bakers, Parliament passed a Bill enjoining the use of brown bread.

Through this hungry and bewildered England the four horses of the stage-coach bore us, toiling up the green hills of our southern counties, and galloping across the many heaths and commons then still free; over plains historical with battles of old civil wars; passing in the twilight the weird giant stone-circles of a forgotten faith; seeing the spires or fretted towers of old cathedrals grow from grey delicate lines into majestic solidity as we approached; everywhere our arrival an event; welcomed in village and city inns by facetious hostlers, officious waiters, jolly landlords, and patronizing landladies. But always behind and around were those silent languid groups of hungry-eyed men and women, and grave children.

At last we drew near the great City. Two

masses stood out distinctly, through the smoke and the twilight, the dome of St. Paul's, and the twin towers of Westminster Abbey. With these last we claimed a kind of kinship through our old Printing House in the Abbey churchyard of Abbot's Weir, where one of the earliest printing-presses in England had co-existed with the Caxton press at Westminster.

My father had often told us of it, and the little link seemed to make those abbey towers like a welcome.

There was little time, however, to observe buildings, at no time the characteristic glory of London.

We had entered the streets; and the multitudes and masses of human beings seemed to seize and overwhelm me, heart and mind, like a great Atlantic wave, and take away my breath. I seemed to pant to get to an end, a shore. And there was no end, no shore! only always, on and on, those busy, crowded streets, those wildernesses of human dwellings. I felt altogether lost, my individuality swept away and drowned, in the bewildering, busy whirlpool of those unknown crowds.

I could not account for it. If I could not have held Piers's hand I think I must have cried out, like somebody drowning. As it was, I squeezed his arm as if I were clinging to him for life. He laughed, and asked if I was afraid, and said it was as easy to the coachman to drive through London streets as to one of our waggoners to plod through the lanes of Abbot's Weir.

I knew the feeling was exaggerated and unreasonable, but I could neither explain nor help it.

And then, all at once, floated on my heart the words—

"And Jesus seeing the multitudes, had compassion on them."

That relieved me. Tears came, and I let them flow quietly.

All the majesty of that pitying Presence came over me! And I seemed to nestle like a child to that tender mighty Heart. I felt there was room for every one of those overwhelming crowds *there*, and feeling this I was at home.

At the coach door we were met by Cousin Crichton. He did not look in the least overwhelmed by the din or the crowd. He looked too solid and, at the same time, too buoyant to be overwhelmed by anything. The evils he could not beat off like a rock, he would float over like a buoy. He welcomed us as if he had known us for years.

"No more luggage than that!" he said, stowing away our boxes in the hackney coach he had ready for us. "Well done, Cousin Bride, I will take you to the Wall of China, if you like, with the same equipage, if only as a standing protest against my girls."

I felt a little abashed. He did not mean to be sarcastic, I was sure. His voice and his face were too round and hearty for satire. But in the grave footman who helped me into the carriage I detected a shade of condescension, inevitable from so solid a personage towards a young lady whose wardrobe could be compressed into one trunk. Also, I felt it necessary to justify the liberality of my father's arrangements.

"We thought Cousin Barbara would help us to buy suitable things," I answered, apologetically.

"Apologizing for your virtues? Don't, my dear! At least not before your cousins, I pray."

We crossed Westminster Bridge. The last faint gold of sunset was dying away over the broad river and in the frosty sky, but there was just enough colour to contrast with the dim grey of the Abbey towers, and the roofs of the old Houses of Parliament.

Again that absurd inclination to tears came over me. The Abbey brought back our abbey, and Abbot's Weir, and father; and the Houses of Parliament seemed sacred with memories of Loveday, and of the eloquent voices that had pleaded there for the slaves, and would go on pleading there until the great wrong was righted.

As we went on, Cousin Crichton poured out information which he thought would interest us. He pointed out Mr. Wedgwood's works, in Greek Street, Soho, and thence diverged to Bolton and Watt's, at Soho near Birmingham, and spoke of engines of a thousand horse power, and said they were beginning a social revolution greater than the French.

He showed us Covent Garden Theatre. "National!" he remarked, "whether we approve of it or not, and historical. David Garrick acted there; Hannah More's friend, you know."

He told us, as we drove over Westminster Bridge, that there was a larger mass of stone in that bridge than in St. Paul's.

I felt I ought to be astonished at everything. Piers evidently took it all in, and was much interested.

But I had very vague ideas as to "horse powers" and comparative quantities of stone, and although I had certainly heard of David

Garrick, I felt in disgraceful ignorance as to Mrs. Hannah More, apparently, in my uncle's eyes, the larger celebrity of the two.

At last I ventured to ask if it was really there, under those roofs, that Mr. Wilberforce spoke, and Mr. Clarkson got all that terrible anti-slavery evidence listened to, which it cost him such labour to collect?

He turned on me with a look of pleased surprise.

"Then the echoes of our battles have reached the quiet old town?"

"My father cares for nothing, more!" I said. "We have heard about it all our lives."

He seemed moved, and gave my hand a hearty shake.

"Have you West Indians, then, in Abbot's Weir? What has roused up the dear, sleepy old town?"

"I don't think the old town is roused up," I said. "It is only father and Loveday Benbow."

"Benbow! I seem to know the name," he said.

"Her father is Lieutenant Benbow, and her mother was a Quaker, and she is an invalid, and has suffered much," I said; "but she cares for what the slaves suffer more than for all her own pain."

"Ah," he said, "the Quakers were always sound on that point; some of our best men are among them. So you have not had any abolition meetings?" he continued, with a business-like practical eye to "the cause."

"Any slave-holders?"

"One," I said, "one of our dearest friends. But she hates it."

"Ah," he sighed, "she has seen it, I suppose."

And then he pointed out to me the house where Granville Sharp lived.

"He is an old acquaintance, too, I suppose," he said, smiling.

"The oldest of all," I said. "We like him best of all."

"A very sound man," he replied; "a little crotchety; peculiar views as to prophecy, but very sound."

I felt a little chilled at the term. Would Andromeda have liked to hear Perseus called nothing more sublime than "sound?"

"There he is!" exclaimed Cousin Crichton.

He stopped the coach, and I actually saw him; looked into the fine face with the broad forehead, the delicate, feminine curves of the lip, the massive, resolute chin.

"Here is a young lady who is quite sound as to the Blacks," said Cousin Crichton.

And Mr. Sharp smiled benignantly in at the coach window, and I actually shook hands with him; had my hand in the friendly grasp of the hand that had rescued poor bruised and battered Jonathan Strong, and searched among the law-books and records, against the counsel of lawyers and judges, until it drew the true law of England to the light, and laid the foundation of the liberty of all slaves in the righteous judgment of one free country.

I was quite beyond tears then.

"Thank you, that is worth coming to London for, Cousin Crichton!" I said, as we drove on again. "The first of them all; he who began it all!"

"Shall we see Mr. Clarkson?" I ventured to ask, feeling as if everything good were possible now.

"Clarkson? Ah, I am not sure. An excellent hard-working man; but he does not belong to Clapham" (the "but" sounded like "although"); "a good hand at the foundations, Clarkson. But to-morrow you shall see Mr. Wilberforce's house, perhaps himself."

And that, I felt, was like saying, "You have seen the ministers; to-morrow you shall see the king."

The coach drove through a handsome stone gateway, and round a wide sweep of lawn, and stopped at a porch, very Grecian and impressive, though vague as to style.

In a moment we were in the brilliantly-lighted drawing-room, with lamps in various places, and a table set with silver and with flowers, and a steaming urn, and a great glowing coal-fire, and a party of most cordially-minded cousins, who kissed us as if they had known us for years, and their father, as if they had parted from him for years, and all fell on us at once with various hospitable propositions, until Cousin Crichton came to the rescue.

"Stand back, girls. You set all ceremonial at defiance. Cousin Bride Danescombe, let me introduce you one by one, beginning at the beginning. You have heard of the Admirable Crichton. These are all Admirable Crichtons. This is Hatty, who has a talent for finding out the most wonderful people to admire; and this is Matty, who has a talent for finding out the most uncomfortable people to comfort; and this is Phœbe, who has a talent for finding out the most impracticable people to reform; and this," he added, placing my hand in his wife's, "is your Cousin Barbara, *the* Admirable Crichton, who has a talent for loving every one lovable or unlovable, and will certainly take to loving

you. The boys may introduce themselves," waving his hand to three tall young men. "And," he concluded, "there is the Lower House in the nursery. And there is little Martha up-stairs." As he spoke of little Martha he unconsciously lowered his voice, as we do in speaking of something sacred; and I noticed she was the only one who had no pet name; the one little patient sufferer in that prosperous, joyous home. Any name that belonged to her became a pet name only by its being hers. To me, indeed, when I learned to love her, she made the prosaic-sounding name of Martha as sweet and high as "Mary," so that I had always, after knowing her, a prejudice to overcome against any of the many occasions in which poor Martha and her blundering love were held up to severe animadversion.

There was a wonderful glow about the whole evening; the welcome, the lights in such abundance as I had never seen, the glowing masses of coal in the large grate, to which I was not accustomed, the rosy glow on my cousins' faces, the tender motherly light in their mother's eyes.

Cousin Crichton declared I looked as fresh as if I had come out of a bandbox. "But, talking of bandboxes, girls," he added, "I should like you to see what your cousin can do with—or without!"

But Cousin Barbara said I must be tired, and gently led me up-stairs.

Into such a bedroom! and with such a fire! I had never had a fire in my bedroom, except for a week when I had the measles. I felt I must in honesty disclaim such luxuries.

And there were book-shelves, and a sofa, and a writing-table with lovely exotic hot-house flowers on it, and a cheval-glass with lighted candles in brackets, and the fire-light flickering on the crimson damask draperies of such a magnificence of a bed! It would require a special ceremonial to get into it. The room was a residence; a house, a garden, a palace! My poor little trunk did look very meagre in it.

"How kind!" I said, "how luxurious and beautiful everything is! So much too good for me, Cousin Barbara. You must put me in some little room fit for a girl."

"I hope you will be comfortable, my dear," she said; "we do not wish to have luxuries, but we do try to make people comfortable."

She left me, and in a few minutes her kind soft voice was at the door again.

"My dear," she said, "you will not mind just looking in on little Martha. She has been expecting you, and she wants a kiss."

We went in.

There she lay, on a couch near the fire, her eager face welcoming me; her eyes with that wistful look of suffering in them questioning mine; her long, thin little hands still holding mine, so as not to let me go, when she had kissed me. The large eyes seemed satisfied with their answer, I suppose partly because I could scarcely meet them for tears.

"Kiss me again, Cousin Bride," she said.

And the second kiss was not that of a stranger.

I felt there was one place at least in that great, glad, wealthy household where I should be wanted, and therefore should be at home.

Then one flying glimpse in their beds in the nursery at the Lower House, which unconstitutionally refused to go to sleep without seeing the new cousin.

Then down again to the full, bright room.

"You will excuse our having only brown-bread, and no pastry, and no sugar," said Cousin Crichton. "The brown-bread is law, of course. The no pastry is our voluntary contribution to the scarcity; it seems a shame to be making into luxuries what others cannot get enough of to live on. But the no sugar is not compulsory. That, you know, is our protest against the slave-trade. Perhaps you take sugar."

Piers and I had given it up for years.

"Three hundred thousand, Clarkson found in one of his journeys had done the same; and some persons refuse to sell it. A little self-denial does none of us any harm."

It seemed strange to me to associate the thought of self-denial with that abundant table, with its cold and hot meats and elaborate cakes, and foreign preserves and dried fruits, and hot-house grapes, and many luxuries new to my provincial imagination. But it seemed to gratify Cousin Crichton to feel we were seasoning our dainties with that little pinch of self-denial, so of course I said nothing.

I think the thought of those starving men and women and little children, of whom we had been seeing so many, would have made it difficult for me to enjoy anything as my cousin wished that evening,—(of course I was over-fatigued and over-excited,)—if it had not been for the thought of that dear little worn face up-stairs.

This family also was, after all, bearing some share of the burdens of the world.

We had family prayers, (not then a matter of course), commenced by a very impressive procession of servants, headed by the portly housekeeper, a far more majestic person than



"AGAINST THE STREAM."



Cousin Barbara, and closed by a frightened-looking little maid, whom I concluded must be either one of Cousin Matty's uncomfortable people to be comforted, or one of Phæbe's impracticable people to be reformed.

Very hearty and benevolent those prayers seemed to me, and very humble I am sure they were meant to be. Our unworthiness and absence of all merit was much lamented in them; and the whole world, black and white, heathen and Christian, were most affectionately remembered, our "poorer brethren" (amongst whom my cousins diligently laboured); the millions of India and China, for whose sake the Church Missionary Society had just been instituted.

But somehow it felt as if we were people on a safe and sunny island interceding for those still struggling in the cold and perilous sea; people set apart in an oasis of exceptional plenty to shower down our alms and blessings on a hungry world.

Except in one tender little sentence, in which "the beloved member of this family who cannot be with us," was in few words and tremulous tones commended to the merciful Father.

As I lay awake in my regal bed that night watching the delightful friendly flicker of the fire-light on the mirror, the books, the mahogany wardrobe, the crimson damask curtains, I felt that "comfort" was a word that covered a good deal in the Crichton vocabulary; and that the distinction so clear to kind Cousin Barbara between "comfortable" and "luxurious" was rather too subtle for a provincial mind like mine.

I had never before known intimately a full complete family life such as this. It had so happened, I saw as I looked back to Abbot's Weir, that my little world there was a world of fragments. Our own home, happy as I was there, had never been complete since our mother went, and never could be more. Amice, Loveday, Miss Felicity, sweet little Claire and her mother, Uncle Fyford, and Dick Fyford were all fragments, more or less rugged or rounded, broken off from complete family life, or never having been moulded into it.

But this was a complete, warm, sunny, healthy, rich, round world, with all that were therein. Its sun and moon, and all its stars were there. The father lovingly providing, generously bestowing, ruling, delighting in the children; the mother loving, sympathizing, understanding, serving; all the brothers and sisters so full of life, and activity, and happiness—so full of trusted and trusting love.

How beautiful, how dear, how warm it was! And how much warmth it must shed all around! What a picture of "the Father's House" to those around it; what a foretaste of it to those within!

Yet my thoughts would wander back to that bewildered, battling, toiling, struggling England; that bewildered, battling world outside, and could find no rest.

Until they came back and did find rest in Cousin Martha's sick-chamber.

Little Martha seemed to link that abounding prosperous family with the suffering, weary, struggling world outside, and to make the contrast less oppressive.

Our blessed Lord did not live in an oasis, when He was visibly in this world, any more than he lived in the deserts; but on the open hillsides; in the city streets where the lame and blind were, and the sick were brought to the doors; on the dusty roads; by the village well, thirsty and weary, really poor.

It seemed to me good for that prosperous household that the footprints of poverty should have come into one chamber of it, poverty of all that makes wealth enjoyable; thirst and weariness no wealth could relieve; good that there should be one on whom the light of the Beatitudes came down direct with no necessity for symbolical explanation; not as a general declaration, but a personal benediction; not only, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, and they that hunger after righteousness," but "*Blessed be ye poor*; for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are ye that hunger now; for ye shall be filled."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE history of the anti-slavery struggle is not picturesque, at least the English portion of it. Its battle-fields are committee-rooms of the House of Commons, at no time the most picturesque of assemblies, the low taverns whence Clarkson hunted out witnesses, platforms of abolition meetings, largely attended by Quakers, the House of Commons itself; none of them very manageable material from a pictorial point of view. Its chief pictorial achievement is a terribly geometrical drawing of a section of a slave-ship with a cargo of black men and women stowed in it "like herrings in a barrel," only alive (at least, alive *when they were packed*), six feet by one foot four inches being the largest space allowed to any. Few historical pictures, however, have been so effective. It moved the House of Commons. "It seemed to make an instantaneous impression of horror on all who saw it."

Nor are the sacrifices made by the abolitionists such as sensationally to impress the imagination. Even such "a sacrifice to virtue" as three hundred thousand persons giving up sugar, scarcely means as much to us as it appears to have meant to the sufferers, who, it is recorded, on the promise of the abolition of the slave trade in 1796, experienced "great joy," and "several in consequence returned to the use of sugar." And, excepting sugar, the majority of its advocates were not mulcted of a luxury. The heart-anguish endured by men like Clarkson in hunting up evidence among the lowest haunts of seaport towns, or on the decks of slave-ships (steeping his soul in that bitter cup of cruelty and wretchedness until often sleep was impossible); and even the real personal danger he encountered; being once all but drowned in a storm he had braved to secure a witness, and once all but hustled into the sea by a band of slave-traders in the Liverpool docks—are not subjects to be dramatically represented.

Nevertheless, in the quiet heroism of "patient continuance in well-doing," strong to keep alive through half a century the glow of sympathetic enthusiasm, with no romantic visions or incidents to revive it, through the damps and chills of prosaic details of wrong and repeated failures of redress, the world has had few nobler examples.

The extent to which the trumpet was blown in some quarters afterwards, may have given subsequent generations a tendency to undervalue the work.

But Granville Sharp, and Clarkson, and Wilberforce, and the leaders of the contest, themselves blew no trumpet before them, called their deeds by no grandiloquent names, and never gave themselves out as martyrs or heroes, or anything but Christian men determined to lift off a great crime from their country and a great wrong from a continent.

I was a little disappointed at the feeling of my cousins with regard to the slave trade. They were quite "sound" on the subject, of course; they wore Mr. Wedgwood's cameo of "a man and a brother;" they abstained from sugar; but they were a little tired of the contest. "It seemed as if it would never come to an end." It had gone on in the House of Commons more than ten years; and ten years to my cousins was the whole of conscious life. "It was remarkable," Mr. Clarkson says, at the beginning of the century, "that the youth of the rising generation knew but little about the question. For some years the committee had not circulated any books."

Nor was the anti-slavery literature very at-

tractive, or very "suitable for circulation in families."

The mere brutality of the wrongs inflicted make their records as unreadable as the criminal columns of a sensational newspaper. Besides, the "newest thing" whether in bonnets or baretas, in vestments, secular or ecclesiastical, in heresies or in philanthropy—will have irresistible attractions for "the youth of both sexes." And anti-slavery was by no means the newest thing in philanthropy. I found that, through Loveday's burdened heart and Amice's stricken conscience, I knew and felt more about it than my cousins. Except little Martha. "I cannot go with my sisters to the schools and the poor and the missionary meetings," she said; "but I can be as near the negroes as they can. They say the abolition struggle has gone on so long! but then, you know, that is *because the misery is going on so long*. I can sometimes make things to help the Moravian missionaries in the West Indies; and I can always ask God to help," she added, "at least almost always, when my head is not too stupid. And in the night when I cannot sleep, I often say over the poems and hymns about them by Cowper. They make my own little troubles seem nothing."

Moreover, the period during which I first visited Clapham was the time of a lull in the battle, although the preparations were continued, as Mr. Wilberforce said, "with uncooled zeal."

In 1800, 1801, 1802, and 1803 it was judged expedient to bring forward no motion for abolition in the House of Commons.

My cousins, however, were by no means irresponsive to my enthusiasm. They were quite ready most generously to acknowledge that perhaps they had not cared as much as they ought. "It was all so terrible and so hopeless, and there seemed nothing girls could do in it, and there were thousands of things so full of hope in which they could help!" "They had rather left slavery to papa and Mr. Wilberforce and the House of Commons." "I must come and see the day-schools and Sunday-schools, and attend the meetings at Exeter Hall for the Bible Society, and the London Missionary Society, and the Church Missionary Society."

However prosaic and old-fashioned those words may sound now, to us, then, they were full of spiritual romance, fresh as young leaves, fragrant as spring flowers, strong and glad as a river just set free from the winter ice. It was a joyous tide of new life, and I was swept away in it.

England had begun to awaken to the fact that she had millions of ignorant children to be taught the elements of Christianity, and millions of heathen subjects to be evangelized, and a whole world within and without in sore need of help. During the next few years, she was to get used to the necessity of standing alone *against* the world in more ways than one; and she was also to rise to the duty of standing alone *for* the world, until the Christian world awoke to help her. As certain as it is that there were years—at the beginning of this century—in which our country alone stemmed the desolating despotism of Napoleon, until nation after nation awoke not at her call but by her deeds; so certain it is that at the beginning of this century she alone, with anything to be called a national enthusiasm, stemmed the torrent of a thousand wrongs; negro slavery, the cruel miseries of the mad in lunatic asylums, of the unfortunate and the guilty in prisons, ignorance and darkness in Christendom and in heathendom, until nation after nation arose at the light of her shining, and the whole world is warmer and brighter for it, down to its darkest corners.

And equally certain is it that these philanthropic movements began not as the silent spreading of morning or as the gradual, insensible diffusion of an atmosphere, but by the honest, hearty, sometimes blundering and ungraceful struggles against the stream of a few earnest Christian men and women, not a few of whom lived at Clapham.

Whatever else the religious life at Clapham was or failed to be, it was hearty, healthy, helpful—not occupied with its own sensations, but with its work; using its strength, steadily and joyfully, in “going about doing good.” “Doing good” was the aim, the motto of the school. “Being good” no doubt should come first; but the “doing” and the “being” are so intertwined that it is not always easy to see which begins; and it is easy to see that towards the “being” few means are so efficacious as the “doing.” Nor is “doing good” a propensity I think likely to be at all generally pushed to a dangerous extreme; although talking about it certainly may.

Those first weeks at Clapham shine back on me like one of Cuypp’s sunny landscapes. They were spent in a golden haze of piety, philanthropy, prosperity, and personal petting of myself. My cousins could never make enough of me. They were much given to superlatives, not from exaggeration, but from a certain glow through which they saw

things and people. The boys accepted me as a kind of younger sister, with a variety which was piquant; and, in their way, were as good to me as the girls. Happily (although I believe to Mrs. Danescombe’s disappointment), no thoughts of matrimony intruded themselves. Indeed, people were not in the habit of falling in love with me, as they were with Claire. The only persons who made that mistake in those days, were two elderly gentlemen, one of whom had an idea that I should devote myself efficiently to his eleven children, whilst the other considered that I reminded him of his first wife, an elderly lady recently departed; and a young curate, who, I believe, thought I should be a mother to him and his parish. On the contrary, people were in the habit of confiding to me their love affairs, as if I had been a venerable and indulgent grandmotherly person of seventy. I took it as a compliment, this being a prerogative of Loveday Benbow’s, although it did seem beginning rather early.

The first Sunday at Clapham was a decided novelty to me. Instead of every one rising a little later in homage to the day of rest, every one was down half-an-hour earlier to begin what, to my cousins, was the busiest day in the week.

There was an amicable contest among my cousins which should have possession of me to introduce me to her own special field of work. They all taught in Sunday-schools—Hatty, the class of young women in the school belonging to the church they attended; Matty, a class of infants in the same school; and Phoebe, a class of boys in a new school recently opened in a very poor and neglected district, which had sprung up like a fungus, with its crowded, ill-drained little houses, at some distance from the classic groves of Clapham, in a ragged outskirts of the great city.

To me, strange as it seems, Sunday-schools were altogether a new and unknown institution. No one had thought of establishing one in Abbot’s Weir. With some reluctance I had to confess it. We had not even a day-school, except a few collections of little ones, in scattered cottages, on a very limited scale as to numbers and instruction, kept by a few old women, chosen on the principle Oberlin superseded among his mountains, “too old to keep the goats, and therefore set to keep the children.”

“No Sunday-school!” exclaimed a cousinly chorus. “What can the children do? and what can *you* do with Sunday?”

I supposed the good people taught their own children, as best they could, and the indifferent people let their children do what they liked. Of the bad people I could give no account. I had not met them; they seemed to keep out of the way. And as to how *we* spent Sunday? We went to church, read good books, and had long talks with my father.

"But, dear Cousin Bride," said Phœbe, "the bad people generally do keep out of the way, don't you think? They have ~~lost~~ their way, you know. So we have to go out

of the way to find them. And we have so many days to read good books in."

It was a new view to me.

If ever "false witness" was borne "against our neighbour," it is in the accusation that the "evangelical party" were supremely occupied with "saving their own souls." They might, some of them, have narrow and shallow ideas of what "salvation" means, (which of us has conceptions of that great word, deep and broad enough?), but at their own souls they certainly did not stop; labouring



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to save other people's souls was of the very essence of their religion.

Whatever else they believed or disbelieved, they believed most really that they had in their possession a remedy for the sins and sorrows of the whole world; and it was their duty and their delight to bestow and apply it; sometimes, no doubt, not discriminatingly or successfully. Have we found yet the school of spiritual medicine whose diagnosis is perfect, or whose treatment never fails?

The bright faces of my cousins did a large portion of their evangelizing work, bringing sunshine wherever they came.

Hatty's class of young women surprised me a little by the spruceness and fashionableness of their attire. Many of them were dressmakers and young shopwomen. But there was no mistaking the intelligent interest in the young faces gathered around the table where they read the Bible together, while she endeavoured to make it plain to them, by a system of "references" which was altogether new to me; no doubt, not always involving a very discriminating study of the different authors and books, but securing a familiar acquaintance with great scriptural revealed truths, in those inimitable words of the English Bible

which would come back to the learners in many an after-hour of sorrow and pain and bewilderment, when none but familiar words would be able to penetrate the heart.

Matty's "babies" were, however, my especial delight. Here the aid of art was not despised. There were pictures, not exactly after the old masters, but very brilliant and attractive, of little Samuel, to whom God spoke, and of the boy Joseph, and of Ruth among the corn-fields, and of the child Saviour in the manger, and the good Shepherd carrying the lambs. There were songs about "busy bees," and "early blossoms," and "twinkling stars," and about the manger at Bethlehem, and the "little children" on whom the merciful hands were laid, and the fold where little lambs were safely folded, by which a thousand tender touches of "the Creed of Creeds" were sung and shone into the hearts of the little ones in tender tones and tints they would no more lose from the memory of the heart, than their mother's voice or their mother's kisses.

Whatever might elsewhere have been dry or over "doctrinal" in the creed, had for the children to be made living and tender and human. With them, at least, there was no danger of the gracious meaning of the Incarnation being forgotten.

But the work of Phœbe, the youngest of my cousins, who, according to her father, had the talent of finding out impracticable people to be reformed, interested me most of all.

With her I went, in the afternoon, to the people who lived, in every sense, "out of the way," and accordingly had to be sought.

The other Sunday-school was already an established institution. The children came to it as a matter of course. They were orderly and well-dressed, and naturally, therefore, more disposed to take the teaching as a matter of course. Many of the parents also were in the employment, in one way or another, of the rich people around, and they had thus a hereditary habit of orthodoxy, respectfulness, and respectability. But Phœbe's school was still experimental. It was a room in an alley, in which it was by no means a matter of course for the inhabitants to do anything they ought to do, or not to do anything they ought not to do, and in which very few were disposed as a matter of habit to be either respectful or respectable.

She could not well have gone there, but for the protection of two of her brothers who accompanied us.

The little persons to be influenced had a most real and independent personality of

their own, and the influence over them had therefore to be real and personal.

If they were not interested, they made no polite pretensions of appearing to be. Uneducated, indeed, they were not. In their own narrow line their education had been terribly complete, only unfortunately in the wrong direction.

They knew far more of "life" and the "world," the youngest of them, than my cousin Matty, brought up in the sunny oasis of Clapham. With intelligence preter-naturally sharpened, like that of wild animals, in all that concerned themselves, acute, sagacious, cunning, because suspicious of traps, acute as one of those sharp-eyed terriers of their own, which Phœbe had such difficulty in keeping out of the school, in detecting an adversary's weak point,—and trained to look on all human beings, especially well-dressed human beings, as adversaries,—it was not in the direction of a contest of wits that my gentle cousin could cope with them.

Her power was that she had something altogether new, terribly, gloriously new, to bring them. She brought them love, and she brought them hope. At first, apparently, the whole thing was regarded, in the alley, by the gloomily disposed as an insolent invasion, and by the cheerfully disposed as a practical joke, which they returned by breaking the windows with brickbats. But by degrees, as one by one awoke to the fact that she and her brothers really cared for them, cared that they should grow better, and do better, and be all that is meant among those who are but too obviously "lost," by being "saved," a little band of chivalrous defenders gathered about her, always ready to execute summary Lynch law on any of their companions who presumed to create a disturbance.

That afternoon she had to rescue a victim who was being liberally "punched" for not "holding his jaw."

And when we came to the closing hymn, and the poor fellows shouted out a chorus about "sweet fields," and "living streams," and "Jesus, Shepherd of the sheep," these innocent pastoral images altogether overcame me.

To these outcasts to whom the world had denied all the innocent joys of home, Christianity, through a woman's words, was bringing childhood, for the first time. These little ones, hardened from the cradle, were now learning to come as little children, (children for the first time in the new life,) to the Master's feet, to the Saviour's arms, to the King's kingdom. And looking across to

Piers, I saw that he also was not a little moved.

These teachings were in the intervals of the church services.

The church services themselves also had in them much that was very new to me.

In the first place there were distinct Christian hymns, altogether an unknown institution in Abbot's Weir Church, except at Easter and Christmas, when Reuben Pengelly, with an especially radiant face, used to perform "Hark, the herald angels sing," and "Jesus Christ is risen to-day." We had also occasionally an anthem at Abbot's Weir, with violins and bass-violins, but the whole performance was considered as a speciality of the choir.

It moved me therefore, particularly when the whole congregation, with soft united voices sang "Jesus, lover of my soul," and—

"O Lord, my best desire fulfil,
And help me to resign
Life, health, and comfort to Thy will,
And let that will be mine."

Both hymns were familiar to me; the first from Reuben's singing it to us in the Foundry-yard, from the days when he used to carry Piers about in his arms among the silent machinery on Sunday afternoons; the second, being his favourite Cowper's, my father used to make me very often say to him.

They brought all home before me; Reuben and the sabbatical stillness of the old Foundry-yard, the Stone Parlour fire on winter evenings, the arbour at the top of the garden on sunny summer afternoons.

All home, and all heaven; those "kindred points," which so often meet in the heart with overwhelming power, through the early associations of the simplest hymns!

The preaching was quite as new to me as the hymns. In the first place it *was* preaching. Hitherto I had heard nothing but meditations or essays. But this was a proclamation, a message, a speaking direct from heart to heart.

At this distance of time I cannot in the least remember the subject, the words spoken—perhaps they might not bear acute criticism; but I remember as distinctly as if it were yesterday the impression on my own heart.

A message from God, from the Father, from my Father, from the Saviour, from my Saviour, to *me*, searching into my heart what I was loving, searching into my life how I was living, making me feel how poor my life was, making me see how rich it ought to be, bringing God before me, bringing me before God.

It moved me much.

I felt too much to speak, when I came out of church. But whatever emotions my dear cousins experienced were not wont to express themselves in silence. The Quaker element was not strong at Cousin Crichton's.

"You enjoyed it, Cousin Bride," said Hatty and Matty simultaneously.

"I was not thinking exactly about enjoying. It searched quite down into one's heart!" I said.

They were satisfied.

"It was very good," said Hatty, "but it was not one of the most striking. It was only the curate, you know."

"You should hear Mr. Cecil, or dear old Mr. Newton, or"—and she went through a long string of celebrities whose names I, and perhaps a fickle world also, have forgotten.

But the comparative anatomy of sermons was a science altogether beyond me.

The Sunday always concluded with a family gathering at supper, when the spirits of all the family seemed to rise with especial elasticity after the day's work. Never was there more innocent glee at Cousin Crichton's; never were more good things said, or things not very brilliant in themselves, made to sparkle more in the glow of that bright home, than at the Sunday suppers.

But that first evening I was too much moved and too tired with all the day's happy excitements to be able to enter into it.

I had a headache, and was suffered to take refuge in little Martha's room.

"I *never* heard a sermon, you know, Cousin Bride," said she, when I said a little to her of what I had felt.

"And I have only heard *one*, Cousin Martha," I replied.

"You have no sermons at Abbot's Weir, dearest Bride?" she exclaimed, evidently looking on us as a case for a new missionary society.

"Not sermons that speak to the heart like that," I said, "Of course Uncle Fyford reads us what is called a sermon. But preaching is something very different."

Preaching seemed to me that evening such a glorious word, and a pulpit such a royal place!

St. Peter and the three thousand who were smitten to the heart at Jerusalem, and St. Paul's, "Woe unto me if I preach not"—if he had, indeed, had such a message to give, seemed to me quite comprehensible.

I pitied Martha very much that she could not go to church, or teach in Sunday-schools. I suppose she felt it by something in my looks or tones, for she said—

"Yet I do get sermons even here, Cousin Bride, from so many things, from everything, sometimes; from the fire and from the trees waving in the unseen wind, from the stars; if sermons mean messages from God."

"Yes," I said, "you have learned to *listen*." And I told her about Loveday, of whom she always delighted to hear. "But oh, Martha," I said, "it is these plain strong words piercing into the hearts that have *not* learned to listen. Surely if men go on preaching like this, the whole world will turn and listen, and love, before long!"

She hoped it would. She thought it must. The news was so good, the need so great.

And in that glow of hope I went to sleep that night in my princely bedroom, planning and dreaming all manner of philanthropic enterprises for Abbot's Weir and the world—day-schools, Sunday-schools, missionary societies; and feeling not a doubt that the result would be such as Abbot's Weir and the world had never known before.

It was an era of youth and hope, and Clapham was a land of hope. A thousand good works were beginning, and from each of them the founders expected a new era for the world.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ON looking at the little packet Madame des Ormes had given me, I was a little alarmed to find that it was intended for no less a personage than our local dignitary, the Countess of Abbot's Weir, whose town house was in Cavendish Square; and that it was to be delivered into no hands but her own. I suppose the Marquise had rather vague ideas concerning the size of London, and concerning the awfulness of our distinctions of rank.

Cousin Barbara could give me no light on the subject. Cousin Crichton and his family "dwelt among their own people," and had far too much simplicity and self-respect to wish to attain, through any irregular by-paths, religious or secular, to a social level above their own.

I wrote to Claire, therefore, to explain what I could of the difficulty; and we were waiting for the reply, when one morning a coach, a little beyond the usual sober and subdued splendour of Clapham, swept round to the porch.

In a few moments Mrs. Beckford-Glanvil was announced, and a lady sailed into the room, in whom I recognised at once the form in which Clapham had embodied itself to Amice.

There was a certain overpowering atmosphere of opulence about her, a pomp in the solidity of her tread, a sonorousness about the rustle of her silks; you felt instinctively that she was a representative figure; the wealth of the new wild West seemed represented in her sables, the wealth of the ancient East in her *cachemires* and her aromatic perfumes; the whole "haut commerce" of England in the magnificence of her presence; the whole "petite noblesse" of England in the condescension of her courtesy. She was not only a Beckford, but a Beckford-Glanvil, and not only a Beckford-Glanvil, but a Beckford-Glanvil consecrated and further illuminated by Clapham.

She saluted Cousin Barbara with a prolonged pressure of the hand, my cousins with a general gracious acknowledgment, and me with a particular and rather embarrassing inspection.

"Our niece Amice has written to her cousin Cecilia about you, Miss Danescombe," she said. "She is dying to see you; but to-day there was the music-master, the poor Chevalier d'Este, and the French mistress, the Comtesse de Montmorency, and the Italian master, the Marchese Borgia; really, Mrs. Crichton, there are so many refugees it seems a charity to take lessons from, one's children have scarcely leisure for friendship or society, or charity, or anything. How do you manage such things?"

"I do not manage at all," said Cousin Barbara, which was certainly a correct account of her mode of government. "The girls seem to enjoy everything, and so to find time for everything."

"Certainly, your sons and daughters seem to have time for everything," Mrs. Glanvil resumed. "I hear of them in the Sunday-schools, at the District Visiting Society, in the Missionary Collections—everywhere. Quite models! I am always holding them up to my poor dear Cecilia and to my sons. But then we all know, Mrs. Crichton, as dear Mr. V—— said so beautifully last Sunday, 'Paul may plant, and Apollos water.' And my poor Arabella, you know, married so very early; and her husband, Sir Frederic, so idolises her that he will not suffer her to enter a school or a cottage. You know there is danger of infection; those poor creatures are not so clean and careful as one could wish. How do you escape?"

"We do not always escape," Cousin Barbara replied. "But my children have good health, thank God, and they take care."

"Ah, some people are hardier than others.

My poor darlings are delicate plants, Mrs. Crichton; a little too tenderly nurtured, perhaps; rather too much hot-house plants, I fear."

But she said this in a way which decidedly implied the superiority of the hot-house products to the hardy natives of the open air.

"Our girls are not hot-house plants, certainly," said Cousin Barbara, a little nettled, "and I trust they never will be."

"But talking of hot-houses," continued Mrs. Glanvil, "your own conservatory is really beautiful."

Cousin Barbara rose and led her into it.

For a minute or two the murmured "gorgeous," "superb," "really, quite a novelty," from the conservatory, which opened out of the drawing-room, reminded me of the dread of Amice's childhood, of growing up and having to perform show-woman to her grandmother's greenhouse. "We have five gardeners—the head man a Scotchman," was the conclusion—"but really nothing quite equal to some of these exotics."

Whilst praiseworthy, it was evidently also a little presumptuous in Cousin Crichton, who only kept two gardeners, to reach this eminence.

We returned to politics and philanthropy.

With regard to the slave-trade she confessed that she and Mr. Glanvil did sometimes think Mr. Wilberforce a little unreasonable. Of course every one agreed it was doomed ultimately, but there were important interests not to be neglected; and wise regulation and discouragement leading in the course of years to gradual abolition, was what many sensible men thought the safest and most practicable scheme.

Cousin Barbara quoted Mr. Fox's words that "with regard to the regulation of the slave-trade, he knew of no such thing as the regulation of robbery and murder."

Mrs. Glanvil said women must leave these practical questions to men, and changed the subject.

The peace with France was beginning to become a general topic.

Mrs. Beckford-Glanvil had much information on the subject "from private sources," no mere newspaper reports, but things Mr. Beckford-Glanvil had heard at the House of Commons, which she liberally communicated in confidential tones, with a suggestion that perhaps at present "it had better not go further"—opinions of cabinet ministers and various great men and honourable women whom they had met at various dinners; sayings even of a Higher Personage still; what

Mr. Pitt intended, and Mr. Fox thought, and what his Majesty had said in confidence.

She was floating away in the midst of this tide of greatness, when the door opened and the butler announced "The Countess of Abbot's Weir," and a tall, majestic-looking woman in deep mourning advanced towards Cousin Barbara.

"You will excuse my coming without introduction, Mrs. Crichton," she said. "I had a message from a dear friend of mine, Madame des Ormes, through Miss Danescombe. It is a pleasure to escape from London," she continued, looking at the conservatory, "to have a glimpse of the country, gardens, and flowers."

If she had sought far and wide she could not have lighted on a compliment sweeter to the heart of Clapham than to call it "country," as I had learned by my cousin Crichton's face when in my first inexperience I had called it "wonderfully pretty for a town."

Cousin Barbara introduced me.

She took my hand, and held it a little, so kindly.

"You have done much," she said softly, "to make my poor friend's hard fate easier. She cannot write enough about you and yours. You must tell me about them all, and that sweet little Claire who loves you so much."

How at home she made me feel, with her gracious easy ways, and with the dear familiar names!

We had all been gradually freezing in the icy circle of that aggressive self-consciousness, which made all the world seem for the moment as if it had forgotten the Copernican system, and were perversely revolving round the house of Beckford-Glanvil, and which set one, (or at least set me,) on a foolish course of inward self-assertion, enumerating my own claims to consideration, and recalling all the distinguished people I had known or might have known; crystallizing us generally into separate spikes and blocks of ice.

And now all at once, as if with the touch of a sunbeam, we recovered and began to flow together. It was certainly not merely the fact of the rank of the countess, (although doubtless it is one of the privileges of mountains to allay the pretensions of the little hills,) it was that she was "at leisure from herself," and simply by virtue of her sweet graciousness set us free from the spell under which we had been growing rigid. In a few minutes I found myself talking to her about Madame des Ormes and Claire, with that certainty of her *really caring* which makes intercourse easy and natural.

I rose to fetch the little packet. Mrs. Beckford-Glanvil also rose, said again how her Cecilia was longing to see her cousin's friend, and hoped I would fix a day to spend with her, and that my cousins would accompany me.

The prospect was appalling, but Cousin Barbara having rescued me by saying we would soon do ourselves the pleasure of returning Mrs. Beckford-Glanvil's call, I was set free to execute my commission.

When I returned the countess was quietly talking to Cousin Barbara on the universal topic of the peace. But her information was by no means so assured as that of Mrs. Beckford-Glanvil. The earl, she said frankly, had never liked the war, and she had always thought it one of the finest things Mr. Wilberforce had ever done to stand out for peace against his political friends.

"It is so much easier," she said, "to differ from the whole world than from one's own party."

But she risked no other name by quoting it in support of any opinion; and of the King, when there happened to be occasion to mention his name, she spoke with the far-off loyalty of an ordinary subject who had never seen his Majesty nearer than in a procession.

"But there is one gentleman at Clapham," she said, "to whom I had once the honour of being introduced, and whose house I should greatly like to see. No doubt you can tell me. Mr. Granville Sharp. He has always seemed to me like one of the old knights before the ideal of chivalry was spoilt. The grandson of an archbishop and brother of an archdeacon, contentedly serving his apprenticeship to a mercer; and then, alone, turning the whole law of England, corrupted by false precedent, back to its true, older precedents of freedom. Then, afterwards, (which seems to me as noble as anything,) giving up his appointment in the Treasury and his income, rather than be involved in sending out ammunition for what he considered the unjust war against America. Content to be alone against the world, such men end in bringing the world round. I think there was never a nobler English gentleman."

My heart beat quick, and I felt my face glowing crimson at the praises of my hero, with the homage of my cousins to whom I had not been quite satisfied.

Cousin Barbara smiled, and said very kindly to me—

"Bride, you know Mr. Granville Sharp's house, if any one does."

"Will you get into the carriage and show me?" the countess said; "and will your cousin come with us? And will you let me drive them home with me, Mrs. Crichton, that we may have a long talk over our common friends and our common heroes? If you can, I should like it so much; the earl is away, and it will cheer my solitary evening; and I promise to send them back safely in the evening."

It was impossible to refuse, and Hatty and I spent a most happy day at Cavendish Square seeing all kinds of interesting ancestral portraits, and relics, and autographs, and feeling as if we were personally drinking draughts of delight at the very sources of English history.

Simple and natural her life seemed, as ours at Abbot's Weir, or my cousins' at Clapham, in the great world of London, which was her native place, or among their tenants in the country, whom she loved to help; its deep places, simply such as mine or Loveday's, or Reuben Pengelly's. Into these depths she gave me one glimpse, which drew my heart to her. Taking me into her dressing-room, she drew back a veil from the portrait of a lovely child about the age of Claire.

"Last year she was with us," she said. "Tell Claire. They used to play together in old days in France."

And on taking leave she kissed me, and said she must see me again at Abbot's Weir.

The visit to Mrs. Beckford-Glanvil could not be evaded, but the good nature of my cousins, great as it was, could not stretch so far as to accompany me. All they would concede was to attend a drawing-room missionary meeting in the evening, at which several of the Clapham lions were to be present, and a "native" of some oriental country in native costume.

Cecilia's longing to see me was not very apparent; but it was the less disappointing because she was not demonstrative on any subject. A kind of mental limpness seemed to pervade her, which was perhaps what her mother meant by her being a hot-house plant.

In Mrs. Glanvil's presence she said little. Her mother spoke for her. She was sure her dear Cecilia felt charmed with this, and interested in that; and Cecilia did not take the trouble to dissent. Mrs. Glanvil's own interest seemed concentrated on Madame des Ormes.

"It is curious," she said, "my mother-in-law did not mention her. Quite a person of distinction apparently. But, then, to be sure, there are so many foreign persons of distinc-

tion staying at this moment in England, that with all the princes, and marquises, and countesses, and chevaliers who have to be helped, one is quite bewildered with titles. Mr. Beckford-Glanvil often has to warn me that, after all, charity begins at home."

I pitied the poor patronised princes and marquises from my heart.

"But," I said, a little indignantly, "Madame des Ormes is not in want of charity. She lives at Abbot's Weir because she likes to be quiet, and (she kindly says) because she likes us. That is all."

"Of course, Miss Danescombe, of course. No one imagines a Marquise would settle in Abbot's Weir from choice. I suppose the Countess of Abbot's Weir knew them in better days?"

After a time Cecilia took me into her boudoir. When I was alone with her she came out in a new light.

To my cousin Crichtons the presence of their parents seemed a free atmosphere in which all their thoughts and hearts expanded; to Cecilia the absence of her mother seemed a liberation. She was surprised that I liked Clapham. It seemed to her and her brothers the dullest place in the world. She supposed it was because I came out of a deeper depth of dulness at Abbot's Weir.

She seemed to me terribly tepid and old. She admired nothing: she hoped in nothing. She was "désillusionnée" at nineteen. The slaves she considered only less wearisome than the anti-slavery people. She could not at all comprehend the fuss made about them. "If they were emancipated, they were still black and still poor, and how was the world to be made an agreeable place for blacks and poor people?"

The only thing she warmed into energy about was her detestation of missionary meetings. Her sister was married and never meant to attend another in her life. "All kinds of people brought into your drawing-room," she observed, with disgust, "that at other times would not come beyond the servants' hall. And my brothers say the whole thing is such an imposition. Converts bought at so much a head to come here and be shown like the zoological animals, and all the ladies and platforms trying who can have the newest or most curious. But I suppose every one must have amusements; we have ours, and mamma has hers. I don't think anything is very amusing; but religious amusements are certainly the dullest of all."

Piers and I had often found amusements, or trying to be amused, tiresome; and I sup-

posed if religion could be brought to that level she might be right.

She depressed me dreadfully.

It was the first example I had encountered of that reaction from unreal enthusiasm to a cynical contempt, or a languid "nil admirari" which besets the second generation of religious parties, as far as they are merely parties; the Nemesis of all unreal religious profession.

Mr. Beckford-Glanvil appeared just before the late dinner at five o'clock. He was interesting to me for the sake of Abbot's Weir and Arnice, as the future proprietor of Court. But Mrs. Glanvil continued to dominate the conversation. He was polite but impenetrable, and seemed to me rather to endure his wife's social amusements than to enjoy them. But this is a peculiarity not limited to religious families.

At dinner there was general discourse about Abbot's Weir, the peace with France, and various political prospects, concerning which Mr. Glanvil was far more reticent and less informed than his wife. After dinner the hostess employed herself in impressing me with the importance of the expected guests, and especially expatiated concerning Mr. Wilberforce; how he "maintained religion in the eye of the world by having a large house, giving hospitable entertainments, and indulging himself in those congruities to his taste and fortune which became the English gentleman and the Christian."

A chill fear crept over me that I should find the lions of Clapham whom I was to behold that evening, and even Mr. Wilberforce himself, removed far from me into that world of clothes, congruities, proprieties, and conventionalities in which the "Me" and the "Not me" were so inextricably confounded, and in which my "Me" always became so terribly isolated.

Vain and foolish fears.

That sparkling wit, lighted up from that tender and benevolent heart, that social genial nature which in all society drew its deepest glow from the Presence it never quitted, that natural, courteous, considerate, easy, happy English gentleman, that lowly, loving, generous-hearted Christian man had not been in the room five minutes before the icy spell of self-importance and self-consciousness, of cynicism and "nil admirari" melted away, unconsciously, and entirely in that genial presence. Every one seemed to become real and natural; their best, because their true selves. Everything in God's creation seemed worth caring for. Every creature in His redeemed world seemed worth loving and serving.

Before the evening ended I was quite reconciled to Clapham, and quite inspired with its devotion to its chieftain.

CHAPTER XIX.

OUR cousins would not hear of our return. As our visit was prolonged, I began to have pathetic letters from Abbot's Weir.

Amice wrote—

"You seem fairly launched into the millennium; for you, that is, the reign of righteousness and peace; and for poor forsaken me, in the meantime the 'thousand years' of pining, without you. It seems just that since you left!

"Granny is more deaf in her discriminating way than ever, and more disposed to be didactic to me. She suspects that I have a turn for negroes and philanthropy, and accordingly finds and makes countless opportunities for depreciating philanthropists and negroes. And I am horribly torn between the conflicting duties of 'submitting myself to my governors' and being 'true in all my dealings;' between the emotions of indignation against what she says, and a reverent tenderness for her. For she loves me more from year to year, I know; and she would feel my crossing her will like a great blow from the hand she loves best in the world; her will, her heart, and her opinions being so inextricably entangled, that nothing would ever persuade her my differing from her opinions was anything but a heartless, wilful revolt against her love and authority. And moreover I cannot help seeing, brave and resolute as she is, and scornfully rejecting help as ever, that she grows weaker as I grow stronger, so that a blow from me now would be like a man striking his aged mother. It is all terribly entangled. Come back, my single-hearted Bride, and walk quietly on through all these tangles, in your wonted way, scattering nets of ropes like cobwebs by merely going straight forward, without an idea of what good you have done, of what perplexities you have made, or what perplexities you have unmade!

"Alas for me! I cannot help seeing and feeling all round, feeling every one's excuses and difficulties so strongly that I seem unable not only to go boldly forward, but to go on at all, and can only sit still, and let the net coil and knot itself about me tighter and tighter.

"Oh for the days of Moses, or of St. Paul, or of the Crusaders! And yet I suppose Moses had some conflict of doubts as to abandoning Pharaoh's daughter; and perhaps St. Paul as to Gamaliel; and perhaps even my crusading ancestor as to the wife, and babes, and 'villeins,' he left at home.

"But I am trying to *listen*, Bride, as our Lovedaysays, and sometimes I think when the call comes I could count it all joy to follow, anywhere, in any way.

"*But can it have come while I was asleep?*"

And Claire wrote:—

"I long for you always. Is London, then, after all, as strong in its attractions as our poor Paris of the old days? Or are you so strong in your attractions that London will not yield you back to us? Yes, that is it. The Countess writes to my mother in ecstasies about you. You are a sweet violet, a fresh breath from the moors, a *demoiselle de la haute noblesse* by nature,—a creature whose natural naturalness no Court could spoil. All this she says or means, when her words are translated.

"As if we needed to be told all that! I call it an impertinence to bestow all these beautiful phrases on us, as if they were anything new to us.

"Besides, I am not so sure about the manners of the noblesse. There are bourgeois souls among the haute noblesse, and there are Bayards among the bourgeoisie. They may create equality of possessions in our poor France if they can; but equality of persons never!

"And here are your violets and primroses sighing and growing pale for you! while Reuben waits when he brings me your letters, like your Newfoundland dog in his company manners trying not to seem solicitous for a bone. Mr. Danescombe grows hypocritical, and endeavours to persuade us and himself that he is delighted you are enjoying yourselves; and Miss Loveday grows monastic, and lectures me on the inordinate love of the creature, until I have to contradict her from her own Bible, which says so much about loving fervently, and never a word that I can see about not loving.

"Piers, no doubt, is well occupied, and forgets us all. That is but natural, when one has so many marvellous meetings, excellent and wise men, charming cousins, and steam-engines, to care about.

"But meantime we, your natural enemies, are possessing your land. And Mr. Danescombe said the other day, I recited some of Cowper's poetry like you! Take care, *ma chérie*, when hearts are left too long empty, they will fill themselves at any poor cup."

And Loveday wrote:—

"My heart is glad for you. You are learning by sight, on the Pestalozzian system, the best way. Perhaps, after all, nevertheless, one does not lose everything by being

a little way off. At Corinth, you know, they were not quite clear which was the greater, Paul the Apostle, or Apollos."

And my stepmother:—

"I am gratified to find you are making wise use of such a golden opportunity. I am gratified also from your excellent cousins' letters to find they make such amiable allowance for any little rusticities your dear father's rather unrestrained ideas of liberty might have produced."

And my father:—

"My children, your cousins are all kindness. I cannot wonder that they delight to have you, as much as my judgment tells me I ought. And I am sure you ought to stay

on, although I cannot wish it as I should, and as they so kindly seem to do. We grow miserly over the years, as there are fewer in the heap before us. But I think your home will be not less dear to you for all the luxuries of your cousins'. You have a love for helping to bear other people's burdens, my children, inherited from one better than I am. And God knows, He and you and every one have made the burdens of life light to me.

"Your letters glow, as if they came out of some tropical land. You are among those who are helping to lift off many burdens from mankind. And I trust you may bring us back some good lessons. We in Abbot's Weir have scarcely done all we might."

THE TANGLED SKEIN.

THE world's a tangled skein, my child, like that ye hold i' your hand,
 There's nought but sometime goes amiss, be it ever so well plann'd ;
 Life's best may be patient waiting, when our heart is at its ease,
 As they say there's always quiet at the bottom o' the seas :
 However wild the waves, they say, deep down is quiet rest ;
 And so the great peace, my child, lies in God's deep o' the breast.
 And I think if we took counsel of what our spirit tells,
 And thought of our good Maker more than of any object else,
 That each of us might do our part to bring that peace to all ;
 And so the world become again like it was before the Fall.

But we run, and, all impatient, break and pull the threads awry,
 And we seldom think we're much to blame, although we never try
 To gather up the ragged ends we've left there in our haste,
 But fancy God will knit them up and pardon all our waste.
 And, I think, our God does knit them up a scourge for us at last,
 For every fault comes back to us with other faults o'er cast ;
 Till of the whole it looks as though God's Providence was bent
 A patched and ugly dress to make out of our foiled intent,
 To wrap us round with misery, unless we strive to show
 Our penitence, and willingness to work for Him below ;
 And then He takes the garment, and dyes it all of one,
 Till it shines a spotless token of the beauty we'll put on,
 When the Son will lead us glorified before the great white throne.

I love to talk of heavenly things and tell you what I think,
 As here we sit at evenings when the sun begins to sink ;
 When father chats with sister Kate, and the great mill is at rest,
 It's like a foretaste o' the joy that's promised to the blest.
 I dunno think I make it plain, as parson does, you know ;
 But of my words you'll maybe think when I lie still and low.
 I'm sure of this that happiness ne'er comes by heaping gain,
 But only to a humble mind, contented to remain
 In patient, meek obedience to God and his commands,
 Leaving all the things of time completely in his hands.



THE TANGLED SKEIN.

ON MAINTAINING A HIGH IDEAL.

EVERY one who observes the lives of individual Christians must become sensible, not only of that natural and great diversity which may be traced back to variety in the original types and inherent qualities of individuals, but of a very great, and almost unaccountable difference in actual Christian character and progress. Persons not apparently dissimilar in original constitution, and not unequally placed as to outward circumstances, yet develop so differently, become, in plain truth, so much less, and more, Christian than each other. There are many reasons for this diversity, but there can be little doubt that one general reason for it may be found in the difference of the original or early idea formed as to what it is to be a Christian. Necessarily, in the quickened thoughts of young disciples there will arise certain prefigurations of what they wish and hope in a measure to realise and embody in after life. If those prefigurations are clear and high, and morally beautiful, there is a greater likelihood of high practical attainment in after life, than if they were commoner and narrower, and less fair. I will now speak therefore for a little on the importance of forming and maintaining a high ideal.

1. By a high ideal is meant not something vast, and vague, and unattainable, but what each, by God's help, in the full development of his own nature, may attain. Neither less nor more. To aim at less would be to be sluggish, undutiful, unfaithful. To aim at more would be to enter the mist, and become unreal. But indeed it is hardly possible to aim at more. For, speaking generally, it will be found that whatever can be intelligently and conscientiously aimed at, can be attained. The aim itself is a prophecy, and "shadow of a good thing to come." In the very ideas we entertain, and in the endeavours we make, God gives us the assurance that what we thus think of, and strive after, may be attained. It was the notion of Plato that each individual human creature is offspring or product of an eternal "form" or idea in the divine mind. Something of this kind must be supposed in reason: something of this kind is indeed taught by the Christian revelation. Our Lord speaks of "the light that is in a man" as something original and potential, and which, in result, may either bring "fulness" of light to "the whole body" or being; or through neglect or misuse, "greatness of darkness!" but in either case, He teaches that the light-

fountain is within. There is an original divine idea concerning the man, and the germ of that idea is wrapped up in the centre of his being. By evolution, and under the nourishment of grace it blossoms out, and becomes a manifestation of the thought of God, answering so well to the original picture and purpose in the divine mind, that we are said to "put on the image of the heavenly." St. Paul's doctrine of "the old man" and "the new man"—the flesh and the spirit—is substantially the same thing. The natural man and the spiritual man are not two divine formations, thrown together in one being at hazard, and left to struggle or "lust against" each other, until one shall gain the victory. The deep underlying thought of the Apostle evidently is that one is original, organic, divine,—*"To be spiritually-minded is life."* The other is a misbegotten thing—a malformation—a spiritual disease tending to dissolution—*"To be carnally-minded is death."* Redemption—what is it, but the rising up of a human being to look upon his better self as it exists in the original thought of God, as it is portrayed in the life and work of his Son? Every child of God is like the prodigal son at least in this, that *"he comes to himself"*—slowly, and unconsciously, and from the first, or more suddenly and amid fleeings, and escapings, and alarms. He comes to himself in coming to his God, and recognises, not without shame in the memory of the poor and sinful past of his life, yet with overmastering gratitude and joy, that it is the loving will of God, and always has been, that he should be as much as, and indeed far more than, in his best moments he can conceive or desire. He cannot surpass the thought of God in regard to his own being. It transcends in majesty and beauty his highest conception. It is purer than his holiest desires. God thus, as we may say, keeps "the secret" of every life, its true image and proportions, and opens that secret to each as he comes to Him. He has a picture in his own mind of which each may be through his grace, a living reflex. O beautiful, inspiring thought—touching us with fear and yet raising us to rapture—that each of us can find himself truly, only in his God, and that the discovery is certain to be eternal advancement and salvation! If we are "made partakers of the divine nature," if we grow up into the divine image, we cannot but be sharers in divine blessedness.

2. To maintain the ideal high we must be

continually striving to enlarge it. Our first conception of our true self, even when it is given to us of God, is comparatively meagre and common. At any rate it is very imperfect. It is a dull shadowed view of a bright thing. We need higher standing-ground, and clearer air, and a purified sight. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be," but in a progressive life it ought to be appearing more and more. If it does not appear more and more, it will but too probably appear less and less. Our moral conception of our own proper nature must either grow larger and more luminous, or fade down into narrowness and darkness. Nothing on earth, mental or material, can continue in one stay. "The world passeth away and the lust thereof." But that is not all. There is in which our best thoughts and noblest purposes are "passing," and dying too; and our only safety lies in raising still better thoughts and still nobler purposes from the ashes of those that have died. There is to be a "daily renewing of the inward man," which clearly betokens a daily waste. Swift, and subtle, and sure is the passing away of our most ethereal thought, our most glowing emotion. Swift and sure also be the reproduction and expansion of them, so that while there is dying and coming into life perpetually, there shall yet be to our consciousness only an unbroken continuity, and a going on of our life "from strength to strength." "I follow after if that I may apprehend that for which I am apprehended of Christ Jesus."

3. In seeking to maintain, and still enhance this spiritual and great idea of our own life, we shall be much assisted by an assured belief that it is the very thing which God wishes and will help us to realise and be. This is his "good, and holy, and *acceptable* will." In moments of penitential sorrow and discouragement, when "our own hearts condemn us," we are ready enough to believe that "God is greater than our hearts," and "knowing all things," will condemn us far more deeply than we do ourselves. In moments of vision, when our hearts pant and strive after more wholesome conditions, and holier thoughts, and happier fellowships than we have ever known, we are not so ready to believe that God is still "greater than our hearts," and "knowing all things" on the upper and better side of our life, as well as on the lower and darker, will meet the upward strain of our thought, and every passionate yearning of our breast, with every needed help from his own "light" and "love." But this is true. Nothing can be true to us,

or worth being true, if this is not true. If God will not help us in this way—by the breath of his own infinite sympathy, by the uplifting of the light of his countenance upon us, our life is indeed a dark and hopeless thing. It never can expand into summer breadth and beauty. Its winter can never pass away; nor can the time of flowers or the singing of birds ever come. But who of us dare say or think that the great helper will not help? That the great Father from whose heart all human affections have sprung, will no more "pity" his children! How it pleases a father or a strong elder brother, to take the hand of some youthful climber and help him up the rocks and along the giddy and perilous ridge towards some sunny and safe elevations of the mountains! Will it please the heavenly Father less to help those who, already called and quickened by his grace, are aiming as they can after entire conformity to the very image of their Father? Verily this is "the good pleasure of his will." We can ask for much, and we can think of more,—but God is "able," and of course He is willing, "to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think,"—and how? "according to the power that worketh in us" already—along the line of our own life-development—by the continuity of what has been begun—sometimes by the strengthening of what "remains and is ready to die," and sometimes by the strengthening of what remains, and is endeavouring more fully to live—in many gentle and quiet ways the heart settling itself into a deeper peace, under the brooding and breathing of his Spirit, and also by strong and pleasant awakenings of the soul under the pull of the celestial attractions—but always "according to the power that worketh in us," and with a view to aid us, and lift us onwards and upwards, and ever nearer to the accomplishment of all our best desire.

4. Once more; if we would maintain a high sentiment and a pure idea about our own life, we must learn to believe in the actual goodness of others, as well as in the possible growth of our own. To use technical, but perfectly appropriate, language, we must learn to believe that God has a people in the world. All people, indeed, are his people. But some people are more nearly and dearly his. There are receptive souls. There are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness—who are trustful, and teachable, and obedient. To deny this would be, in effect, to deny that God has been practically working in the world at all; for there is nothing conceivable as God's chief work in

this world except something which goes directly to the production of character. The glory of God in this world is the production of his own likeness in the hearts and lives of men—his own likeness, which also, by original birthright, is theirs. But in this, as in so many other things, very much depends on habit—on how we look, and where we look, and what we look for. If we are to see much of God's glory in man's life, in the lives of his own children, no doubt we must be practically expecting to see it.

It is recorded of that mysterious man Balaam, that, at a critical moment, and apparently even a kind of turning-point in his strange history, he "went not, as at other times, to seek for enchantments, but he set his face towards the wilderness," *i.e.* toward the uplands and mountains of Moab, where, as he knew, the chosen and guided people lay encamped. And *then* he saw the tents! And then the whole picture of the coming prosperity and power of this now pilgrim people came floating into the sphere of his rapt vision. And then he sang, "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel!" We, too, Balaam-like in this at least, must look where God is working if we wish to see the work of God; and where God is working most graciously if we want to see that work in its best forms. And there are so many other directions to look in, and so many other things to see, if we will. The devil has work enough on hand in this world; and men are working for themselves; and passion, and individual interest, and all the social "enchantments" of modern life, which are greatly more potent than poor Balaam's ever could be, are cast as softly as the air about men as they go. And all the sins are being sinned, and all the crimes committed, and all the miseries and sufferings are being endured; and a young man may look at all this and say, "I see no glory of God." No. Because, morally, you are not looking in the right direction. You are not looking in the right way. In fact, you are not looking for the thing. "We bring with us what we find." Balaam expected to see the tents of Israel, and he saw them. If we wish to see real goodness, if even we are only willing to see it, it will not be hid from our eyes. But there are those in our time who, worse than Balaam, expect little or nothing, and find as little as they expect. The sight of the tents, if we may for a moment allegorize, almost sets them cursing—mildly perhaps, but really. There are certain words and terms, and those as significant

and holy as any in the language, which when heard or read, seem to excite in some breasts only the most undesirable emotions—ridicule, scorn, mistrust, even enmity. "A Christian," "A child of God," "Church," "Bishop," "minister of the Gospel." See how the lighter literature is spiced with contemptuous, and disdainful, and sometimes even thoroughly ill-tempered allusions to such things and persons. Or, when the element of ridicule is absent, and there is no malignity in those who write, how often is there an utter want of sympathy, a lack of the very faculty of appreciation and apprehension; in one word, a profound disbelief in all high and real goodness, either human or divine. Is not there a new creed something like this—"that men are sincere enough, and Christians among the rest. They—the Christians especially—honestly think themselves sincere, and disinterested, and in a measure self-sacrificing. But the world is really governed by selfishness all the while. Men are seeking enjoyment in different ways. Some find it in the indulgence of the passions; some in the culture of the higher affections, some in the discipline of conscience, and the upholding of the moral rule in life; and some in religious faith, and the making of supposed good investments for a world to come. But in reality 'self-seeking accounts for it all.'"

That we may be somewhat reassured, those who hold a creed like this tell us that they make no complaint of this state of things. It seems to be, for the present, a part of the constitution of the world. All they seem to complain of is, "the hypocrisy, conscious or unconscious, which affects to deny this, and puts out a scheme of celestial virtues which are utterly unattainable, and, of course, as they think, unattained by man." All this, no doubt, is what may be called *outside* sentiment. True. But whatever exists in any great strength outside the Christian Church, casts shadows within. And the chill is felt, and the darkness is seen, oftentimes, without knowledge of whence they have come. And we may depend upon it that in a state of society like ours, permeated all through with the cynical, critical temper, and characterized by a constant distrust—sometimes fierce and sometimes sorrowful—of everything like saintliness in human beings—*i.e.* of everything like high, steady, growing virtue and goodness—a beautiful ideal, in short, ever growing more beautiful, we need all to be on the watch. Pray God to preserve in you, or restore to you, a child-like trustfulness of heart and disposition, and to give you the

clear, open sight, the single eye which will see things as they are, with the inward habit of believing that, in the main, things are what they seem to an honest look, and, in some instances, even better than they seem. Look for goodness, and it will shine out upon you, unless you yourself are evil. Look for humility, and you will find it, unless you yourself are proud. Look for truth and honesty, and they, like the living, personal fountain whence they spring, "will not leave you comfortless, they will come to you." Look, in a word, for the love and tenderness of Christ, which yet are found in so many human hearts, and you will soon be refreshed by the breathing of that love and tenderness as though He himself were near.

Discoveries of these qualities in men and women, and even in little children, are constantly being made in a very affecting way. All at once, and ah, how often! the truth comes out to view, as by revelation, and we doubt no more. Who is the revealer? Death.

"It clothes their every gift and grace
With radiance from the holiest place,
With light as from an angel's face.

"Recalls the loving fond device,
The daily act of sacrifice,
Of which, too late, we learn the price.

"It sweeps their faults with heavy hand,
As sweeps the sea the trampled sand,
Till scarce the faintest print is scanned."

"Thus doth death speak of our beloved
When it has laid them low.
Then let love antedate the work of death,
And do this—*now*."

God had been with Jacob, and "he knew it not." God's children are with us, and we hardly ever know them fully, until they are gone. But certainly the more we see of the goodness of others, the better will it fare with our own. No one who does not believe in the goodness of others, can hope ever to attain real goodness himself. He dooms himself, by this very scepticism, to eternal selfishness. *He* cannot hope to be the one exception to the universal law, which sweeps everything before it. And what a fate for a man to choose—to be eternally shut off from goodness, and alienated from God! What a fatal conclusion, *for himself*, a man reaches when he has demonstrated, as he thinks, that there is no such thing as virtue in the world! Far wiser and happier are they who, in the true filial spirit, first look up to the Father, and then, with almost an equal confidence, look around to see the sons and daughters. None of them perfect, some of them only beginning to put on the beautiful image, but all cherishing the common hope, and striving in the one grand aim which will be reached

and realised in fulness only in the final "manifestation of the sons of God." Is there any human society which can be better, morally, than those associated companies of Christian believers whose very profession it is that they are profoundly dissatisfied with themselves, and whose constant aim is to attain a higher character, and lead a nobler life—who strive to hate *all* evil and to win *all* goodness? Is there anything in human life sweeter, in its way, than the Christian quietness? anything more touchingly beautiful than patience under lengthened suffering? anything grander than faith in things invisible? or a hope so sacred and sublime as that which burns in many a heart, undimmed and undiminished through the dank and cold mists of death? By association, less or more, as God gives opportunity, with those, the excellent of the earth, we shall be the better able to relume our own sometimes flickering lamp, to raise again our slanted aim, to keep our ideal pure and high, and to press on with tireless feet towards the dark death-gate of exit, which we believe to be on the other side, the bright gate of entrance into the everlasting kingdom of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

5. Also the contemplation of the goodness of the sainted dead will be found, in the case of most young persons, to operate powerfully in the same direction—towards raising and keeping the standard and tone of life pure and high. Most people, young or old, are conscious of a quite peculiar feeling, and of the movement within them of an influence quite unique, as the result of biographical or autobiographical reading of a really interesting kind. Nothing touches life so deeply and sensibly as life. Nothing moves it to finer issues. One excellence and another, which perhaps had seemed too ethereal for realistic embodiment in an actual human life, and amid common conditions, are found to have been actually embodied and expressed: "Ah then, my secret thought is, after all, a possibility! The secret sighs of my discouraged imagination may yet break into songs. With God all things are possible." Nor need there be to our thought much subtraction from this influence in consequence of unconscious exaggeration of the good qualities of the departed in the glowing portraiture drawn by the hand of friendship or love. True, some qualities are exaggerated. But 'tis equally true that some are forgotten, or unknown. And after all, the exaggeration, where it is honest, is only, as it were, an acceleration of the development which is actually going on—only

an enlargement along the lines of the truth, only a heightening of colours already existing; and the perfectly legitimate feeling of the reader is, "I am looking not at a picture of the fancy, but the very man himself as he is growing to be. The ideal will become the real in a while." It is so. The great artist begins his living pictures here, and we never see the finishing. But we see how the finishing is to be. Face and feature begin to come out to view, and gleam of intelligence and glow of love. Wonderful process! The canvas of this picture is the organic substance of the human soul. Thoughts and feelings make the colouring. An unseen hand—light as a "wind blowing where it listeth"—is busy, without ceasing, in the living work, and then, suddenly or slowly, by the same unseen hand, the picture is removed from sight. But can we help anticipating and believing in the perfecting of a process so beautiful, so good, so worthy of God? And can we but be thankful that we have been permitted to see the beginnings of it? and—best of all—looking then with appreciative eye on God's selectest work in others, can we fail to receive some increase of the same good work in ourselves? Is it not certain that, looking, we shall become like? being changed by the subtle, benignant laws of grace into the same

image we thus see and admire—"from glory to glory as by the Spirit of the Lord."

6. Lastly, and above all, we must maintain a constant, vital connection, a connection by faith, love, admiration, with Jesus Christ. None among us, old or young, can maintain a high ideal of our life without Him. We need Him—for our reverence, and for our admiration, and for our enthusiasm, and for our love! and for our frailties, oh how much! and for our great unworthiness. And for failures, and hindrances, and fears, and discouragements—his cleansing sacrifice, his killing cross, his quickening grave, and the reviving airs and all the refreshing powers of his risen life. "Without Him we can do nothing," either in the way of escaping from evil, or achieving good. But by his "strengthenings" we can do all things. The good-will of God, in which, as we have seen, it is so necessary to believe, is expressed and embodied by Him, brought into closest nearness, translated into helpfulness. A human life is then simple, pure, and high, when it is a "growing up into Him in all things who is the head." Human beings will be in their perfection, in glory and eternal blessedness, when it can be said of them that they have "come to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." ALEXANDER RALEIGH.

KEEP THY FOOT—A WORD FOR WORSHIPPERS

BY THE LATE ISLAY BURNS, D.D.

"Keep thy foot when thou goest into the house of God, and be more ready to hear than to give the sacrifice of fools; for they consider not that they do evil."—ECCLES. V. 1.

IT is possible that the opening clause of this text bears a special allusion to the words spoken of old to Moses from the midst of the bush: "Put off thy shoes from thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." In that case the specific duty they enjoin is reverence. We are to draw near to God in his house of prayer with the same sentiments of holy awe and fear with which he turned aside to behold that great sight. We are to recognise God as really present here, even as He was present there, and tread softly and heedfully as feeling that we too stand on holy ground. We are to demean ourselves alike in the inward worship of our hearts and in the outward posture of our bodies, as in the presence of the august majesty of heaven. We are to cast off the shoes from our feet, leave all our ordinary thoughts and feelings

and habits of soul behind us, nor dare to tread the cloth of gold before the eternal throne with sandals soiled with the dust of earth. "We are to worship," in short, "and fall down, yea, kneel before the Lord our Maker." In this way the words would not express the whole of that state of mind and heart which God requires in his worship here, but only a part of it. They would inculcate the fear only, not the love; the reverence, not the confidence; the spirit of the servant rather than the spirit of the child. They would thus breathe a more exclusively Old Testament spirit, and bring home to our trembling souls the thought of the great and terrible God, rather than the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. But we may take the expression in a more general and comprehensive sense. We may regard the words "keep thy foot" as simply expressing the

sense they would bear in the every-day language of life. To keep our feet, or, take heed to our feet, is just to walk heedfully, carefully. To mind what we are about, to remember where we are, and take care that we do not stumble. So, to keep our feet when we go to the house of God, is just to go about the sacred business seriously, thoughtfully, circumspectly, as those who realise the grand importance of the occasion, and are resolved by God's grace not to miscarry therein. It includes, therefore, everything that belongs to a right approach to God. The serious preparation beforehand, the earnest attention at the time, and the prayerful improvement afterwards; the attitude and behaviour, in short, throughout, of a man in earnest, in contradistinction with one who heedlessly trifles with holy things. "Keep thy foot;" realise the nature of the business in which you engage; deal with it as a serious and weighty affair. Remember the momentous issues that hang upon it; the joy, the peace, the strength, the victory which, on the one hand, it may bring you, and the withering and deadly blight which, on the other, it may entail; and as you remember this, draw near with anxious heed and holy fear, praying the while as you think of the manifold snares and stumbling-blocks in your way." "Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not." "O send out thy light and thy truth; let them lead me, and bring me to thy holy hill, even unto thy sanctuary."

1. "Keep then thy foot." Take heed lest thou stumble to thy soul's damage and hurt, and to the dishonour of thy God on the very threshold of the holy place. For there are many stumbling-blocks. Satan, who is at all times watching and waiting for our halting, has his eye specially on those who are drawing near to God, the fountain of life and salvation. He would fain trip us as we go in, or failing in that, when we are coming out. One stumbling-block is thoughtlessness: a heedless forgetfulness of the grandeur and awful importance of the occasion; rushing lightly and without fear where angels fear to tread. Another is formality: going through the whole as a matter of mere custom and lifeless form in which the heart and soul have no share. Then there is unbelief: blotting out from before our eyes the whole spiritual world with which the soul in its sacred moments has to deal, and making the living God himself but a shadow and a name. Then there is a distractedness of thought, carrying our hearts away in chase of a

thousand vanities, while our bodies perform their miserable automaton service before the Lord. Alas! by how many dangers are we encompassed! What a crowd of enemies and betrayers throng around the holy place! What need of watchfulness and fear and strenuous earnestness, and above all of continual prayer, if we would not have our holiest duties turned to vanity and shame—the most golden moments of blessed opportunity snatched from our hands! Oh, then, let us give the more earnest heed to these things, lest by any means we should let them slip. "Keep thy foot when thou goest into the house of God."

2. "And be more ready to hear than to give the sacrifice of fools." The best and most effectual way to avoid the dangers which beset us in sacred duties, is to keep clearly before our eyes the real nature of the work in which we are to be engaged, and the attitude of soul which it requires. Of this we have a brief but comprehensive statement in this second clause. "Be more ready to hear." In approaching to the Most High, our great business is to hear. In entering the audience chamber of the Great King, our part is not to listen to our own voice, but to his. "I will hear what God the Lord will speak;" "I will stand upon my watch and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what He will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved." "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." Such passages as these unveil to us the deepest springs of the new nature and of the rule and exercise of holy living. The listening heart; the waiting heart whose ears are stretched to catch the least whisper of the voice of God; that is the secret and starting-point of all spiritual and acceptable worship. Wherever it ends, *here*, at least, it must begin. Man in his higher, as well as in his lower nature, lives not by bread alone, or by what men may call bread, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. By that Word He gave us life at first, and by the same Word He sustains that life, and strengthens it more and more unto the end. Therefore, we must listen for that Word, for listening is to that food of the soul what eating is to the food of the body; therefore, if we would thrive in our souls, and grow strong within, we must have ever a sharp appetite, and a keen relish for that heavenly food; we must "be more ready to hear than to offer the sacrifice of fools." Not, indeed, that our intercourse with God is to be all hearing.

If God is not to be silent to us, no more must we be dumb. If He graciously speaks, He as graciously listens. He is the hearer of prayer, and to Him shall all flesh come, with their confessions, their petitions, and all the sad detail of their sorrows and their sins. It is ours, oh blessed and priceless privilege! to lay our petitions on the steps of the throne, as well as wait and hear the answer of the King. But even then it becomes us to demean ourselves as those who are coming to a King. If our petitions may be large, let our words be few and well weighed. Let them not outrun the sense, outrun and overshoot the real conviction and inward feeling of our souls. Here, of all places in the world, let us beware of words that are mere words—meaningless, hollow words. Better be silent altogether than thus to trifle with the holy majesty of heaven. "Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be in haste to utter anything before God; for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth; therefore, let thy words be few." In short, say only what is true; say only what you feel; pour not out words from your lips which have no corresponding reality and meaning in your heart. Do not utter raptures you feel not; contrition and heart-grief you know not; vows of holy obedience you mean not, and never intend to pay. Such prayers are nothing better than an hypocritical pretence and impious mockery of Heaven! yet what else can we do, if we are resolved to speak in many and inflated words to God? If we feel little and yet speak much, what else can the greater part be but such meaningless, soulless words as these I have described? Therefore let thy words be few. Let them be like the prayer of the publican—of the Syrophenician—of the dying thief—swift arrows of the heart, piercing the heavens. Let them be the fruit of much thought, much meditation, much searching of the Divine Word, much silent waiting upon God, and listening to his voice; but let the words themselves be few.

Better one spark of living fire, than a whole heap of ashes. Better a single grain of genuine wheat, than a whole mountain of chaff. Better to utter even one word of real heart-prayer once in our life, than walk amid a cloud of empty words all our days. Still, the primary element in all true communion with God is hearing. This must be the groundwork of the whole. By it faith lives; hope gathers fresh courage, and devotion receives at once its sustaining aliment, and its quickening breath sustains its flame. *Hearing*, I say; but not in any narrow sense. Hearing, but not by any means mere hearing. In Scripture language, hearing implies obedience. It is hearing, not of the mind only, but of the heart; not of the speculative reason or curious fancy, but of the loyal loving will. The true worshipper hears that he may believe, hears that he may follow, hears that he may obey. He listens to God's words that he may make them his own, and makes them the very life of his life by carrying them into action and by turning them into prayer. "My sheep *hear* my voice, and I know them, and they *follow* me." "As the eye of a servant looketh unto the hand of his master"—looketh! for what end? surely that he may catch by every slightest sign or token his master's will, and promptly follow it. In this spirit, let us go to the house of God, and wait upon every means of grace which He hath appointed for bringing us nearer to Him. Let our language be the language, not of our lips only, but of our hearts; their feeble, broken utterance, it may be, finding vent rather in sighs and unuttered groanings than in any articulate words, but still the utterance of our very hearts. "Speak, Lord, and open mine ears to hear thy voice. Show me thy ways, make me willing in the day of thy power; not only to know, but to do thy will; not only to hear, but to love, to obey, to trust, to follow." Then, "not being forgetful hearers, but doers of the word, we shall be blessed in our deed."





KING DIVINE.

(FROM THE FRENCH OF ALEXANDRE VINET.)

KING divine!
 Song of mine—
 Can it reach Thy heaven and Thee?
 And wilt Thou
 Stoop so low
 That Thy love shall visit me?
 Deeps profound!
 Who shall sound,
 Without faith, their mystery?

Could my prayer,
 Father! dare,
 All so weak, to rise to Thee,
 But that Thou
 Deign'st to bow
 In Thy tender love to me?
 Love untold!
 Humbly bold—
 Faith adores the mystery.

From the deep
 Toward the steep,
 Toward my King's eternal throne,
 Mounts my prayer,—
 Waiting there,
 Waiting on His grace alone:
 Saviour dear!
 Bend Thine ear;
 Of my faith the tribute own.

Lord of all!
 Hear my call:
 For Thyself, Thyself, I cry.
 Art Thou near?
 Nought I fear:
 Art thou absent? then I die:

Helper mine,
 King divine,
 In me reign eternally!

H. DOWNTON.

MRS. MARY FLETCHER.*

MARY BOSANQUET, who afterwards became the wife of Fletcher of Madeley, was born in the autumn of 1739, at Leytonstone, in Essex. She at a very early age wished to become a Methodist, and when she had joined the Society, she devoted herself during a long life entirely to the advancement of Wesley's doctrines, and to the education and improvement of the poor children and women whom she received into her house. Her copious journals (which were published about twenty years after her death) give a most interesting account of her life and work, and from them the following sketch of her history has been taken.

When quite a child Mary Bosanquet began to ponder upon her spiritual condition. She says—

"When I was five years old I began to have much concern about my eternal welfare, and frequently inquired of those about me whether such and such things were sins. On Sabbath evenings my dear father used to instruct us in the Church Catechism. At those seasons I can remember asking many questions. I wished to know whether any one ever did love God with all their heart, and their neighbours as themselves; and whether it was really the command of God that we should do so; also, if the Bible really meant all it said. It seemed to me that if it did I was wrong, and all about me in danger; for there appeared to be a great difference between the description of a Christian given in the Word of God and those who walk under that name. As I was a backward child, and of weaker understanding than the others, I was not well read in the Scriptures at that very early age; but sentences out of the Word of God frequently occurred to my mind and made a deep impression, such as—'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart.' I would answer, 'But I do not love God at all; I do not know how to love Him; and with respect to loving my neighbour thus, I am sure I do not; for though my sister is dearer to me than anybody else, I do not love her as well as myself.' Again, that word struck me much where St. Paul says, 'I have fought the good fight,' and when I was baptized the minister said I was to be 'Christ's faithful soldier and servant, and to fight manfully under his banner.' This amazed me greatly. I thought, I am sure I do not fight, neither do I know what to fight against. But, above all, that sentence would follow me, 'Narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it,' and, 'If ye are not of the world, the world will hate you.' I did not feel it a narrow way, neither did the world hate me; therefore I questioned often whether I was not quite out of the way, yet it was not with any terror. I believed if the Lord saw that I was wrong He would make me right, and sometimes I prayed for it. At other times I was very careless."

About this time a Methodist maid-servant came into Mr. Bosanquet's household, and

frequently conversed with his eldest daughter, who repeated all she heard to her little sister Mary. The child then thought that if she became a Methodist she should be sure of salvation, but after reading with her sister some of the servant's little books, she found that to belong to any sect was not enough, that the Methodists said she could be saved only by believing in Christ, and that that belief would make her holy. This the poor little girl could not understand, and as the maid went away there was no one to explain it to her. She says—

"My heart rose against the idea of being saved by a faith which I could not understand. One day, looking over the pictures in the 'Book of Martyrs,' I thought it would be easier to burn than to believe, and heartily did I wish that the Papists would come and burn me, and then I thought I should be quite safe. Yet these troubled thoughts were mixed with a degree of hope. I thought, 'God does love me, I believe, after all; and perhaps He will show me what it is to believe and be converted.' When I was between seven and eight years old, musing one day on that thought, 'What can it be to know my sins forgiven, and to have faith in Jesus?' I felt my heart rise against God for having appointed a way of salvation so hard to be understood, and with anguish of soul I said, 'If it were to die a martyr I could do it; or to give away all I have; or, when grown up, to become a servant, that would be easy; but I never shall know how to believe.'"

The poor child goes on—

"I fell into an uncommon lowness, and weakness of nerves, which was accompanied with grievous temptations. I was oppressed beyond measure with the fear of sin, and accused in almost everything I said or did, so that I was altogether a heap of inconsistency. This was followed by temptations unspeakably afflicting. It was continually suggested to my mind that I had blasphemed against the Holy Ghost. The consequent effect of these temptations on my temper drew on me very grievous burdens, and exposed me to so much anger and reproach from my parents as made me weary of life. It appeared to them that I was obstinate and disobedient, and my flesh has seemed ready to move on my bones when I have heard my dear mother say, 'That girl is the most perverse creature that ever lived; I cannot think what is come to her.' My heart used to sink like a stone; for I knew not what to do, and the grief of my mind quite destroyed my health. . . . This heavy season lasted, I think, nine weeks, when one day opening my mind to my sister (as indeed I had often before attempted to do, but could not explain myself), she providentially used these words in her answer: 'Why, you do not mean to blaspheme, do you?' A light immediately struck into my mind; I weighed the thought over and over, and could truly say, 'Lord, thou knowest I do not mean to blaspheme.' I then recollected that I had heard something about temptation, and often wondered what it was. I thought, it may be Satan whispers this into my mind. . . . I determined never to regard it

* See SUNDAY MAGAZINE for October, p. 20.

more, but always to answer with these words, 'I do not mean to blaspheme, I will acknowledge Christ for ever;' and in a few days I was perfectly delivered."

The unnatural and excited condition of mind into which Mary Bosanquet had fallen was a source of great anxiety and distress to her parents. They were most kind and lenient in their treatment of her, but they could not understand her religious opinions, nor could they overlook the insolent and disobedient spirit which, as she herself admits, she showed towards them. She had no one to advise her, for as she considered her parents to be irreligious, she would not consult them, and she continued to follow her own course with great obstinacy and without the least regard to the wishes or feelings of her family. A Mrs. Lefevre, with whom she made acquaintance in London, exercised for some time a healthy influence over her, and induced her to show some consideration to her parents; but in 1756 this lady died, and Mary, again left to herself, made her home almost unbearable. Her sister married, and she herself received an offer from a religious gentleman, whom her friends entreated her to accept. But she refused him, saying that her "present light was to abide single;" and, after many consultations, her parents decided that, though they were grieved to part with her, it would be better for the whole family if she lived by herself. Her income was ample, and lodgings were taken for her and her maid in a respectable family. Her parents seem invariably to have treated her with the greatest kindness and forbearance, and they now frequently visited her. She as often spent the day with them, and they were continually adding to the comforts of her home.

Mary had already formed a friendship with Mrs. Ryan, one of the earliest as she was one of the most earnest Methodists. They now agreed to live together, and continued to do so till Mrs. Ryan's death in 1768. At first they resided at Hoxton, but when Mary inherited a house at Leytonstone, they removed there. Mary was, in spite of her undutiful conduct, sincerely attached to her parents, and trusted that she "should not be called to offend them any further." But she and Mrs. Ryan had determined to receive the Methodist preachers, and she feared that her father would object to the plan. However, when she consulted him, he only replied with a smile, "If a mob should pull your house about your ears, I cannot hinder them." Mary rejoiced that he

did not oppose her wishes, but she never seems to have felt the least gratitude for the generosity and forbearance which he showed towards her, and certainly she never reflected that her own conduct had not been so regulated as to raise his opinion of the Methodism which she professed.

Mary Bosanquet and Mrs. Ryan began at first by holding meetings in which they prayed, read a chapter, and spoke from it. They had soon twenty-five persons joined in Society, and applied to Mr. Wesley for a preacher. Their house was once or twice surrounded by a mob, but they were never really molested, and they soon wished to undertake more work. They decided on receiving little girls, whom they would clothe and train as servants, but they would take none but destitute orphans, in order that no one might interrupt their plan of education. At first they received six children, and attended to them themselves; but, finding that they had not time for this and their other work, they engaged a young woman to act as governess, and to wash and comb the orphans! Mary Bosanquet says that she "found great need of wisdom and patience," but her undertaking prospered, and she had soon thirty-five children and thirty-four grown-up persons in her house, though not all at the same time. Each had separate duties and employments, and in order to avoid conformity to the world, as well as needless attention to dress, the whole family was clothed alike in dark purple cotton. The following account of the daily arrangements of the house is given in Mary's diary:—

"The eldest of the children arose between four and five, and the youngest not much later. At half-an-hour after six we had family prayer. At seven we breakfasted together on herb tea, or milk porridge; the small children then went into the garden till eight. At eight the bell rang for school, which continued till twelve. Then after a few minutes spent in prayer, they came down to us, at which time we either walked out with them, or if the weather did not permit, we found them some employment in the house, endeavouring at the same time to give them both instruction and recreation. We invented various employment for those hours in order to remove the appearance of idleness, as from the first we endeavoured to impress that lesson on their minds, 'An idle person is the devil's cushion, on which he rolls at pleasure.' Likewise, that in the choice of their employments they should always prefer those that were most useful, and be always able to render a reason for everything they did. At one we dined; about two the bell rang again for school, and at five they returned to us, and were employed as before till supper-time. Then, after family prayer, they were washed and put to bed by eight. Four or five of the bigger girls were each week kept out of the school by turns, and employed in house work, cooking, &c.,

that they might be accustomed to every sort of business; and there was work enough in so large a family. Several of the children were very young, though I do not remember we had any under two years of age, except one of about a month old, which was laid, very neatly dressed, late one night at our door, but it only lived a fortnight."

In spite of the want of recreation (which surely ought to have been more considered in the education of these little creatures), and in spite of a somewhat stern doctrine both as regarded religion and morals, this first Home for Orphans prospered, and repaid Mary Bosanquet by its success for the trouble and anxiety which it caused her. The children of course contributed nothing to its support, neither do the women (whom she received as sisters) appear to have given any further aid than occasional assistance in household work; the expense, therefore, was entirely borne by herself, and she at times seems to have been much alarmed by the prophecies of her friends, that she and all her household would come on the parish. But her income, as has already been said, was large, and she occasionally received presents of money from her family. Her father, during his last illness, spoke to her with the utmost kindness, and regretted that he had not left her better off. He offered to alter his will, but she refused this, and afterwards found that the sum left to her was more considerable than she had expected it to be. She set up a box in the hall of her house, into which any contributions towards maintenance of her Home might be dropped, and she often found it well filled. So that, with the advice of Mrs. Ryan (who seems to have been a good woman of business), Mary's money matters were tolerably well managed, and she had no lack of means to carry on her work.

It is at this time that, in an account of a dangerous illness of Mrs. Ryan's, Mary Bosanquet first speaks of Mr. Fletcher. She does not say where she had met him, nor does she describe the progress of their acquaintance. She merely observes that she remarked to Mrs. Ryan that it was sometimes presented to her mind that she should be called to marry Mr. Fletcher. Mrs. Ryan quite approved, but the subject does not appear to have been again discussed between them. Mr. Fletcher, in a letter to Charles Wesley, said that "Miss Bosanquet's image had pursued him warmly for some hours," and that he had "considered matrimony with a different eye" since he had known her, but he resolved not to think of her, as he did not wish to marry a woman with so large a fortune of her own. He gave as his reason Juvenal's

proverb, *Veniunt a dote sagitte*, "The arrows come from the portion."

In 1768 Mary Bosanquet made up her mind to leave Leytonstone, and to take a farm in Yorkshire. Her present house was too small for her very large family, and she found great inconvenience from having no land in her own hands. Her friends assured her that in the north of England her income would go as far again, and she was strongly urged to remove by several of her most trusted advisers. A Methodist, named Richard Taylor, who had, as he said, been driven by misfortune from his home in Yorkshire, came to London in the hope of settling with his creditors, and two of Mr. Wesley's preachers recommended Mary to invite him to her house at Leytonstone. She did so, and after a time he persuaded her to go with Mrs. Ryan and all her large household to Yorkshire, to stay with his wife's parents till a suitable farm could be bought. Mrs. Ryan only survived the journey two months, and her death was in all ways a very great loss to Mary Bosanquet. She now relied entirely on the advice of Richard Taylor, whom she believed to be as disinterested and honourable as herself, and found that the want of judgment and neglect of even common prudence, which had brought his own affairs into so lamentable a condition, rendered him the worst of counsellors with regard to hers. He was perhaps not otherwise than honest, but his careless management of her property led her into great difficulties, and though she supported and believed in him throughout, she allows herself to observe that he was not to be trusted in worldly matters. He induced her to buy a large farm near Guildersome, in the West Riding, and to build a house on it for her family, besides the farm-house which already existed. On this estate were malt-kilns, which Mary was assured would be most profitable, and would repay her for the very heavy expense of stocking so large a farm, and of building her house. The first year the kilns did answer, and she cleared £50 by them, but this was not nearly enough, and she spent £300 in settling Taylor's affairs with his creditors. Her meetings, however, were well attended, for as many as fifty persons came to her every Wednesday evening. She founded a number of smaller meetings, and had the satisfaction of seeing them prosper.

But in spite of this pleasure Mary's affairs fell into such disorder under Taylor's management, that she was filled with anxiety. He undertook too much, employed too many men, and gave credit so easily that numbers

of debts were owing to him. The malt-kilns cost far more than had been expected, the farm did not pay, and Mary had to incur great expenses in the entertainment of the number of persons who came to stay with her for her meetings. She was in the utmost perplexity when a gentleman, who was said to be "the only man of business in the country," offered her his advice, and then begged her to marry him. This proposal she refused, because she "could not see in him the man her highest reason chose to obey," but he entreated her to allow him to continue to advise her, and added, "You cannot do without me. You will be ruined. God has made me your helper, and if you cannot see or feel as I do, we will be only common friends. I will say no more on the subject so disagreeable to you." This generous man continued for years to give Mary Bosanquet his best advice and assistance. She would not consent to part with Taylor, chiefly from pity for his wife and children, but she was persuaded to give the farm and kilns up to him, and to receive £60 a year from him, hoping that, as her agent, he would make it answer better, and at least spare her expense. For three years all went on pretty well, but at the end of that time Taylor was found to be £600 in debt, and this large sum had to be paid by his unfortunate mistress. The gentleman before mentioned once more begged Mary to accept him, but she again refused, and he, with some difficulty, induced her to borrow from him the £600, as she could in no way raise it herself. She also took all her affairs out of Taylor's hands, and as she could not sell the farm, she determined to manage it herself, taking her kind friend as partner, though she would not accept him as her husband. Her behaviour to this man appears rather heartless, but it must be recollected that he urged his friendship upon her, and was anxious to advise and assist her. Her relatives and friends blamed her, for her marriage would have relieved them from the continual anxiety which they felt on her behalf. One of them spoke plainly to her, and expressed the feelings of the rest, when he said, "I cannot approve of your proceedings; I fear you fight against Providence. Here are several doors open before you. If you object to Mr. —, why do you not accept some other of those good men whom the Lord seems to have cast in your way? You stand stiffly in the choice of a single life. . . . The end will be ruin. You will be brought to a prison, and all the reproach will be cast on religion."

But Mary remained firm. Perhaps a reason for this persistence may be gathered from the constant allusion in her diary to Mr. Fletcher's "Checks to Antinomianism." She had not seen or heard from him for fifteen years, when, in the midst of her distress, a friend said to her, "Do you know that Mr. Fletcher, of Madeley, is dying? Indeed I know not but he is already dead. If he holds out a little longer, he is to go abroad, but it is a pity, for he will die by the way, being in the last stage of a consumption." Mary says that she received this news with the utmost calmness, but she adds, "As I was one day in prayer, offering him up to the Lord, these words passed through my mind, 'The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up.' But I said, 'Lord, I dare not ask it; I leave it to thy sacred will. Thy will be done.'"

She threw herself with greater earnestness into her work, frequently preaching in the neighbourhood of Cross Hall, her farm. She consulted Wesley as to the propriety of her preaching, but though he never sanctioned a regular female ministry, he considered that she had an extraordinary call to the work; and as she never interfered in the government of the Methodist Society, or (in the words of her biographer) "usurped authority over the man," he encouraged her to continue. But, notwithstanding the gift of eloquence which she evidently possessed, Mary never overcame the great reluctance which she felt towards speaking in public. She frequently mentions this in her journal:—

"*May 28, 1775.*—This day I set apart for prayer, to inquire of the Lord why I am so held in bondage about speaking in public. It cannot be expressed what I suffer; it is known only to God what trials I go through in that respect. Lord, give me more humility, and then I shall not care for anything but Thee. There are a variety of reasons why it is such a cross. The other day one told me he was sure I must be an impudent woman; no modest woman, he was sure, could proceed thus. Ah! how glad would nature be to find out Thou, Lord, dost not require it. Then Mr. William Brand observed to-day, 'The reason why your witness is not more clear is, because you do not glorify God by believing and more freely declaring what He hath done for your soul.'"

"*Sept. 10, Sunday.*—I rose this morning with a sore weight on my mind. It was given out for me to be at D—. There was much wind and rain, and the roads were very bad. I feared the journey. I feared also I should have nothing to say when I came there. I feared all manner of things. Those words, however, came to my mind, 'Take no thought what ye shall say.' I then felt myself led to consider those words, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.' I found some liberty in speaking from them, and the people were affected. As I was riding back I clearly saw I was called to stand still, to live the present moment, and always to praise the

Lord that his will was done though I might have much to suffer. I had a clear conviction God brought me to Yorkshire, and that I had a message to this people, and that notwithstanding the darkness which hung over my situation I was at present where God would have me. Well then, answered my heart, if I am but in his will I am safe; for where the Lord leaves me, there He will be my light.'

"*Aug. 30, 1776.*—Yesterday it was given out for me to be at —. For a whole month it lay on my mind. None, O my God, but thyself knows what I go through for every public meeting; I am often quite ill with the prospect."

Almost the first place at which Mary Bosanquet preached was on the side of a coal-pit. She says, "Here I saw a little of what the Methodist preachers see much, viz., deep poverty, dirt, and cold; but the Lord gave me freedom of speech, and some seemed to have an ear to hear. Lord, let me not be a delicate disciple!" Once, when she was at Harrogate, drinking the waters there, the "ungodly company" who filled the principal inn requested her to preach to them in the ball-room. She remarks:—

"This was a trial indeed. It appeared to me I should seem in their eyes as a bad woman, or a stage player, and I feared they only sought an opportunity to behave rudely. Yet I considered, I shall see these people no more till I see them at the judgment seat of Christ, and then it shall be said to me, 'You might that day have warned us, but you would not.' So I answered them immediately, that I would wait on them at the time appointed. They behaved very well, and the presence of the Lord was with us. The following Sunday they made the same request, and much more company came in."

Her account of her preaching at Huddersfield must be given at full length:—

"*Sept. 17, Tuesday, 1776.*—Glory be to Thee, my faithful Lord. Oh that I could always trust! then I should always praise! Last Sabbath morning I went, according to appointment, to Goker. I arose early, and in pretty good health. The day was fine, though rather hot. About eleven we came to Huddersfield, and called on Mrs. H—. She had asked me to lodge there on my return and have a meeting, saying many had long desired it, and there would be no preacher there on that day. I felt immediately the people laid on my mind, and that I had a message to that place, and said, 'If the Lord permit, I will.' She then said, 'We will give it out at noon.' We rode forward, and Benjamin Cock met us and kindly conducted us over the moors. When we came to his hut all was clean, and victuals enough provided for twenty men. But I was so heated with the ride (near twenty miles) and with the great fire on which they so liberally cooked for us that I could not eat. My drinking nothing but water seemed also quite to distress them. They said the meeting had been given out in many places, and they believed we should have between two and three thousand people. That I did not believe, but there was indeed such a number, and of such a rabble as I scarce ever saw. At one we went out to the rocks, a place so wild that I cannot describe it. The crowd which got round us was so great that by striving which should get first to

the quarry, (where we were to meet,) they rolled great stones among the people below us, so that we feared mischief would be done. Blessed be God, none were hurt. I passed on among them, on the top of the hill, not knowing whither I went. Twice I was pushed down by the crowd, but rose without being trampled on. We stopped on the edge of a spacious quarry filled with people, who were tolerably quiet. I gave out that hymn, 'The Lord my pasture shall prepare.' When they were a little settled, I found some liberty in speaking to them, and I believe most heard."

After Mary had finished preaching numbers followed her to the hut, and she was quite exhausted by speaking to them till the time came for her long ride back to Huddersfield. On the way Richard Taylor begged her not to stop in the town, as he had heard there were persons there who objected to female preachers, and he feared she might meet with something disagreeable. But she recollected the hymn she had given out in the quarry, and determined to do as she had been asked, though if the friends who had invited her should think it better for her to go on without preaching, she was ready to do so. She was, however, again urged to hold a meeting, and not to disappoint the people, and she went into the house which had been prepared for the purpose. But the room was so crowded, and the heat so great, that it was impossible for her to speak. She continues: "We came out. My head swam with the heat; I scarce knew which way I went, but seemed carried along by the people till we stopped at a horse-block, placed against a wall on the side of the street, with a plain wide opening before it. On the steps of this I stood, and gave out the hymn, 'Come ye sinners, poor and needy.'" She preached at considerable length, and observes: "Deep solemnity sat on every face. I think there was scarce a cough to be heard, or the least motion, though the number gathered was very great. So solemn a time I have seldom known; my voice was clear enough to reach them all, and when we concluded I felt stronger than when we began." But a few days later she writes:—

"I have been more abundantly led to reflect on the difficulties of the path I am called in. I know the power of God which I felt when standing on the horse-block in the street at Huddersfield; but at the same time I am conscious how ridiculous I must appear in the eyes of many for so doing. Therefore, if some persons consider me as an impudent woman, and represent me as such, I cannot blame them. Again, many say, 'If you are called to preach, why do you not do it constantly, and take a round as a preacher?' I answer, Because that is not my call. I have many duties to attend to, and many cares which they know nothing about. . . . Again, they say, 'Why do you not give out I am to preach?'

Why call it a meeting?' I answer, Because that suits my design best. First, it is less ostentatious; secondly, it leaves me at liberty to speak more or less as I feel myself led; thirdly, it gives less offence to those that watch for it. Others object, 'Why, yours is a Quaker call; why then do you not join them at once? You are an offence to us. Go to the people whose call is the same as your own; here nobody can bear with you.' I answer, Though I believe the Quakers have still a good deal of God among them, yet I think the Spirit of the Lord is more at work among the Methodists, and while I see this, though they were to toss me about as a football I would stick to them like a leech. Besides, I do nothing but what Mr. Wesley approves. . . ."

Besides these annoyances, Mary Bosanquet was much troubled about her farm. She wished to sell it, nobody would buy it, and she seemed to find fresh difficulties and expenses on all sides. Mr. — again repeated his offer, and she thought it better to go away for six months to Bath, hoping that matters might mend. She writes, "I shall be glad to be at a distance from poor Mr. —. Oh, how sad it is! I fear while he helps me I hurt him. Lord, what a situation is mine!" She found her sister at Bath, and she so far helped her as to undertake the expense of Taylor and his numerous family. But on Mary's return things seemed worse than ever. She says she returned "with that kind of sensation which a scourged child would have in returning to the rod," and she found that, in spite of the efforts of Mr. —, the farm did not pay. She knew not what to do, and thus describes her perplexity as to one course which was open to her:—

"In the midst of my trials it is sometimes presented to my mind, perhaps the Lord will draw me out of all this by marriage. Opportunities of this kind occur frequently; but no sooner do I hear the offer but a clear light seems to shine on my mind, as with this voice: 'You will neither be holier nor happier with this man.' But I find Mr. Fletcher sometimes brought before me, and the same conviction does not intervene. Yet I fear lest it should be a trick of Satan to hurt my mind. I know not even that we shall see each other on this side eternity. . . . Well, this I resolve on, and strive against the thought, never to do the least thing towards a renewal of the correspondence."

In 1781 Mr. — said that he was at a loss what to do for Mary Bosanquet. Her affairs seemed more involved than ever. He added, "You are ruined, madam. You withstand the order of God. My fortune is enough for you and me. But you cannot see in my light. May the Lord stand by you! but I cannot think of a partnership any more, the blame would fall on me." Poor Mary turned again to the thought of Mr. Fletcher, knowing that now he was much better, but an intimate, though mistaken, friend assured

her that he intended to live abroad, and to see England no more. "Thus," she adds, "was I cut off from the prospect of any human help, but I kept to my old word, 'My soul, wait thou on God, from Him cometh my salvation.'" Mr. — further added to her distress by saying that the farm was so much impoverished he was sure that she would not get more than £600 by the sale of the whole place. She was almost in despair, and wrote in her diary that all was dark before her; she could see no light. But, quite unexpectedly, on the 8th of June, 1781, Mary received a letter from Mr. Fletcher, in which he said "that he had for twenty-five years formed a regard for her, which was still as sincere as ever; and though it might appear odd that he should write on such a subject when but just returned from abroad, and more so without seeing her first, he could only say that his mind was so strongly drawn to do it he believed it to be the order of Providence."

Mary Bosanquet does not tell us what answer she made, but she says: "We corresponded with openness and freedom till August 1, when he came to Cross Hall, and abode there a month; preaching in different places with much power;—and having opened our whole hearts to each other, both on temporals and spirituals, we believed it to be the order of God we should become one, when He should make our way plain." After several weeks of anxiety Mary's farm was sold for £1,620 (far more than she had expected), and she was enabled to provide in different ways for the numerous members of her family. She goes on: "So on Monday, Nov. 12, 1781, in Batley Church, we covenanted in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, to bear each other's burdens, and to become one for ever." Early in the following January, Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher went to Madeley, and began their happy life together there—which was only to last for four years. Mary's diary becomes less copious, but in every entry she mentions her perfect happiness with her husband. "He is," she says, "in every sense of the word, the man my highest reason chooses to obey. . . . His constant endeavour is to make me happy. . . . What a helpmate he is to me! . . . What a tender, kind friend, hath he proved himself in every circumstance of each situation!"

In July, 1785, a sort of typhus fever broke out in Madeley, and Mrs. Fletcher was one of the first attacked. She was for some days in the greatest danger, and almost as soon as she recovered Mr. Fletcher was seized with

what proved to be his last illness. She gives a most touching account of his death, dwelling, in all her grief, upon one of his last sayings to her, "Polly, let us not fear, God is love. What canst thou fear, my dearest, when God is love?" It had been his conviction that she would not survive her attack of fever, and after he had spoken for her at a meeting, he said to her, "My dear, I could scarcely speak to the people. I felt I know not how, as if thy empty chair stood by me. Something seemed to say we should soon be parted, and I thought, Must I meet these people, and see my Polly's empty chair always by me?" "But," adds poor Mrs. Fletcher, "now that cup was mine. I am truly a desolate woman, who hath no helper but Thee."

She was much perplexed as to what she ought to do. Mr. Fletcher had expressed a wish that she should remain at Madeley, but there were difficulties about her doing so. She says:—

"I thought on two places the most likely, and had some desire to draw a lot concerning them. I had the paper in my hand in order so to do, when the remembrance of my dearest love was presented

strongly to my mind, as speaking again those words, 'Polly, do not let us look for signs; let us leave ourselves in the hand of God.' I felt an immediate light of faith, and throwing the paper out of my hand, I took up the Bible, intending to read, and for the present to drop every other thought. It opened on those words, 'God shall choose our inheritance for us.' All my spirit acquiesced, and I answered, 'Yea, Lord, thou hast chosen for my dear the bright mansions above, and thou wilt choose for me all my wanderings below.'

Mr. Kenerson, the son of the patron of the living, became vicar of Madeley, but he did not reside, and Mrs. Fletcher was allowed to recommend as curate Mr. Melville Home, whom Mr. Fletcher had wished for as his successor. She continued to rent the house in which her happy married life had been passed, and remained there till her death. Her life was most quiet and uneventful; she passed her time in caring for the poor, and in holding meetings—always bearing in mind one of Mr. Fletcher's sayings to her, (made in reference to her view of the importance of a happy death,) "Let us get holy lives, and we will leave the rest to God." She died, after a short illness, December 9, 1815, aged seventy-six, having survived her husband thirty years.

C. PALMER.

JESUS HERE.

SAD voices far and wide have said,
"The letter of the Word is dead,"
And wistful travellers through the gloom
Seem but to see the yawning tomb:
When dawn is chill, and evening drear,
What would we give for Jesus near!

The earth is white with wintry snow,
And death hath laid our dear ones low;
Feel as we may, and yearn how much,
We miss the tender voice and touch:
Our hearts sink down with dismal fear,
What would we give for Jesus near!

'Tis then we seek with fond accord
Their presence who have *known* the Lord!
Whose eyes by faith have surely seen
Luminous tracks where He hath been:
As once when angels brought good cheer,
Even to us is Jesus near!

His footsteps are not far to seek;
Where Patience turns the unsmitten cheek;
Where Conscience thrills beneath the rod,
Owning the judgment sent of God;
Where perfect Love absolveth Fear,
What can it be but Jesus near!

He hallows love, He softens grief,
He brings the aching thought relief.
He stills to peace the stormiest lot;
What were a world where He were not!
The waves subside, the heavens grow clear;—
Could it be else with Jesus near!

What word so coins the Saviour's thought
As image He in us hath wrought!
What Church can fold or preach His name,
Better than souls He sets aflame!
The seeking eye, the listening ear,
Know at a touch is Jesus here.

So, Lord, at last, when one by one,
The minutes, hours, and days are done,
And all that we could do for Thee
Is garnered in Thy treasury,
The old fond call we fain would hear,
To Jesus *there*, from Jesus *here*.

B. P. E.

CROOKED PLACES:

A Story of Struggles and Hopes.

BY EDWARD GARRETT, AUTHOR OF "OCCUPATIONS OF A RETIRED LIFE," ETC.

PART III.—MILLICENT'S ROMANCE, AND WHAT IT WAS MADE OF.

CHAPTER X.—EUREKA!



FERGUS LAURIE was already established as a domestic friend at Mrs. Harvey's hearth.

He seemed everybody's visitor as much as Milly's, and

yet he would have been nobody's visitor but for her, for he was no special favourite with any one else there. But all the Harveys had a genuine tolerant respect for each other, and for each other's tastes and wishes, and once they found there was a substantial friendship between Fergus and Milly, they refrained from little criticisms, and opened their eyes fully to all that was really likeable in Mr. Laurie. And they each found something. Even Miss Brook and Mrs. Webber were obliged to own that he was remarkably industrious, energetic, and quick. George could fully appreciate his enlargement of mind and aim. Christian acknowledged his wonderful will-force, saying that "it was half the material for the finest character." And yet her feeling towards him was curiously touched with a pity, which she never seemed to bestow on him whom most of the others called "poor David Maxwell." Milly was not affronted when she noticed this,—there was a mysterious dash of pity in her own admiration,—as indeed there is in most feminine admiration, where the hero is mentally summed up as so much courage, so much fortitude, so much wisdom, and such a broken

leg! Only Milly felt that Christian's pity was not a component part of any admiration, but stood quite alone.

It can easily be understood that the new firm had a hard battle to fight. Not with anything but its own circumstances. Fergus's old masters were quite kindly disposed, and actually bestowed two or three signal favours on the early days of "Laurie and Co." David was delighted, hailing these, not only as practical benefits, but as proofs that Fergus's ideal of mutual help and honour was already not unknown in business matters. But Fergus was not so pleased as might have been expected. He acknowledged these favours with cool reserve, putting down David's eager gratitude with a quiet remark that he knew what these people were, and what their kindness was worth. When one of these kindnesses was shown, when the firm was sticking in a transitory difficulty, he hinted it was done because the old firm considered it no rival at all, but a mere helpless protégé, who might safely be petted and patronised, but that they would soon see differently! When another was bestowed just after a brilliant little success, Fergus said triumphantly that everybody was the friend of those who could befriend themselves. His friend's cynicism a little disappointed David. But Fergus declared that it was not because he thought evil of human nature, he only knew it,—that was all,—and he liked it too, though he despised it, and it could be made very useful in its own way.

Still, as months and months passed on, the new business did not make way. It scarcely paid its current expenses, setting some of them—David's remuneration for instance—very low indeed.

David worked hard among his chemicals, striving after certain results which were the desiderata of the trade. Nobody knew much about that, because he was always at it, and never had to make it his excuse for declining or curtailing visits, because he never paid any, except to George and Christian, and somehow he had fallen into the habit of spending Sunday afternoon and evening with them, and accompanying them to church. That began when Christian's baby came, and George for a while was without a com-

panion. But everybody heard a great deal of the midnight oil which Fergus consumed over his ledgers and correspondence, because after he had spent an evening hour or two chatting with Mrs. Harvey and Milly, he would tell them that he had oceans of work to get through before he could go to bed. And as Milly combed out her tresses in her secret chamber, she would think of him bending over his dreary ciphers, and would smile with a happy womanly pride to think that he had doubtless felt he could go back to his toil refreshed after a little talk with—her! She could quite understand it, and she wondered how Miss Brook could not do the same, but was so unfeeling as to say—

"He'd better work while there's daylight, and save his candles."

Still in spite of the immense amount of work that was really put into the young business, it did not prosper. Debts which should be paid immediately began to be delayed. David grew frightened, Fergus smiled serenely.

"It is always so," he said, "a great deal must be sunk out of sight before anything appears."

"But if there is not much to sink?" David suggested, and got no answer, except a dark cloud on his friend's face.

On a certain morning, Fergus averted paying a debt of six pounds—a small affair, truly, but due to a man who was somewhat pressing, and even menacing. The account was not rightly due, according to its terms of credit, till a week later, and Fergus curtly declined paying it till that date, saying that unless things were kept in their regular order, his books would get hopelessly confused. David acknowledged that the principle was right enough, but knew in this particular instance that it was the cash-box rather than the ledger which would be inconvenienced. In the afternoon, Fergus sent this very creditor an urgent order for another article from his workshop.

"We have done without this implement till this time," David said; "don't you think we might do without it a little longer, and pay his bill before we increase it?"

"No," said Fergus shortly. "He will trust us the more, the better customers we make ourselves, because he will not want to offend us. And we are no cheats. We mean to pay everything."

"Of course, we mean so. But can we do it?" David asked, rather timidly. The cash in the affair being chiefly his own, he felt as if any shame that there was not more of it was his too!

"I should rather think so," Fergus answered drily. "You can scarcely have made this scheme worth less than it was when you came into it! It was worth your sinking your money in it then. It will surely be worth other people sinking more money in it now. I knew from the first that we could not really succeed without more capital. But it is easier to borrow for a tangible affair, with a local habitation and a name, than for a mere airy castle, as this was when I came to you. Why, at the very worst, we can but arrange to give our creditors an interest in our business corresponding to their claims. But we shall have a fine sale next week."

David said nothing more, but returned quietly to his chemicals. He spent twelve hours a day in his laboratory, and he wondered what else he could possibly do to help or spare the cash-box, whose "Debtor" and "Creditor" compartments were now alike empty. He remembered that he had an old schoolmate, who had succeeded to his father's business of law-stationer. So next day David nibbled his luncheon sandwiches as he walked from Bow to Chancery Lane, and there presented himself to his old acquaintance, and asked if he had any copying to give out. Law copying was very plentiful in those un-lithographic days, and the friend had some—yes, as much as David liked. David could not take more than he could do in six hours a day, he had no more time to spare. The experienced friend computed that sixty folios was a good allotment for that time, and entrusted him with an enormous abstract which would occupy him six hours for six days. As David left him, the good-natured tradesman privately reflected—

"Maxwell can't be doing much good for himself to want this kind of work, at his age, and with his capabilities. Surely he must be either shiftless or thriftless."

But David himself went back to Bow, rejoicing that he should be able to keep his own and Phoebe's immediate necessities supplied without himself becoming a troublesome creditor to his own needy firm. He must just work eighteen hours for a little while; it would not be for long, he thought cheerily. He had a humble-minded confidence in Fergus's talents, which was at least its own reward, since it gave him a bright belief in his sanguine prophecies. And besides, David had a private hope of his own, which he never mentioned to Fergus, lest delay or possible failure in its consummation should give more pain than the prospect could give pleasure. This was

something which had been David's chemical aim and ambition even before he had left the Blenheim House surgery; in fact, ever since Fergus had accidentally enlightened him as to the extravagant cost at which a certain very imperfect result in colour was obtained. David felt quite certain that a much better effect was to be had at a much lower rate, and had been diligently experimenting for this purpose. Over and over again he seemed almost to have solved the problem, and over and over again something—a very small something it seemed to him—had baffled him. David's utter humility gave him courage and patience. He thought that "accident" had put him on the right track, and that if only other people had happened to get there, they would have smoothed away all difficulties and got straight to the end directly; but that his "stupidity" must be content to take double the time and trouble that any one else would require to use. "If one is rather dunder-headed, the least one can do is to try the more," was his only reflection. At the same time, he had the prudence to remember that it was impossible to keep temper and judgment for such work for more than twelve hours a day, and that the mind would be all the clearer if free from fears of debt. His copying might tire him a little; but not so much as the wonder where next week's housekeeping was to come from.

Phœbe looked glum when he spread out his pen, ink, and paper.

"I should think you needn't be such a slave in that 'boratory, sir, if it isn't worth enough without other work," she said.

"If you were in the laboratory all day, Phœbe," David answered playfully, "you would be like me, very glad of a change of occupation. This washes my mind. Minds want washing as well as bodies, I can tell you, and if they don't get it, one's thoughts are as dim as writing on a smeared slate."

Phœbe grunted. "I can't be up to you, sir," she said; "but yet I know you are gammoning me somehow. If it ain't beneath the likes o' you to do this here, it ain't beneath the likes o' me to get a half day's washing or charing, an' I'm sure I've more time to spare. And besides, sir, you'll excuse me a-speaking; for I know I've no right, being your servant, anyways; but you'll not be able to go on without your natural rest."

"I'm always in bed for nearly six hours," said David, "and don't you know the old saying, 'Six hours for a man, seven for a woman, and eight for a fool?'"

"Ah well," Phœbe retorted, "there's no knowing how many hours he slept that said that; or if not, I'll go bail he lived to grow wiser. I don't hold with slug-a-beds. Down at ten and up at six has always been my way whenever I could; but down at twelve and up at six won't do for any folks that ain't made o' bell-ropes and wash-leather; an' you ain't, Mr. David. You're not that strong. You've got a go in you, sir. You're like them animals that win races and drop dead at the end. You'll not be able to keep on at this rate."

"I don't wish it, Phœbe," said David seriously. "I hope and believe everything will soon be quite different." And then he added in her own pithy style, "If you put your shoulder to the wheel when the cart is in a rut, the cart will carry you to your journey's end."

And so he had the last word.

But at last, one day, when things were looking very dark, so dark that Fergus Laurie sat glumly over his ledgers, and said that nothing prospered in this world but iniquity and money-grubbing, David ventured to whisper that he thought they must really take heart and struggle on a little longer, for he fancied he was on the eve of a great discovery. But Fergus was altogether out of sorts. In fact, his private cash-book was actually claiming more money than his trade creditor column could supply. For of late his sensitive pride had been conscious that people were beginning to wonder how he was getting on, and he had even felt it like an insult when some of his friendlier customers had been particularly prompt in their payments. And he had tried to cast off the suspicion of struggle and poverty by directing Robina to be liberal in her housekeeping, and giving her leave to go again to the draper's, not with money in her hand, but to "open an account." There was still no considerable hesitancy on Robina's part. "He must know best about his own affairs," she decided within herself. "She had nothing to do but to obey; that was her place,"—a dictum whose force she never felt when it had reference to her geniality or hospitality, or in fact to anything, except spending money on herself! This sense of private involvement superadded to outraged pride, acted on Fergus Laurie absolutely like a nervous disorder, when the patient will not attempt any ordinary method of cure, but will place faith in any preposterous quackery. It would have been really easier for him to imagine that relief might come to them wildly—from

an unexpected legacy, or even the discovery of a treasure buried in the counting-house, than to hope for it in the success of David's persevering experiments.

"I think I shall have it to-night," David said eagerly, "for I am sure I should have had it last night, but for a slip in the last combination."

"Ah, that's the way it'll always be," Fergus answered bitterly. "It's the way it always has been since the old alchemists sought for gold."

"This will be as good as gold when we have it," said David, choosing to take up the words without their despairing meaning.

"Ah, if it was to be done, others would have done it long before," Fergus returned, shaking his head. "What do you say—get the effect twice as beautiful at one-third the cost? You need not think that it has not been often tried before by better chemists than you, with far finer laboratories. It is a discovery which would be a fortune. But I don't suppose it is to be made, or it would have been made already. It is just a sheer waste of ingredients, David, and we need every penny that we have—and a great many more—to even keep up the merest show of going on."

"Well, I'm just going to try to-night. And to show you how sure I feel, I shall ask you to wait here an hour or two. I believe you will hear some good news the sooner. Will you grudge waiting?"

"I should, if I hadn't plenty of work to employ me. As it is, I may as well write my letters here as at home."

This was all the answer David got. Fergus's want of faith in his success would have shaken his courage had it not been founded in the deepest humility.

"It is no wonder that he can't expect me to do such a thing as this where others have failed. Well, it will save him from disappointment if I do fail after all. And if so, I must do a little more copying, and put aside something towards the chemicals I have wasted."

Such was the content and quiet spirit which David carried to his labour. But there was something to be done before he set to work. Perhaps it was this something which the other experimenters had omitted.

He knelt down and prayed. "O Father, I am all ignorance, but thou art knowledge. Teach me, Father; I am seeking my daily bread, and if this is the way where-in I am to find it, help me. For Christ's sake. Amen."

He rose up. His spirit had been to God,

and had spoken to Him. Do those who say that prayer is nothing, say also that it is nothing to speak even with a wise and good man? Many a man goes to beg, and his boon of pence is denied him if it be not good for him; but such counsel and encouragement is given him, that he goes out strong to earn for himself, and perhaps comes back to thank his benefactor, saying, "When you refused the paltry gift, you made my fortune; for you gave me a share of your free spirit instead." Oh, while friend speaks with friend, while ignorance takes counsel of wisdom, and sorrow of sympathy, let no man say, that it is no good to speak with God! If the Lord himself cannot hear and respond, it were best for us all to walk silent through a heartless universe.

An hour passed. Fergus sat scribbling his letters, absolutely forgetful why he was waiting there. Another hour passed; and then a quick step rattled half way down the laboratory stairs, and David's voice cried eagerly—

"It is done, Fergus. We have succeeded!"

In less than a minute the two young men stood together bending over the perfected discovery, comparing the soft, lovely new tint with the old, dim, thickish hue which had hitherto been the nearest approach to it.

"What a difference!" said Fergus; "and do you mean to say this will also be cheaper?"

"For every shilling which that old horror cost, this loveliness will cost but fourpence," David answered triumphantly. "God has given us a fortune in this secret, Fergus."

Half-an-hour later the two were pacing down the dark road, arm-in-arm, speaking in whispers like those of men who have a mutual knowledge of a hidden treasure.

"Plenty of work for Miss Harvey now!" said David, as they came in sight of the lamp-lit window of the Harveys' cottage. "This new discovery will come before the world first in her designs. Eh, how lovely it would have made some of those that have been carried out on the old principle!"

"Millicent Harvey has fancied we have not been very successful lately, I think," Fergus observed. "I believe her family mistrust us."

"Well, it is only likely they should be anxious," said David; "for you see we withdrew her from regular work for your old firm—got her to leave a certainty for a hope."

"A fine certainty, truly!" Fergus answered. "They will see now that it was well worth her doing so."

"I know the old firm did not appreciate her," David went on, "or they would not have restricted her to the most ordinary class of designs, as you say they did. Didn't I always say so? But what did Mr. Smith think when he found she was capable of those illustrations to the Leech Gatherer?"

"He never knew she did them," said Fergus. "He offered only five guineas in the first instance, and I afterwards got it raised to ten. But I should never have done that if I had not kept the artist a mystery. Why, most likely, if old Smith had known she was somebody who was drawing more than a hundred a year from the firm, he would have thought she ought to let him have those pictures for nothing, or next to it, as a kind of bonus."

"When will Miss Harvey have occasion to come over to our place again?" David asked.

"Not for a week," said Fergus.

"Then might it not be kind, considering all circumstances, if we just dropped her a hint that we have had a great success, something far better than a gift of a thousand pounds?" asked David.

"Well,—yes," said Fergus; "it seems only right. And it might be wise in many ways. But it is rather awkward for us two fellows to go rushing in there at this hour. I daresay they are at supper."

"You can go,—not stay a minute,—and I'll wait for you," said David, releasing Fergus's arm.

Fergus did truly stay only a moment. For Milly herself opened the door, and he just spoke to her there, under the clematis.

"Miss Harvey, I just call to tell you that we have made a great hit. We are certain to prosper now. Nobody knows yet, but you. You have a right to know. I shall never forget your confidence, and now, good night, Miss Millicent."

And Millicent turned back into the house and sang this thanksgiving in her heart.

"God, I thank thee that thou dost reward the diligent and the energetic—that thou puttest the power to bless into hands that will bless. Prosper my friend still, let him find that the cup of success thou givest him is not only full, but runneth over. And oh, I thank thee, O Lord, that thou makest this strong silent heart of his, which cannot confide everywhere, to find pleasure in confiding in me. Make me worthy of it, O God."

Ah, well it is for us that God is a loving Father, who takes our very prayers and thanksgivings rather for what we mean them to be than for what they are, just as parents

smile on the trailing weeds that their ignorant little ones bring them for flowers!

Then Fergus rejoined David, and the two young men went on together to the cross roads, where they parted.

"Our fortune's made," Fergus Laurie announced to his mother and Robina. "We've hit on a discovery that I would not sell for five thousand pounds. You see what a good thing it is to have the faculty of selecting fit instruments. I chose David, and told him what it would be a fine thing to discover, and he has discovered it!"

"Couldn't you discover it yourself, without bringing any one else into it?" asked Mrs. Laurie, who wanted her share to be exactly all, and everybody else's nothing.

"It was not in my line," said Fergus curtly.

"But David could never have discovered it, if you had not told him of the want, Fergus," said Robina, "could he, now?"

"No," Fergus replied, more conciliatingly. "And now we must think what it will be right to do, under circumstances that are altering as ours are. We must take a larger house, and live in altogether different style. We shall have to keep two female servants, at least."

"I hope you'll mind what you are doing, Fergus," said his mother. "You might just make us comfortable in a small way, and let me always have a fire in my bedroom."

"Oh, he knows what he is about," observed Robina. "And other people know he does, too. Those Harveys would have had nothing to do with him, unless they were sure he would prosper."

"There isn't a truer-hearted woman in the world than Millicent Harvey," said Fergus, speaking stoutly from the depth of his better nature.

"When did you see her last?" asked his sister sharply.

"I—I just called in at their house to-night," answered poor Fergus.

"Oh yes, I see it all," said Robina, "I may have all the work of getting up your fine house, and then be turned out to make room for certain other people."

"Well, at any rate, you will have had a better living in the meantime than you could have got for yourself," replied Fergus coolly.

"Oh yes, I know that it is only by toleration that an inferior creature like me is allowed to occupy a place in the same world with Miss Millicent," sneered Robina.

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself," said her brother, thinking to himself that he

must keep up his dignity, and yet conciliate her at the same time. It would be so awkward to quarrel just now. "I answer you according to your folly, but you are talking what you do not understand. What reason have you to think that Millicent Harvey or any other woman has any influence on me? As for your working in my interests, and then being turned off,—you are my sister, and you can surely trust my honour to give you provision befitting my position, and the duties you may fulfil towards me."

"I am sure I love you too well to be bitter about anything that would be good for you, Fergus," said Robina, with melting reproach.

"As soon as my income is at all settled," Fergus went on, "I will fix you a handsome salary as my housekeeper, and another sum for household expenses, and then if ever we want to part it would be with perfect satisfaction, and no sense of injury on either side."

"I'd rather trust you entirely, brother," said Robina. "I would rather just ask you for whatever was needed for the house, and just let you give me what you choose for myself. I can't bear anything to make us seem independent strangers, Fergus."

"Well, so be it then," said he, "I own I like living and working together in perfect confidence rather than on strict business footings."

And so their squabble ended, and Fergus went to bed, and pondered over the prices of drawing-room suites, while Robina and Mrs. Laurie lay awake half the night, discussing dresses, the old lady saying that she did not wish to go into any extravagance, but she thought she might have a new satin dress, and could not make up her mind whether its colour should be sage green or maroon; while Robina stated that she should not care for much better dresses than she had already, only she should like them always fresh, and at least as much spent on their making and trimming as on their material.

When David reached home, he found that the unconscious Phœbe had set up his candles as usual, and arranged his writing-table. He felt weary and excited, and little inclined for his self-imposed task of copying, but he put the disinclination aside with the reflection—

"What I've done so long already, I can surely do a little longer. Besides, I should like to finish the work I have undertaken. And there are plenty of claims coming in

upon us, and nobody is the worse off for a little ready money. If I don't need it myself, I can give it away."

It was long past midnight ere he permitted himself to lay down his pen; and then in his evening prayer rose the meek thanksgiving—

"I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that some things which thou hidest from the wise and prudent thou revealest unto babes, choosing the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty, that no flesh should glory in thy presence. Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight."

CHAPTER XI.—TWO HOMES AND ONE HERO.

It was presently clear to everybody that a great change had come to the young firm of "Laurie and Co." Samples of the beautiful new tint, fully displayed in one of Milly Harvey's most tasteful designs, were circulated among the trade, and orders came streaming in—only too fast to be executed. A neighbouring firm, old established and wealthy, actually made advances which might have easily been converted into overtures of partnership; and David was inclined to listen, and to think it would be wise to accept. But Fergus Laurie would not hear of it, declaring that they could now get the use of plenty of money on terms that would not hamper their freedom of action. And Fergus seemed right; for he was certainly able to obtain large loans on comparatively small interest.

David was quite ready to understand that as far as the perfect adjustment of money matters was concerned, sudden success had been almost as perilous as failure. Fergus was the head of the firm, with all its privileges and responsibilities. Definite adjustment of finances was found to be simply impossible. And so, in the meantime, it was merely arranged that Fergus was to take what was required for all the varying expenses necessarily falling on the head of the firm, while David was to be guaranteed a minimum allowance, with such additions as the profits of each year would permit.

David had no difficulty in settling into a proper style of life, because that seemed to him the proper one, which gave him and those connected with him the most genuine comfort with the least toil and expense, and was so safe within even his moderate minimum, that every addition would be left a

wide, free margin for those true luxuries of life—the pleasures and duties not absolutely demanded by our circumstances.

He took a tiny house within a few paces of George Harvey's abode. Its miniature chambers were easily furnished by the cumbersome old articles which he had rescued from the sale at Blenheim House. Even Christian's large organ of veneration could scarcely understand how he held the wrecks of his so wretched past as precious salvage. Christian was his great stronghold in the days of his furnishing. David would come to her for advice, and then she and George would return with him to his cottage, and consult and plan "on the spot." She chose his parlour carpet and his bedroom curtains; she took counsel with Phœbe as to the best "range" to be put up in the kitchen; she knew of wonderful dainty ways which made beauty economical, and economy beautiful. Hatty Webber bade her send the sheeting and house linen round to her house, saying, that the Webbers' own "white sewing" was done up for years to come, and that the little stepdaughter Ellen needed something to learn needlework upon.

The two sisters-in-law had one day been making some helpful call upon the busy, important Phœbe, and while they were there David happened to come in, and took them out to the little back grass-plot, to consider whether there should be a tiny flower-bed in the centre, or only along the sides. David himself inclined to the former, and so did Christian and Hatty, too, "only," the latter remarked, "there was something in Millicent's idea, that it was a pity to have flowers where one could not gather them after a shower without crossing wet grass."

"Ah, so it is," said David; "we won't have one. And as for brightening my window view, I can easily put a flower-box on my sill instead."

Christian withheld her eyes from a glance, and so forgot to repress a sigh.

Phœbe watched the three from her kitchen window, and when the two visitors had gone, she herself went out to take "a look round."

David came back from the gate with a beaming face.

"They are the sort of friends to have, Phœbe," he said. "How different it makes things!"

"You're right there, Mr. David," the old servant replied; "only I could not help being a bit vexed that they're but outside the place after all. I'd have liked it well if it was the young lady that'll be missis someday that

was givin' an eye and a word about her home that is to be."

David's bright face grew a little grave—not sad. "You are the most of mistress that this house is likely to have, Phœbe," he said.

"Ay, I suppose you'll be always movin' from one house to another, each finer than the last, Mr. David."

"I don't think that's my way, Phœbe," said David; and then he turned, and walked into the parlour.

Everybody supposed that Fergus Laurie would also select another dwelling in the same lane. There were vacant some much larger houses than either George Harvey's or David Maxwell's homes,—old-fashioned, Georgian houses, with a sort of ready-made order in their prim internal arrangements, and with one room, at least, quite fit for the reception of a limited number of guests. People who supposed that Fergus Laurie's original "nothing" meant, at least, only "not much," and whose imagination set Mrs. Laurie's pension at more than double what it really was, concluded that the Lauries, being ambitious people, might possibly venture to take one of these residences, not as a family luxury, but as a business propriety.

Judge of the universal astonishment when it oozed out that Fergus had taken the lease of a substantial old family mansion standing in its own grounds, the wall of which came up to the vicarage-palings!

"I don't suppose it is true," said Mrs. Webber, as she reported the rumour during a visit to her mother.

"Yes it is," Millicent observed, raising her head from her drawing, with a slight flush on her face. "At least, he told me he thought of taking that house."

She did not look up as she spoke, or she would have seen that her sister and Miss Brook involuntarily glanced at each other.

"Well, great fortunes are raised by such hits as he has made," said Hatty, "but that house will be a great responsibility."

"He'd better walk before he flies," remarked Miss Brook. "That house will take a fortune to furnish."

"He won't furnish completely at once," said Millicent. "But there is so much more satisfaction in having a home where one can hope to settle permanently than one from which one is sure to wish to remove."

"He'd need to keep twenty fires burning in that great mansion, or else he'll have a doctor's bill as part of his regular family expenses," Miss Brook went on practically.

"One's house is the thing that most directly gives one status, and all the expenses belonging to a good house are small compared with any other kind of expense," Milly pleaded. "Look at the Lewsons with their carriages and horses; and look at the Benhams with their shooting-box. And Fergus Laurie is really in as good a position as they are."

"Only that the one family is in the second and the other in the third generation of successful business people," observed Mrs. Harvey. "I remember old Mr. Lewson myself, and his hair was white before he thought of leaving the little house by the warehouse, where the managers live now. And he himself never kept more of an establishment than two female servants, a middle-aged woman and a girl. That is the way the wealth accumulated through which his descendants enjoy their luxuries."

"Well, I think he would have done wiser to spend it himself in a more liberal way of life," Milly argued. "If the present Lewsons were not able to drive everything before them by their sheer force of *£ s. d.*, may be they would be more sensible women and more gentlemanly men. When a sensible man gets money in his hands, he had better spend it wisely and rightly than let it accumulate for he knows not who."

"You're right so far, Milly," her mother answered. "A wise liberality would keep down many an unwieldy fortune, and do in a natural way what charities do in an unnatural one."

Miss Brook grunted. "It's very well to say 'Don't hoard money' when you have it in your hands, but you might safely add, 'Don't spend it before it is there,'" she said.

"I am sure that Fergus Laurie wishes for position and influence only to do good," said Milly, disregarding the old lady. "And we, who owe so much to him, should be the last to criticize him unfavourably. See how much more he gives for my work than the old firm did."

"But then your work is so much better than it used to be," Hatty interpolated.

"And he gives me better than money, too," Milly went on enthusiastically. "The interest he takes in my work always quite inspirits me. It is so different to being left to plod on without a word, as I used to be. If you knew how he has made my daily work a daily pleasure, I think those who love me would only wish him God speed and all prosperity, instead of carping at him."

"I am sure we all wish him well most sincerely, Millicent," said her mother sooth-

ingly. "You see, Miss Brook and I are elderly women, and perhaps don't know it quite well enough, and are a little dumfounded to see such young people coming forward and taking the lead in life. I'm sure when I'm reading George's books, I often keep thinking they are written by some of the wise old professors and poets, whose works I used to read in my young days. It is hard to realise they are by my own boy, whom I taught to read. But those old writers were other people's boys, in their time. If my dear mother could come back to earth, I believe she would think I was a great deal too young to be wearing caps, and I don't believe she would have any particular confidence in my housekeeping! It's the way with old people, Milly. They don't feel old in themselves, dear, and that makes them think that everybody younger must be babies. I am sure I wish Mr. Laurie well, and so do we all."

Milly allowed herself to be pacified. She felt her friends' doubts very keenly, for this ample reason, that they had sprung up in her own mind, the moment Fergus had confided his intention, and though his arguments had cut them clear down, their roots remained, and gave an uneasy shooting in her mind, which she did not understand herself.

The great house was taken, and a few of its many rooms made habitable. The Lauries brought no old furniture with them. Even Mrs. Laurie's own bed-chamber was all spick and span new. The moment the old lady saw her mahogany wardrobe and marble-topped washstand, she parted without a sigh from her spindle-legged chairs and shaky tables, and from all the past associated with them. Of the three Lauries, it was actually Fergus himself who found it hardest to make himself quite at home in apartments, whose fashion and freshness made them look like an upholsterer's show-room. He would really have liked to keep some of the old things. But his mother and sister declared positively that the old parlour chairs would never do for rooms that were to be dining and drawing rooms, and that they would be out of harmony with the necessary new bedroom plenishing. So they went. The same plea availed to sacrifice everything. There was an old cradle in which had slept in life and death, a little baby-boy Laurie, for whom Fergus had felt the strange passionate tenderness which wilful reserved children often pour out on helpless infants. Even in his self-contained intellectual manhood, Fergus would pause to smile upon and pat a child

who had a look of little Jamie. It was a peculiarity of his nature that it would have been torture to him to acknowledge this clinging remembrance. The nearest words he could find, was to say coldly to his mother, pointing to the cot—

"I suppose you would like to keep that."

"What use is it?" she asked. "If you

ever have children, you'll want to give them a better bed than that."

"It won't fetch anything. People would almost want you to pay them for taking it away, mother," said Fergus.

"Well, then, let it be chopped up for fire-wood. Anything better than lumber standing about useless and gathering dirt."



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And so the first fire round which the Lauries sat in their new home at Acre Hall, was built with the old cradle!

They were a family who had never possessed many of those relics on which Fergus could secretly lay hold and stow away. What he could he did. They had an old framed print, and a black profile of somebody. These he thrust into his own portmanteau and carried off himself; the first he

put up over his bedroom mantel; the second he hid in his private drawers under his gloves and handkerchiefs. They had very few books, except what Fergus had bought himself, and these few were nothing very attractive, being controversial theology, old dictionaries, and antiquated ready-reckners. But those also he conveyed to his own room, and arranged on a bracket that he caused to be put up there.

This room of his was the smallest and barest in the house. It did not even command the lawn with its two or three fine old trees, but looked out on a strip of yard, bounded so narrowly that one standing at the window could almost touch the wall. When Fergus showed David through his new abode, this was the last room to which he led him. And when David saw the coarse druggot, the cane-chairs, and the poor, blue-checked bed, he reproached himself bitterly for sundry fears as to his friend's luxurious and extravagant tastes, which had been rising during the earlier part of his survey.

"You see what my own tastes are," Fergus remarked, as if reading David's thoughts. "I do not care for anything more than this. If I were an independent man, this is how I should live. All the rest is forced upon me by my position. It is nothing more than my stock in trade—one of the weapons with which I must carry on our warfare."

"Well, prosperity is certainly a trial as well as adversity," David answered. "It seems really hard if one must thus invest one's first success, when one would rather use it in providing solidly for the future."

"It is," said Fergus. "My peculiar post in the firm, as its ostensible head, compels me, for the benefit of everybody, to take the lion's share of the profits this year; yet I daresay by Christmas your own balance at the bank will be larger than my private one."

David did not for one instant dream that though Fergus told the truth when he said he had bought his lease, he did not tell the whole truth, namely, that he had paid for it with money raised by a mortgage upon it. David only knew that there was a great deal of business come into their firm. His place was in the laboratory, not the counting-house, and he knew too little of the practical part of the trade to be able to make any approximate estimate of the actual profit. In fact, David had not received a commercial education, and his simple faith in others exceeded his shrewdness. The accident which had put him in business connection with Fergus Laurie had so brightened and settled his life, that he never thought of stopping to gauge his exact rights. He often wondered what would have become of him if Fergus had not taken him into the firm, but he never thought what might have become of the firm, if he had not made his discovery!

There was also a sunny glamour bewitching his simplicity. He had not the least doubt that Acre Hall would one day be Millicent Harvey's home. Poor fellow, the only love-

dream that his new prosperity brought him was, that he might very likely make more money than would pay his self-imposed debt to his cousins, and provide for Phoebe, and then he would leave it as a legacy to the children of Fergus and Milly, perhaps to some bright-eyed Milly, the picture of her mother, who, maybe, out of old family friendship, would adopt him as "Uncle David." There are many such shadowy relationships in the airy castles of loving, lonely hearts like David Maxwell's. But such a dream of the future was certainly not calculated to make him very exact in his present monetary transactions with Fergus.

Millicent Harvey had set up a certain figure in her own ideal temple of supreme energy, patience, and self-sacrifice. It was a sufficiently grand and pure temple, the pity was that like the great heathen temples of antiquity and orientalism, the wrong name was on the altar! Perhaps, by some instinct similar to Christian's about love affairs, Millicent was aware of the neighbourhood of a hero, and only made a mistake by looking for him in the library of Acre Lodge, rather than in the tiny parlour of David's cottage! Half the mistakes in life come in just at that point.

Oh, giving the heart's love is often a "crooked place," and so is "getting on in life." And though God has promised that "He will go before us, and make our crooked places straight," He has not promised that we shall lose nothing in our stumbles, nor that his guidance will avail if we do not follow.

"Milly has my mother's face," said Mrs. Harvey to Miss Brook one day; "but she is like her father too. She has her will and keeps to it."

"Ay, she has so," responded Miss Brook. "May God bend her himself; for He upholds with one hand while He strikes with the other. If anything else breaks those strong wills, it breaks the soul's back with it."

The mother sighed.

CHAPTER XII.—RISING AND FALLING.

AND then time passed by, and months grew into years. More than one of the Harveys secretly wondered when Fergus Laurie meant to take Millicent out of her own family, and make her the mistress of Acre Hall. They had reason for their wonder. For there was many a merry-making at the Hall, and never one to which she was not invited. Apart, Fergus delighted to

stand by her utterances on subjects which she might be fairly supposed to know better than he, and made it his highest praise of others to trace a likeness in them to "Miss Millicent."

"Laurie and Co." had certainly made their way in the world. Their name stood among the highest of their trade. And in social style and expenditure, Fergus, with his sudden ascent from "nothing," managed to hold his own with the best. People shook their heads at first, and thought "he was pulling the reins too hard," but as the reins did not seem to break, most of the heads left off shaking, and their owners concluded that the aspiring young merchant was right after all, and was justified by his success. And then he was naturally expected to head every subscription list, and to organize every local movement or gaiety, and to exercise every species of hospitality. The man who goes into the way of temptation need not be surprised to find temptation there!

Fergus presently began to realise that he was standing on a mine. He had not over-estimated his success, but he had under-estimated its cost. The early profits, which should have been husbanded to meet the further demands for capital, were swallowed to satisfy his private creditors. Nor were the later profits as much larger as had been expected, because, in spite of the immense increase of business, the firm still continued too short of cash to buy in the cheapest markets, or to work in the thriftiest way.

Then, one fatal day, Fergus found that he was the possessor of a fortune as bewitching and beguiling as a pot of fairy gold. It was Credit.

He felt quite happy on the first evening after he had satisfied a creditor by a "bill." He found Milly taking tea with Robina at Acre Hall. And afterwards, when they chanced to be alone together for a few minutes before the candles were lit, and the soft early moonlight came stealing down through the elm-tree, and Milly said gently, "How lovely!" he was very near saying to her, that all beauty, and all success, would be nothing to him without her. He had been much harassed of late, and she looked so kind and good and sensible that he thought it would be a comfort to tell her about it, and what a rest it was to be out of it for a while. Only he somehow felt that Milly would be sure to say, however sympathizingly, that it was a pity he had taken so much expense upon himself, and would it not be better to retrench. And he felt he could not do that,

and therefore he must not tell Milly of his troubles. He must keep that to himself, even if he told her that he loved her. He would like to share his sorrows, but not with any one who would be so prompt to remove them by unpleasant ways. Besides, it would be kinder to Milly not to tell her. Why should one's "wife," (Fergus's heart leaped as he thought the word) be tormented with one's business anxieties?

And while he sat in silent cogitation Robina returned with a servant and the candles, and began talking about a poor tradesman in the neighbourhood, whose wife had given a large order at the draper's the day before he committed suicide through severe pecuniary distress.

"What a shock it must have given her!" Robina remarked. "People are beginning to blame her; but it is not likely that she knew anything about her husband's affairs. Sensible men do not talk to women about business."

"And show their sense by such a dreadful result as this!" exclaimed Milly. "I cannot understand a husband and wife standing on such a footing towards each other! If it is not the wife's fault, if she had been always attentive and sympathetic and obedient, I can scarcely see how she can forgive the sin her husband has committed against her."

"But it would often trouble a wife unnecessarily," Robina observed. "There are so many business bothers which eventually settle down without affecting private life in the least."

"I should like to be in all my husband's 'bothers,'" said Milly. "I almost think if he didn't tell me, I should still be able to find them out. Oh how dreadful it would be to be a wife, quite unconscious of things that many other people must know, quite innocently thinking she has a right to money to which they know she has none! Better and happier to live on bread and water, and wear one's old clothes year after year!"

"Everybody's not such a Spartan as you," Robina said; and so ended a conversation, not without its result, as nothing is in this world. For Fergus felt thankful that he had not "spoken" as yet, and resolved that he would not do it, until he was fairly clear of business difficulties, saying to himself that Milly was a noble woman, but rash and unbusinesslike, and apt to cut down where trimming would do. So that he must be content to wait for her, till he had settled his foundations too strongly to be overthrown by any of her brave, self-sacrificing impulses.

Poor Fergus! May we not pity him as we would a man who tried to build a pyramid from its apex?

Time passed by, and bills were met by bills, and though a few city men smiled cynically at the name of Laurie and Co., still local society, and society at large, found it quite easy to believe that Fergus Laurie's success had grown into wealth.

He had not repaid a loan of a few hundreds which Mr. Webber had advanced to him in the early days of the firm. Why need he? He gave good interest. He always spoke as if he gave such a very good interest that it must be really a help to such a man as Mr. Webber, in comparatively so small a way of business. Nobody ever thought of asking what security Mr. Webber had, or if any. In fact, Mr. Webber would never have made so rash a loan to anybody but a struggling young man who he thought had talents and wanted help. And Mr. Webber would have asked for the return of his money, but for one of those influences, which have more weight with all of us than we know. Hatty had been rather vexed at his lending it, had prophesied hard things, and, cruellest of all, had finally comforted herself by the thought, that its loss would not absolutely ruin them. Her husband had been glad when, with this conclusion, she let the matter drop, and he felt reluctant to bring it forward again. Whenever he thought of asking for it, he always fancied it might be a particularly inconvenient time, and as long as the interest came in regularly, surely Hatty must be convinced it was quite safe! These were poor arguments, and this was a weak course of action; but if you or I, dear reader, cannot recall similar conduct of our own, it is probably only because we do not "know ourselves."

Bills! bills! There was plenty of success still. Fergus was working in a system which made success more disastrous than failure is to other men, but he still looked for new successes, to retrieve the irretrievable.

There was one who often looked very grave in those years. That was David Maxwell. David had once imagined that he was to be some sort of partner, but it was without any soreness that he discovered he was to be but a paid official. He turned his mistake into a blessing.

"A regular salary is the best income for anybody who is not very business-like," he decided. "And though mine is too narrow to save much, I shall always be able to save all my bonuses."

For he always kept in mind those five unknown girls in Yarmouth, none of whom either died or married!

David still knew little or nothing of the finances of Laurie and Co. But he felt something was wrong. Year after year, his bonuses were either infinitesimal or nothing. Year after year, Fergus' private "necessary expenditure" increased. David would not have heeded the fact if he could have discovered a justifiable reason for it.

But it was a something changed in Fergus himself which pained his old friend so sadly. David began to question what had been his former thoughts about his friend's spiritual state. He concluded that he would never have declared that Fergus was a decided Christian, but that he had seemed one of those "not far from the kingdom of heaven." Now, a looser tone was creeping in. The Lauries were growing very slack in their church attendance, and Fergus was falling into that tone of thought which decides that because the "form" is not the "spirit," therefore the spirit is never in the form! Quite unaccountably to David, he had made some very unaccountable friends—worldly, light-living men, "who feared not God, neither regarded man," and though Fergus did not run immediately to their excess of riot, he tolerated and excused it in a way which made a strange discord with former days.

Perhaps this declension was not spiritually so great as it appeared to David. When Fergus had been a poor clerk, living in a needy household, an outward form of religion had been a social distinction, indeed in one way, almost the only one then at his command. Apparently devout and regular habits had won him the confidence of his old masters, the friendship of the Harveys, the notice of the vicarage. Alas, alas, godliness is so profitable even for this world, that its mere simulation is worth something!

Do not let it be understood that Fergus had been a voluntary and cold-blooded hypocrite in those former days. No. He had only been self-willed and ambitious, ready without question to take the nearest path to a desired end. When he had been in a class of life to which only religion can bring much refinement of mind and habit, he had been attracted to religion. When he could get something of these without it, its charms were gone. He could visit plenty of well-appointed houses now, and talk to plenty of intellectual people, and so he could afford to drop the vicarage, and did so, with a grace-

less pointedness, which had its true origin in a little pang of remorse.

For he satisfied himself that he was "obliged" to do it. The vicar had looked very gravely upon some of the visitors he had met at Acre Hall—the very men who awakened the doubts even of the charitable David Maxwell. Now, they were holding "bills" of Fergus's, and were being very "accommodating," and he said to himself that he "must not" offend them. The vicar ought to stick to him in spite of his backslidings, and if he did not, then so much the worse for the vicar's care of souls! He quite forgot that he would not allow the vicar to keep to him, unless he also kept a smiling silence which would have made him partaker in his sins.

Fergus Laurie developed "tastes," and so did Robina. Acre Hall was soon not only handsomely, but singularly furnished, so that everybody remarked it and remembered it. Robina's dress was a model for a duchess. To be sure she talked too much about it, especially about its quality and its style. She could never wear any but the best of everything—the best was the most economical.

"Yes, that is quite true," Hatty Webber said one day, rather bluntly. "Only some people cannot afford it, and some people do not make their first-class things look or wear so well as other people's poorer ones."

Millicent always preferred to keep Robina and Hatty apart. It did not require much finesse to do so. Milly herself did not always like Robina. But Robina, with all her aversion to women's taking interest in business, could make very uncomfortable remarks about Milly's designs, and often vaguely suggested that, of course, she would always like to stand her friend, and take her part with her brother.

Out of all the Harveys it was only Milly who ever went and came familiarly in Acre Hall. Hatty Webber and Miss Brook were never there at all. Mrs. Harvey called once or twice, and George and Christian went when they were formally invited. Fergus spoke very freely to Millicent about David Maxwell's family misfortunes, with tolerably broad suggestions of the shield and shelter that David had found in his friendship. But in all David's friendship with George and Christian, he was never so candid about other folk's business, or about his own where it mixed with other folk's. They never knew of the little capital he had brought to Fergus, and though they could not help knowing that his had been, as it were, the hand that made

the prosperous discovery, even they did not know how little any other head had been concerned therein.

When Milly returned from her visits to Acre Hall, she never said much about its splendid furnishing or entertainment. One does not speak about things which one wishes to veil, even from one's own soul. What she did tell was of Fergus's liberal payments, and of his active interest in his work-people,—the little *fêtes* he gave them, and the way in which he sent them to the seaside or elsewhere when they were sick.

"There's many can submit to their inferiors that won't to their superiors," was Miss Brook's grim comment. "He'd have turned round on Mr. Devon if he had spoken out to him. It's a kind of humility that pride is made of. It's like some women who obey their children instead of their husbands."

It remains an open question whether Milly would have married Fergus, had he asked her in those days. She certainly would not have married any one else. All of her heart which was open to her own knowledge was filled by him. But Milly was one of those women who keep some chambers of the heart which another hand must open before they themselves will enter.

Had he asked her to be his wife—had he even broadly shown her that he had hopes beyond those of a near and dear friend, very likely Milly would have paused and owned to herself that even some of the fairest points in his character might be but treacherous peat mosses, unfit to bear the heavy tread of daily life and companionship.

It was not a happy state to be in. The wall between love and friendship is not a fit standpoint for any one. On either side are happiness and content, but betwixt, neither.

David Maxwell could not understand what it meant. Fergus and Milly were still friends. Milly's praise was still on Fergus's lips. Milly still confided in Fergus. How was it that so much did not grow into a little more?

Once upon a time, David might have ventured to suggest his thoughts to Fergus. But not now. As those reckless, ungodly men had grown into familiarity, David had grown out.

And David almost asked himself, "Would it do Fergus good to marry Milly? Or would it do Milly harm to marry Fergus?"

And he thanked God that it was not in his hands, but thought that Milly was too good for anything to harm her.

Only he saw she was growing to look older than her years, and was generally grave and often weary.

SCRIPTURE VERSES.

BY ONE OF THE AUTHORS OF "POEMS WRITTEN FOR A CHILD."

I. THE WEDDING FEAST.

A KING prepared a marriage—
 A marriage for his son,
 And gave a very sumptuous feast,
 As kings have often done :
 He sent his invitations
 To noble and to dame ;
 But to this feast, from west or east,
 Or north or south, none came !

The king sent forth his servants
 To seek each tardy guest,
 And say the feast was all prepared,
 And of the very best.
 But though the servants found them,
 Their mission was no use,
 For every man had his own plan,
 And made his own excuse.

One said, " I pray excuse me ;
 I bought a piece of ground,
 And to inspect that ground to-day
 I am in duty bound."

Another said, " I've purchased
 A yoke of oxen new ;
 And I must see how we agree—
 Pray thee excuse me too."

Another stayed, contented,
 Within his quiet home,
 And said, " I'm married to a wife,
 Therefore I cannot come !"
 The king was very angry
 They disobeyed his will,
 And when he heard each spoken word
 He was more angry still.

Then said he to his servant,
 " A remedy remains :
 Go forth into the city streets,
 And to the narrow lanes ;
 Go forth and bring me quickly
 Each creature you can find—
 The lame, the poor, who much endure,
 The beggar, and the blind."

The servant did his bidding.
 In crowds the people come ;
 But still the table is not full ;
 Its wealth leaves room for some.
 " Go forth into the highways,
 And from the hedges win ;
 Or near or far, whoe'er they are,
 Compel them to come in !"

So spake the angry monarch,
 Determined there should rest

No place at the delightful feast
 For one invited guest,
 Many may be the summon'd ;
 The chosen are but few.
 Let us beware, with anxious care,
 Lest we are banished too !

For we have been invited
 By the great King's command,
 Baptismal drops upon our brow
 And Bibles in our hand.
 Dare we for earthly pleasure,
 Or earthly duty even,
 Refuse to grace the promised place
 God keeps for us in heaven ?

II. THE LOST SHEEP.

WHAT man of you having a hundred sheep,
 If he lost one, and one alone,
 Would he not dream of it in his sleep,
 And think of it as his very own ?

And would he not leave the ninety and nine,
 And climb the steepest and roughest
 ground ?
 And would he not cry, " Here's that sheep
 of mine !"
 With exceeding joy when that sheep was
 found ?

And would he not call his neighbours and
 friends,
 Call in a loud and cheery voice,
 " For all my toil I have sweet amends ;
 I have found my sheep—O my friends,
 rejoice !"

I tell you that mid the other bliss
 That is up above in the perfect heaven,
 There is a beautiful joy like this
 When a man repents and may be forgiven.

III. THE SILVER PIECE.

IF a woman a silver piece hath lost,
 She lights a light, and she looks for it ;
 And of all her treasure she prizes most
 That one little missing silver bit.

O silver coin, how beloved thou art !
 She calls it the one she cares for best ;
 And if she finds it, with happy heart,
 Her friends rejoice, and she takes her rest.

I tell you that through the heaven above
 A beautiful joy like that is sent—
 A joy made up of pity and love—
 For ev'ry sinner that doth repent !

THE FUTURE OF THE WORKING CLASSES.

IV.—THE GORDIAN KNOT—MASTERS AND MEN.

OF all the subordinate duties of the clergy, one of the most difficult and undesirable is to act as umpire between man and wife, or between parent and child (especially step-child), when their relations to each other have got into disorder. To give a sound judgment on the particular points of difference is usually easy enough; the "faults-on-both-sides" formula serves for most cases; but to heal the morbid temper, to clear the jaundiced eye, to dispel the suspicious habit, to gender that spirit of love and forbearance that will keep everything sweet for the future—here, truly, is the difficulty. We may hope that by-gones are to be by-gones; we may entreat the parents to remember the example they set to their children; we may call up the memory of happier days; we may even kneel with them before God, and beseech his grace and mercy, and we may get them to shake hands as if all were past and gone; yet if we were asked to forecast the future, and tell how matters were likely to go in the family, we should probably be greatly at a loss—unable to determine whether STORMY or SET FAIR was the point at which the domestic barometer would be most likely to stand.

We must own it is with a strong kindred feeling that we approach the question which is now convulsing the world of labour—the relation between masters and men. At the present moment, beyond all doubt, the mercury stands at STORMY, and tap the barometer as we may, it stubbornly refuses to rise. How is this question going to be practically settled? What are to be the future relations of capital and labour? What is to be the issue of unions and strikes? Are the workmen of the future to be as dependent on their employers as the workmen of the past? Are the employers of the future to be as dependent on their workmen as they say they are now? Is there any reasonable or practicable way of establishing a relation comfortable and satisfactory on both sides? These are the questions now before us; they are questions, we confess, with which we are loath to meddle, and to which we address ourselves only because they are quite unavoidable when the subject in hand is the future of the working classes.

It may throw some light on the future if, in the first place, we look a little at the past. Who is to blame for the present state of things? How is it that employer and em-

ployed have come to be so thoroughly at loggerheads? If we can find out the cause, it may help us to the cure; and if we can find a practicable cure, the difficulty and obscurity of the future may be thereby considerably lessened.

It is after very much thought and inquiry that, for our part, we have come to the conclusion that, *in the first instance*, employers are to blame for the present collision between masters and men. When, about half a century ago, the industry of this country got that remarkable impulse which came from the introduction of steam, a new class of lords might be said to have arisen, beyond the pale of the feudal system. Whole regiments of workers came to be employed together, many times more numerous than it was possible for their employer to know or care for individually, even if he were disposed to do so. These were bound to work for him to the full compass of their working ability; but instead of being cared for and protected by him, as the retainers of the barons under the feudal system, they simply received a weekly wage, and in all other respects had to shift for themselves. In short, the factory and workshop system was essentially the feudal system *without* its attractive and compensating features. The services of the men were hired by the master; the men were to work on day after day at the stipulated rate; but instead of being looked after in sickness or old age, as the theory at least of the feudal system implied, they were left to struggle through the one, and drag through the other as best they might; their employer bargained only for their labour; and when through whatever cause they had no labour to sell, he had nothing more to do with them than the Emperor of China or of Japan. If business should thrive, and great wealth should flow into his purse, he seldom thought of making them the better for his prosperity: "No," he reasoned, "if I had sustained heavy losses they would not have proposed that I should lessen their earnings, and when I have realised large profits they must not expect that I shall offer them an increase." As a general rule, men were treated as machines or animated tools, whose labour was to be bought on the principle on which machinery was bought; the cheaper it could be got so much the better, provided always that it was not too cheap to be efficient. As for the idea

that the "hands" were men and brothers who might get tired of working for a sum of money not enough to keep them far off the edge of pauperism—who might think it reasonable to share somewhat in the prosperity they created, and who might wish to have their humanity recognised, and to be encouraged to fulfil the higher purposes of life—every such idea was apt to be set down as nonsense, which it was a real service to the men to stamp out in the most summary way.

By-and-by the first symptoms of the social rebellion showed themselves in fitful efforts in the direction of strikes. It became apparent that if the feudal system could not live even with its paternal compensations, much less could it live without them. The mutterings of a volcano began to be heard, and it was plain that the forces gathering below ground were of no ordinary strength. Now was the time for employers to lay to heart the inherent defects of the system hitherto pursued, and encourage measures for a more satisfactory relation with the men. That golden opportunity the employers, as a body, not only failed to seize, but, like the counsellors of Rehoboam, they rather turned it against the men. When Lord Shaftesbury and others, in order to lighten the pressure of toil, introduced the Ten Hours' Bill, the employers, as a body, were keenly against it. Then, in some quarters, there prevailed the truck system, an arrangement hurtful to the workmen, but a source of profit to the employer, who of course resisted its abolition. When certain arrangements were made for the benefit of the working man,—provision, for example, in mining districts, for medical attendance or schooling,—it was alleged that they were sometimes so managed by the employer as to afford pickings and parings for himself. So late as 1871 the provisions of the Act of Parliament for the safety of miners were vigorously resisted in both Houses in the interest of the employers. It grieves us to say it, but taking the great employers as a whole, their spirit has been painfully selfish, and the country has good reason to complain of them as the original cause of the social anarchy, the fruits of which are now so disastrous and distressing.

The impression made on the men by the general resistance of employers to parliamentary and other measures for their relief and protection was very profound. It made them despair of friendly relations being established between them. It led them to contemplate resistance as the only effectual

means of securing any improvement in their condition. More than that, it hindered them from appreciating duly the efforts of individual employers to act a brotherly and Christian part towards their men. The revival of earnest religion and of Christian philanthropy, which has been so active during the last thirty years, has led many an employer over the country to think of his responsibilities, and to endeavour in his own sphere to remedy the evils affecting the system of labour. These efforts of individual employers have not been altogether in vain, but they have not succeeded to the degree that might have been expected. In "Heads and Hands in the World of Labour," I collected, in 1865, many interesting samples of kind Christian effort by employers in various industries for the benefit of their men; but it is impossible to resist the conclusion that many such employers have been quite discouraged, and that others have been prevented from trying anything of the kind. The impression of the selfishness of the employers has dominated among the men; and the exceptions to this spirit, interesting and beautiful though they have been, have not been enough to change the current, or to modify the attitude which the men have assumed.

If employers fifty years ago had opened their eyes to facts that are now forcing themselves on their minds, and had showed the kindly spirit of which there have been many examples more recently, the wild turmoil of the present strife would probably have been avoided. But they lost their opportunity, and the natural consequences came. The forces of human nature cannot be permanently dammed up. It is natural for toiling men to desire a proportionate interest in the wealth which they help to create. It is natural for them, especially when they get political knowledge and political rights, to desire to be more than bread-making machines. The drudgery of constant toil pursued from morning to night, and meeting with no recompense that suffices to do more than keep the wolf a little way from the door, sours the mind while it exhausts the body. Supercilious treatment, as if a great favour were done to them by those who use their work and pay their wages, is an additional irritant. Men made in God's image crave some recognition of brotherhood, some encouragement to aim high and struggle hard, some impulse in the direction of the higher purposes of life. Had this been felt generally a generation ago, had the men been met frankly by their employers, had they

received an occasional bonus on their earnings in prosperous times, had some consideration been shown for the obvious drawbacks of their position, the peace might have been kept, and kindly relations sustained. We say so with some confidence, because we know of particular districts and industries where this policy was followed, and with good effect. We know of such districts both in England and Scotland, where strikes have been all but unknown. The employers entered into the feelings and circumstances of the men, and tried to make provision for wants and cravings which it was reasonable and Christian for them to consider. It is hardly possible to over-estimate the value of a little spontaneousness in such matters. If a similar course had been followed all over the country, the relations of capital and labour would not have been in the somewhat hopeless condition in which they are at the present hour.

But let us now turn to consider the course of the men. Believing that they would not obtain what they deemed fair and reasonable terms by the spontaneous action of their employers, they fell back on the principle of union, in order that they might have strength enough to obtain what they sought. At first the combination laws shut them out, though with a bitter sense of wrong, even from the attempt to unite. Of late years, however, they have been free to do so. And it is but fair to the workman to say, that his trades-unions have been a great educating power. They have stimulated his intellect, and in many ways made him much more of a man. And what ought always to be frankly acknowledged, they have taught him a great lesson,—how to make great sacrifices in the present in order to secure benefit in the future. We have the conviction that the public has never yet done justice to the moral grandeur exhibited in certain aspects of a workman's strike. The attention of those outside is so apt to be fixed on the uglier aspects of the proceeding that they overlook what is really great in it. But for a great body of the working mass to surrender present benefit in the hope of realising future advantage, and patiently endure indescribable privations, hour by hour, day by day, week by week, indicates a power of self-discipline which, under happier circumstances, may one day be a great means of moral elevation. No mere animal could do this. No savage or body of savages could attain to it. Whatever drawbacks may attend it, and however any may disapprove of the

immediate purpose for which it is done, it shows a great power of sacrifice, and among human forces the power of sacrifice is the one that is capable, under high direction, of achieving the greatest amount both of glory and of good.

But while we say this frankly, we must with equal frankness add that the working out of the policy of union has often, in our judgment, been most injurious. We will not go into the economical aspects of the subject; but, confining ourselves to the moral, we will specify three particulars to which we consider that this observation is specially applicable. In the first place, the tendency of this policy has been to bind up good masters and bad in one and the same bundle, and make war equally on both. We have no doubt that this has often been regretted, but still it is the tendency of the system. We have in our eye a branch of industry in which two employers have been conspicuous for their considerate and Christian treatment of their men. The union declares a strike, and in these establishments the same terms must be exacted, and the same result of refusal must follow. Some of the men leave weeping, and we believe the masters weep too. Strong men do not weep for the loss of sixpence a day; they weep for wounded affections, for heartstrings torn rudely up, for the best treasure of the heart rent from its embrace. This is an awful kind of violence, a dreadful thing to do in a world where such love is rare, and where the want of such love is the very cause of the evils sought to be remedied. In the second place, there is an irresistible temptation to interfere with the free action of men who do not concur in the policy of the union. That such men should be left free to follow their own course, should escape persecution in some shape, if that course be contrary to the interests of the rest—is all but impossible. Then, in the third place, there is a temptation to bring work to a stand-still at a time singularly inconvenient for the employer, and for his customers. If he be pressed for time to finish a contract—if a season approaches when he has many urgent orders—the moment is often chosen to declare a strike. This is a proceeding which can never meet with the approval of a Christian mind. The workmen may say, "Our employers desire nothing but to buy our labour as cheaply as possible, and we desire nothing but to make our bargain when they feel its value most. If at any moment we ask more than they care to give, they may simply let us alone." True;

but there is a prior rule binding on every Christian workman—"Do to others as you would be done by." There are undertakings we all enter upon in the confidence that old understandings will not be broken up at an hour's notice. Suppose that a steamer sailing to remote places has been accustomed to take in coal and water at a certain island-station, hundreds of miles remote from any other; suppose that, trusting to the old arrangement, the sailing-master has made himself absolutely dependent on the merchant there; but that one day the merchant refuses further supplies except on terms enormously higher than before,—he may be doing what is legal, but he is dealing shabbily with one who has become dependent on him by trusting him—he is not doing as he would be done by. It is no small offence to disappoint one who has become dependent on you because he has trusted you. It is a course very distasteful to an honourable mind. You pay a man a compliment when you become dependent on him by trusting him; and he who betrays such a trust is like a man who holds out his arms to a child on a high bank, encouraging it to leap into them, and when it has taken the leap, suddenly withdraws them, and leaves it sprawling on the ground.

We have tried to state fairly the cause of the present unhappy collision between employer and employed. It is quite probable that by what we have said we may incur the displeasure of both. But we are too much in earnest in the matter to be greatly moved by that, much though we should regret it. If there be truth in our *diagnosis*—our attempt to find the cause of the evil—we shall be the more likely to reach the remedy. One feature of the remedy is, indeed, suggested by the very statement of the causes that have bred the disease.

The disease has been caused by selfishness; the cure can come only from the opposite spirit. Let us suppose that by some unearthly power, the tone of the employers were to change. Going frankly to their men, let us suppose them to admit that it is reasonable for them to desire more leisure, less drudgery, a higher place in the social scale, the means of better living, the removal of what hurts their health or endangers their life, and generally, such arrangements as would help them to fulfil the higher purposes of their being. Let the confession be made, that as a rule employers have been too neglectful of the comfort and well-being of their men, have been lordly and not brotherly, have embittered the

feeling of inferiority instead of trying to smooth it down; and let this expression of a livelier interest in the welfare of the men be accompanied by substantial tokens of willingness to treat them more considerately in the future. This would be a right Christian course. And if only our supposition should become a reality, we cannot but believe that under God's blessing this course would ere long gain that reward which Christian love and Christian gentleness have so often gained amid the stormiest elements. We cannot believe that it would produce no better result than that which comes from the common method of storming against the proceedings of the men as intolerable, and swearing that they shall be brought to the masters' feet.

Let us suppose next, that the same unearthly power were to operate on the men. Under its influence, would there be no regrets to come from them? No expressions of sorrow for having wounded the hearts and hurt the interests of some masters who deserved better treatment—for having spoken bitterly and acted cruelly to old comrades that took a different course—for having rejoiced over the misfortune of the master when he could not finish his contract—for having stirred up in themselves and in others a fierce spirit of hatred and enmity? Is all this Christian and Christ-like? O working man, if some Nathan were to unfold his parable to you, and veiling all this under allegoric guise, were to ask your judgment on the doer of it, what would your answer be? And what would be your feeling when Nathan turned and said, "Thou art the man?" Would you not hasten, if it were possible, to blot out the memory of much of the past by your eagerness to realise a more Christian future?

We have supposed all this to be brought about by some unearthly power. We can easily fancy most scornful treatment of this supposition. "Why," we may be told, "you have only to suppose the same thing, and France and Germany will be hugging one another like bosom friends; the Pope will be calling Bismarck and Victor Emmanuel his dearest allies; the International will be holding a Wesleyan love-feast; Mr. Huxley will be conducting a prayer-meeting; in short, the wolf and the lamb will everywhere be dwelling together. It is only trifling with a pressing practical question to propose such a cure."

From those who treat the supposition of an unearthly power with contempt, we fear we must turn away. We must address ourselves to a smaller circle who still have faith in God

and in his word. Undoubtedly it is a Christian doctrine that there is an unearthly power, promised to those who seek it, capable of finally accomplishing all the results that have been adverted to. And all who know anything of Christian discipline, know well that even when the blessing sought seems most remote and unlikely, it is our privilege to be cherishing the hope of it, to be working towards it, to be praying and longing for its advent. If we do not get the whole, we may get an instalment. But one day faith is sure to get the whole. We read in the last of the prophets that one day a single messenger of God's is to do a work not unlike the work now needing to be done—he is to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to the fathers. Change two words, and have we not that which we crave? "He shall turn the hearts of the employers to the workmen, and the hearts of the workmen to the employers." Who shall say that there might not be raised up in these islands a great apostle of social Christianity, full of God's Spirit, who securing the ear and the confidence of both classes, might do much to restore love and confidence between them?

But even without such a prophet, if the whole Christian Church would take up this matter, some good thing might surely come out of it. If our fifty thousand pulpits should strike the true key-note, might they not do something to sweeten the relations of labour and capital? If fifty thousand congregations should unite in prayer for the descent of the spirit of love and confidence, would it not come? Yet how extremely seldom do we find any allusion made to the subject either in

church or chapel! Once only do we remember to have heard it made a special subject of prayer—at a religious conference where several landed men were present, and where in praying for better weather, it was suggested that it would be well to pray that tenants might be led to think kindly of their landlords, and landlords to think kindly of their tenants. The petition was excellent, so far as it went; but it seemed strange that it should have occurred to no one to suggest a prayer for a blessing on the much wider relation of masters and men, employers and employed, including farmers and labourers, so that the sin and misery which are so often connected with that relation now, might be turned into a corresponding measure of love and happiness.

But in settling the affairs of life, we are often compelled to come down to a lower platform than that of mutual Christian love. If we cannot get the south wind to blow, we must see what can be done under the influence of the north. In any case, many questions of detail would still arise between masters and men. Is there then no better way of adjusting the relations between capital and labour, so that the occasions of strife shall be removed, or at least greatly diminished? Undoubtedly, if there be, it is indispensable that it be applied. Several such remedies have been proposed:—conciliation courts, councils of arbitration, industrial partnerships, and schemes of co-operation. A lengthened discussion of these in the columns of this magazine would be out of place; we can but bestow a few passing words upon them. This, however, must be postponed to our next paper.

W. G. BLAIKIE.

A FAREWELL.

SWEET friends, why do you grieve that I am dying?

Such farewells should be made with smiles, not tears.
I go and bear no fears,
Into the unknown world before me lying.

For death is but a bridge from earth to heaven,
Linking two worlds, and heaven is most fair;
And we shall gather there
Glad harvests of repose after much sin forgiven.

Upon that bridge stand angels waiting for me,
With looks of love and smiles of welcome
sweet,
To guide my trembling feet
Into the presence of my Master's glory.

Oh! very radiantly the bright transition
Prophetic breaks upon my wondering mind,
Till all I leave behind
Is shadowed by the splendour of the vision!

Farewell, O friends beloved! A glad to-morrow
Treads close upon the footsteps of to-day;
Soon ye shall pass away,
Like me, into a world where friendship hath no sorrow.

M. BETHAM-EDWARDS.

OUR DISTRICT.

By A RIVER-SIDE VISITOR.

VIII.—AN EVENING WITH OLD BIBLE.

AMONG those who knew him Bible Braidy was familiarly spoken of as "Old Bible;" but in his case the familiarity of expression was the outcome of respect and affection, and I also soon fell into the habit of so speaking of him. To meet the old man once, was to desire his further acquaintance, to know him was to love him. After our first meeting, I availed myself of every opportunity that offered for talking with him, and I was gratified to find that, in addition to being a sincerely religious man, he was also highly intelligent and well read, and, though grave, was neither gloomy nor severe—had indeed a touch of humour in his composition. When we encountered each other it was by chance, and our conversation on such occasions was of a very general kind—not at all calculated to gratify my curiosity to know more of him. Having this curiosity, however, it will be readily understood that I at once accepted his invitation when, after some months, Old Bible one morning suggested that I should "give him a look in at his home some afternoon or evening."

Happening on the following day to run against Shiny Smith, it occurred to me that probably that volatile gentleman would be able to tell me something about Old Bible—something that would give me a hint as to the best line to take in order to "draw out" the old man. Having mentioned Braidy's invitation and my acceptance of it, I asked—

"What is Braidy?"

"A man, take him for all in all,
We shall not look upon his like again!"

exclaimed Shiny by way of answer.

"Aptly quoted," I said; "but not quite what I wanted."

"Of course not," replied Shiny, "don't think, I don't take. The bit of flowery came in pat, and so I gave it mouth. 'It is my nature to'—another bit of flowery. I know what you want. You don't want a *multum in parvo* definition of him; you want a few details—who he is, where he came from, what makes him live in such a neighbourhood, what he does for a living, and, in fact—to give another bit of flowery—'the story of his life from year to year.' That's about what you want; but giving you the information is up another street. The old man knows more about others than they do about

him; he's the oldest inhabitant. I don't suppose he has got anything to conceal; but he never talks about himself, at least, he never has to me. If any one knows his history hereabout it will be Larry H—, a talkative Irishman, who sets up as his friend and gossip; but who, it is my opinion, takes advantage of his simplicity to get trifles of money out of him, and that sort of thing, you know. All that I know about Braidy is, that he was in the Dockyard for many years, as a storekeeper or timekeeper, or something of that sort; that he has a small pension, and that with this and the interest from some savings he manages to rub along pretty comfortably. He always dresses as you see him, is plain in his eating, and neither drinks nor smokes. His only extravagance—if you can call it extravagance—is laying out a few shillings now and again in books. His idea of a day's pleasure is rummaging over second-hand book-stalls, and coming home at night with a volume tucked under his arm. He has got a very tidy collection, and mighty proud he is of them; in fact, they are his pets."

This was all that I knew of Old Bible's private life when I set out to pay my promised visit to him. He occupied a couple of rooms over a "general" shop, which was so situated that I had to traverse nearly the whole length of Barker's Buildings to reach it. In making this passage I found Braidy's name was a safeguard and passport. The sight of an outsider was a novelty in the Buildings, and from doors and windows I was furtively but closely scanned by fearsome-looking customers, who were evidently making mental calculation as to the probable value of my clothing, and speculating on the chances of my carrying a watch or purse. But with recognition danger passed, and I could hear such whispers as, "Oh, I know him, he'll be going to Braidy's," "A bit of a pal of Old Bible's," "Don't you remember he was down here with the old man on the day Fly Palmer was 'corpsed?'"

Picking my way along the dirty footpath, and among the equally dirty children who were playing about on it, I at length came to Old Bible's abode. Hearing my voice in the shop, he hurried down-stairs, and, with a face glowing with satisfaction, ushered me

up to the apartment which served him as sitting and living room. It was plainly but comfortably furnished, and the whole of one side of it was fitted up with well-filled bookshelves, the volumes being such that, independent of what I had been told by Shiny Smith, I should at once have guessed to be gatherings from the second-hand stalls.

"Here you are then, sir," said Braidy, taking my hat from my hand, and placing a chair for me. "Be seated. I'm delighted to see you under my roof-tree. I have been looking forward to your visit; for, I can assure you, it is quite an event for me to have an educated man to talk to. It's a thing I often long for, the want I feel most; for my nature is social, and I feel as if I could give anything to have some one of understanding mind to converse with. But great are circumstances, and they will prevail; as Cowper says—

"Where penury is felt, the thought is chained,
And sweet colloquial pleasures are but few."

So far as the gratification of my wish is concerned, I might almost as well be a Robinson Crusoe; placed here, I am alone in a crowd."

"But you are not bound to be placed here?" I said questioningly.

"Oh no, I'm a free agent in the matter," he answered, smiling and resuming his ordinarily quiet tone and composed manner. "I could if I liked live anywhere where a man with a guinea a-week might live honestly. But I lived in the Buildings here when they were inhabited by a very different class from those who occupy them at present. When they first became what they are now, I stayed on from force of habit, and later I remained from a sense of duty; because I felt a call to do so. And, after all, I believe I have been happier here than I would have been elsewhere, and I am certain I have done more good than I could have done in a better place. I do sometimes feel the want of companionship, and yet it is wrong of me to complain; for it has been given to me—and it is a great gift to a poor, childless, kinless old man—to be able to find companions in these." And as he spoke he walked to his books, and placed his hand upon them. "There they are to be taken up or put down at will, the best of all good company. There—" pointing to one shelf—"are the sermons of great divines; there—" pointing to another—"the lives of great and good men; and here—" he concluded, again laying his hand carelessly upon the shelf, upon which was arranged copies of

the works of most of our great poets from Spenser downwards—"are the veritable

'great of old,
The dead but sceptred sovereigns who still rule
Our spirits from their urns.'

"Well, it is a pleasant thing to be able to make friends of books," I said, feeling called upon to make some remark.

"It is," Braidy assented; "and yet there are times when you tire of them alone; when you long for the sight of a human face, the sound of a human voice; when you want to disburden your mind as well as to fill it; when you would be glad even to be contradicted. However, if I keep on in this strain you'll be setting me down as an old grumbler. But it is only the novelty of your visit that has set my tongue running on that theme, and after all I am not quite companionless, I have one friend that often drops in to have a crack."

"Larry H——," I said, making use of what Shiny Smith had told me, in order to give Braidy a little surprise.

"Do you know Larry H——?"

I explained that I didn't know him, but that I had heard of him, and, from what I had heard, thought there was no danger of conversation flagging where he was.

I am afraid there was a sneer in the tone in which I spoke. At any rate Old Bible caught what was intended to be the covert meaning of my words.

"Well, we all have our failings," he said, smiling, "and it is no libel on Larry to say that he has a flux of words, and loves to hear the sound of his own voice; but then he has ideas and knowledge as well; and you should bear in mind that I must judge him by comparison. When I compare him with the bulk of my neighbours, I can paraphrase the poet's line and say, 'Better a year of Larry than a cycle of the rest.' There are great doings in the way of talk when we get together. Larry is a strong politician; and we settle the affairs of the nation, argue as to the relative merits of our favourite authors, and discuss whatever general topics may turn up; and, if we do no good to others by our talk, we certainly do no harm, while it pleases us, and, I hope, improves us a little. I enter into these details, because otherwise Larry's ways might seem strange, and the fact is I have asked him to drop in after tea,—speaking of that, I must see about getting tea ready; you must know that I 'do' for myself."

I murmured something about not wishing to put him to expense or trouble.

"It's no trouble, sir," he answered

promptly, "and a plain cup of tea, and a slice of bread and butter once in a way, can scarcely be considered an expense. I look upon the hospitality of a first visit as incomplete unless my guest takes bite or sup with me."

I made no further objection, and in a short time Old Bible, who had everything handy in a neatly-arranged cupboard, had tea upon the table. We lingered over the meal, more intent on conversation than eating or drinking. We had been speaking of the death of parents being so frequently the cause of children drifting into the criminal classes, when the old man with marked earnestness exclaimed—

"I can speak feelingly there, for I have much to be thankful for in that relation. I was left an orphan at so early an age that I have but the faintest recollection of my parents—so faint, in fact, that I can scarcely tell whether it is recollection or only imagination. My father, a common sailor, was lost at sea when I was about five years of age, and my mother, a loving but weakly woman—as I knew afterwards—died a year later, beaten in the struggle. Her death is the earliest event my impression of which I can be sure is a recollection, and not a mere self-formed mind-picture. I can remember being lifted up to look at her as she lay dead, and crying when I found that she did not speak to me; and the neighbours coming in and out the house, and taking unusual notice of me. The parish buried my mother, but fortunately, as it turned out, they objected to take charge of me. There was some technicality that they said relieved them from the obligation to do so. Portsmouth—for it was there these things happened—was not my mother's settlement, or something of that sort. They found some old letters in her room, giving the address of a sister in London, and to this sister they wrote with a view to obtaining some information as to the settlement; but she settled the matter out of hand by writing to say that if they would send me to her, she would keep me, and they did send me, packing me off by coach under charge of the guard, who, I remember, was very kind to me.

"So I came under the care of my aunt Martha, and I can truly say that from the moment when she took me in her arms as the guard lowered me from the coach, till the hour of her death, I was never allowed to feel the want of parents. She was all to me that the best of parents could have been, and I loved her as a parent. The proudest thought of my life is that I was able in part to repay her in kind. She kept me when I was a helpless child, educated me and made a man of me,

and her kindness was so far blessed in this life, that when years and infirmities had made her helpless, I was in a position to support her in comfort; and, when at a good old age she sank to her last rest, it was in my arms, and with my parting kiss on her lips, that in life had never spoke ought to me save words of kindness and good counsel."

He spoke with evident feeling, but still in a quiet, even, and indeed rather musing tone, and on his coming to a pause at this point, I merely asked, by way of saying something to lead him to go on with his story—

"Was she a single woman?"

"Yes," he answered; "what she herself would have called a lone woman, dependent upon her own exertions. She lived in this very street which, at the time I speak of, was quite a new one, and inhabited almost exclusively by artizans engaged in a neighbouring Government establishment. She took in the washing of a number of the unmarried men among them, and the washing of their black greasy working clothes was no light task. She was slaving at the wash-tub from morning to night; but she never grumbled, and when work was over and the place 'tidied up a bit,' she would take her seat by the fireside, and with her knitting in her hand, and her old large-print Bible—the one book she read—open before her, would be as happy as any lady in the land. She was an ignorant, ungainly, hard-featured woman, and to a stranger her manner might have appeared austere, and even crabbed; but she was at bottom as kind-hearted a creature as ever breathed; and a true Christian. It was she—poor, ignorant, and uneducated as she was—who, while I was yet a child, implanted in me a reverence and love for the Bible, and both by precept and example led me to aim at living a Christian life. Before I could read she used to read the Bible to me, and explain it in her simple way; and when I was better educated she used to call upon me to read her a chapter every evening. I have often fancied that we would not have made a bad picture as we sat there on either side the fireplace; she busy with her knitting, her eyes fixed on me, with a look of listening attention on her homely countenance, and I, a little fellow of ten, perched up at the table, with my head bent over the book or with my finger marking my place, looking up at her as she asked a question or made some remark as it was her practice to do each time that she snuffed the candle—the snuffing being her duty at these evening readings.

"She was a regular chapel-goer too—I

mention it because it is connected with something that is to follow, and I can see us now in my mind's eye as we used to troop out of a Sunday morning dressed in our best. She had a little pew of her own that just held us two. 'Not, Jim,' as she once explained to me, 'as I'm above the free seats; but the minister has to depend a good deal upon the lettings, and even a preacher of the Word has to think about making ends meet as well as other people, and if he has to think too much of that he can't think enough of other matters, which is a bad thing for his congregation as well as himself. For that reason it's your duty to pay for your seat if you can manage it at all; that's live and let live, as the saying is, don't you see?' And I answered that I did see, though I'm afraid I was not very clear upon the point at the time. Her chapel-going was no mere form. With her hymn-book before her, and her heavy tortoiseshell-rimmed spectacles on her nose, she lifted up her voice boldly in the singing; her Amens were loud and fervent; and, though she was ignorant and had certainly not the gift of tongues, her voice was sometimes to be heard at the evening prayer-meetings. Her one idea of pleasure was a chapel tea-party, and though necessarily a small, she was always a cheerful giver to the collections that were frequently made. In short, though only a poor illiterate washerwoman, 'Sister Simpson' was somewhat of a personage among the congregation to which she belonged.

"There was a school in connection with the chapel, and there, by the time I was thirteen, I picked up the rudiments of a good plain education. Through the influence of a foreman, for whom my aunt washed, I was then taken as office-boy into the Stores' Department in a Government establishment. I suppose I gave satisfaction, for by the time I was sixteen my wages were sufficient to keep me respectably, and on my twenty-first birthday I was in a position to say that my aunt should slave at the wash-tub no longer, but simply manage the household. In the meantime I had joined a Mechanics' Institution, and read a good deal; I belonged to a Debating Society, in which friends said I was by no means the worst speaker, and—a thing of which my aunt was prouder than all the rest—I was actively engaged as a Sunday-school teacher at her chapel. Among the teachers was an exceedingly pretty girl, the daughter of a moderately well-to-do tradesman. I was not the only one that fell in love with her, but I proved to be the favoured suitor, and after a time we became regularly

engaged. I was received at her father's house as her accepted lover, and I took her to my aunt's as my wife that was to be. On the very first occasion I saw that she did not like my aunt, but took a dislike to her. From words and hints dropped at various times, I found that she considered her old-fashioned and vulgar, and was inclined to be ashamed of her. At first I tried to reason her out of this prejudice, but finding that this only made matters worse, I avoided the subject.

"At length, however, when we came to speak definitely of being married she brought the point to a crisis. After a good deal of argument, and beating about the bush, she spoke out most unmistakably. She wouldn't, she said, live under the same roof with that horrid old woman, and so I must choose between my aunt and her. Well, I loved her very dearly, but not less dearly in another way did I love the woman who had been a mother to me. Without hesitation, without a quiver of the lip or a shade of either anger or reproach in my voice, I spoke the words that were to part us for ever. 'So be it then,' I said, 'I do choose, and I choose to stand by the woman who from infancy has stood by me; a woman to honour, not to be ashamed of, and who, homely as she is, is at heart as noble a woman as any breathing.'

"I meant what I said, and I knew even while I was speaking them that the words would make me a lonely man, I did not then regret what I had done, or at any other time wish it undone. I never let my aunt know *why* the affair was broken off—the knowledge would have made her uncomfortable."

This portion of Old Bible's life history, though containing nothing specially striking, I had listened to with a considerable feeling of interest. Still it was not exactly the sort of thing I had expected to hear, or that I was most wishful to learn something about, and so, after a brief pause, I asked—

"How did the Buildings here come to fall into their present condition?"

"The explanation is very simple," he answered. "The work in which the bulk of those living in the Buildings in its respectable days were engaged was stopped. Hundreds of men were thrown out of employment, and there being no work of the same kind to be got anywhere near, they had to go elsewhere. Nearly every house in the Buildings was left empty, and they remained empty so long that at last the landlord was fain to lower the rents and take whatever tenants offered. The first of the new-comers were very poor, the sort of people who live a family in a room

and have a lot of ragged, dirty children, who run about the street regardless of whom they annoy or what mischief they get into. But after a while there came into one of the houses a couple of families, who, though calling themselves costermongers, were really thieves of the type known as farmyard poachers. They had a fast-trotting pony—which they stabled in the kitchen—and a light trap, with which they used to go out on night expeditions to plunder market gardens and farmyards. So much was well enough known, but they conducted their operations so cleverly that though the police came after them several times, they could never succeed in substantiating a charge against them. Getting their stock in this way, they made a goodish bit of money, the greater part of which they spent in drink, and being quarrelsome and riotous they soon made things so 'hot' for their neighbours that the more peaceably disposed among them were driven away. They were replaced by a worse class of tenants, who, in their turn, drove away the decenter sort, and so matters went from bad to worse, till the place became what it is—a refuge for criminal men and lost women, the terror and disgrace of the district."

Again, what Old Bible had said had been interesting enough in itself, but it had not explained the point about which I was chiefly curious, namely, *why* Braidy himself should be living in such a spot, and, with a view to leading him to that subject, I observed—

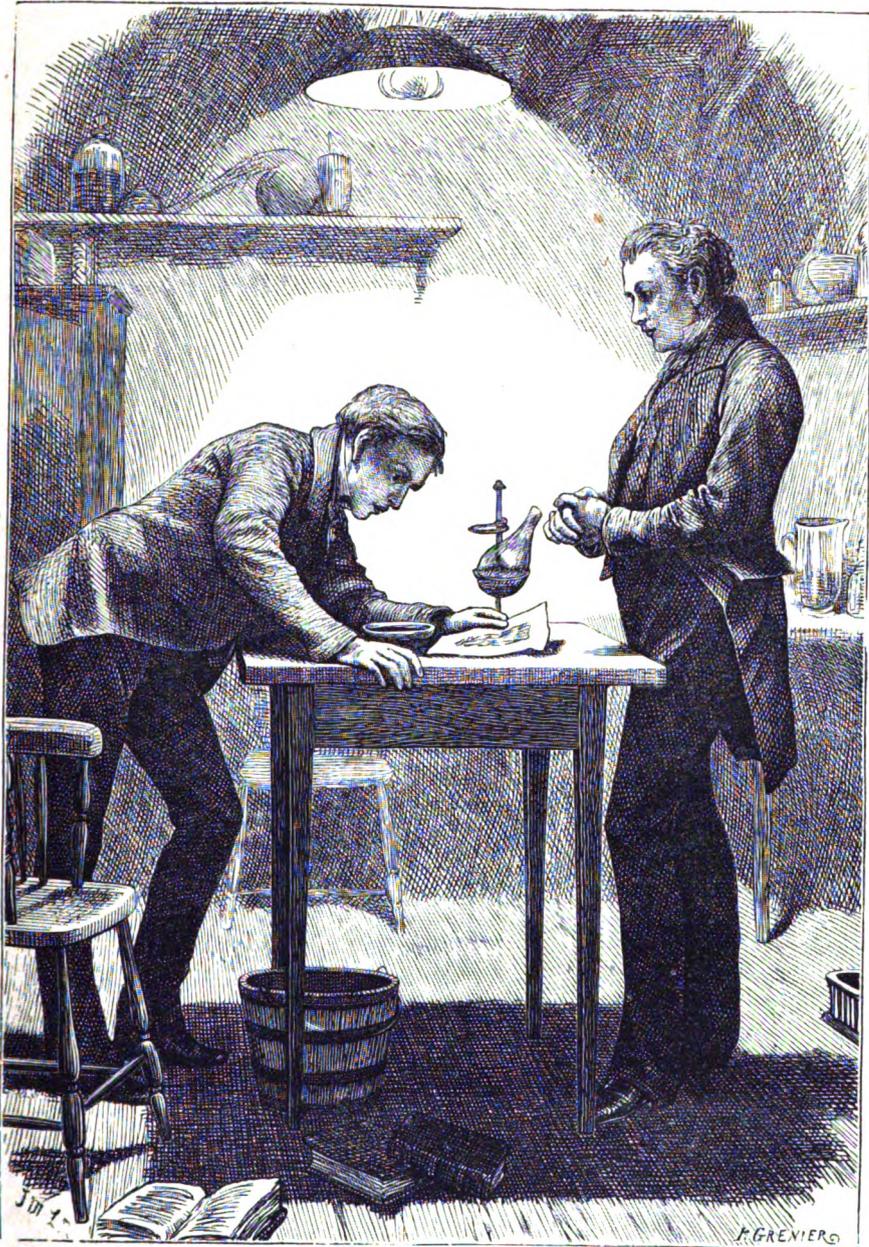
"Well, it appears you held your ground against all comers."

"I did," he said, smiling with a good-humoured knowingness of expression, "and now I'll tell you how that came about. It was through a feeling made up of indolence of disposition, force of habit, and aversion to 'bother,' and afterwards it was through my feeling called upon to stay, and providentially, as I think, the last-named feeling became operative just at the time when things had reached such a pass as to have conquered the first feeling. When, like others in the street, I was thrown out of employment by the closing of the establishment in which I had been engaged I was a middle-aged man, and was at the time just recovering from the accident that caused my lameness. I was alone in the world, and was of the type that really thinks 'man wants but little here below.' I was entitled to a small pension, had saved a few hundred pounds, and was, by means of clubs, provided for the rainy day of sickness. So, as I had no other situation in view, was troubled with no ambition, and had no greater idea of pleasure than

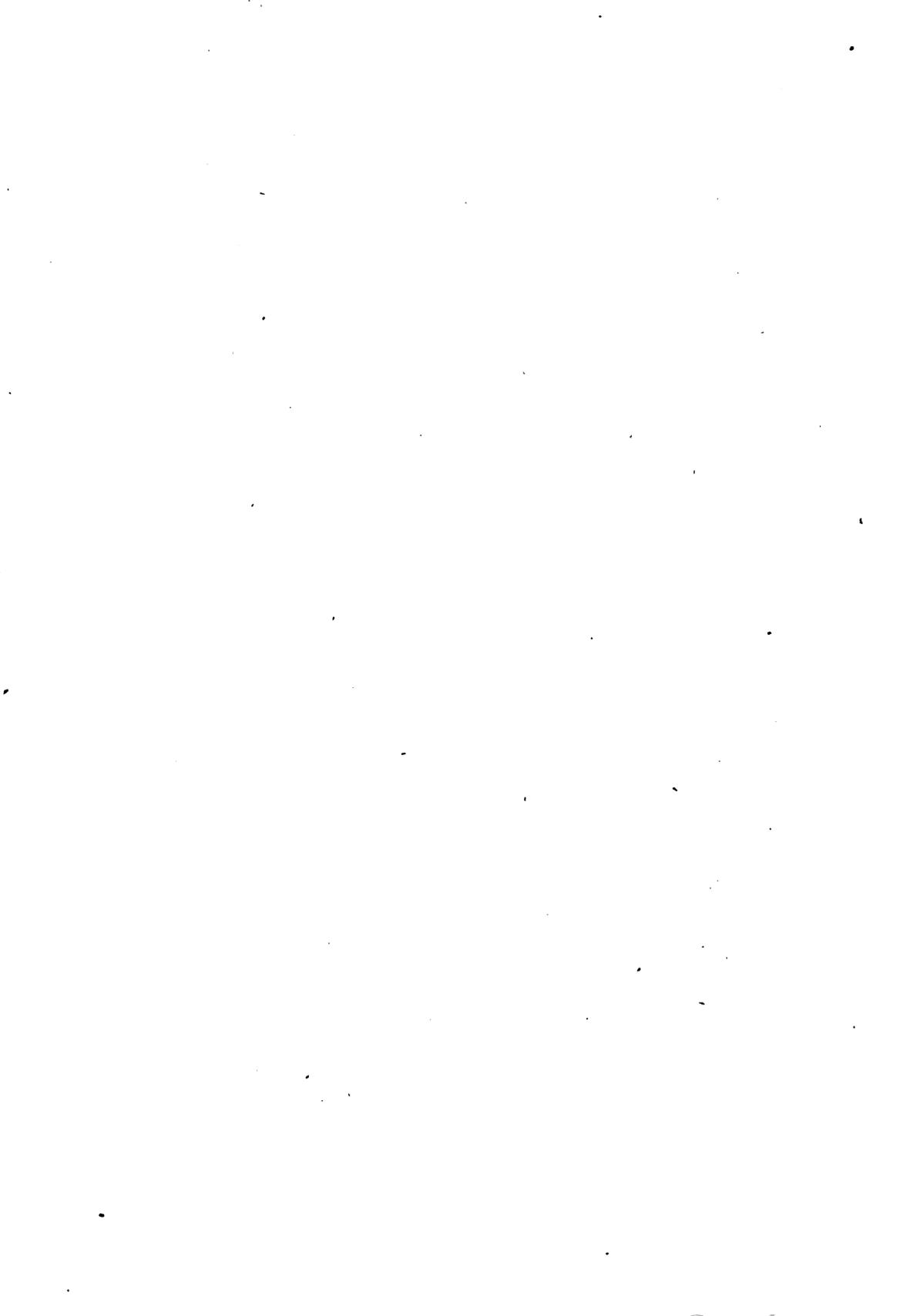
being allowed to potter about at will, I made up my mind that I would lie by for a bit. I took to going in the mornings to the reading-room of the Mechanics' Institution, at first for the purpose of looking over the advertisements of 'Situations Vacant,' but soon I got acquainted with a set of old fellows who, despite the institution rule of silence discussed as well as read the news of the day, and by-and-by I became one of them. In the afternoon I would go for a walk, or sit down with a book according as the mood took me, and in the evening I would either read on or go out to some lecture or meeting connected with the institution, or to my chapel. Finding this style of life very pleasant, and a situation very difficult to get, and being, according to my plain notions, secure against want, I gradually gave up the idea of going to work again. Meanwhile, the Buildings had been so degenerating that they were no longer a suitable place of residence for a honest, peace-loving person who had the means of living elsewhere, and I was constantly saying that I would get away. But I had been there many years, I was used to my landlady—one of the few respectable inhabitants who had remained—and she to me; I had my books and everything comfortably around me, and I disliked the idea of going into a new household unused to my ways, which I know some people would have considered eccentric, and what was of more immediate consequence, troublesome, for your ordinary landlady will tell you that above all things she detests a man pottering about the house in the day-time.

"So it came about that while I was constantly saying I really must clear out, I delayed taking action. At last, however, the drunkenness and ruffianism, the night rioting, woman-beating, shoutings of murder, smashings of windows, and so forth, became so rampant, that I screwed my courage to the moving point. I was devoting my afternoon walks to a search for fresh lodgings, and had already partly decided upon a place, when the event occurred that led to my changing my mind and coming to the conclusion that I was called upon to stay in the Buildings.

"One winter's night, or rather morning, for it was in the small hours, I was awoken by a sharp but cautious knocking at the street door. I lay still a while to hear whether my landlady would answer, and finding that she didn't, I got out of bed and opened my window. It was very dark, and I could just make out the figure of a man standing below. He had heard the window open, and in a gruff undertone said—



"CROOKED PLACES."



"I want to speak to Mr. Braidy."

"You are speaking to Mr. Braidy," I answered, and before I could ask what he wanted with me, he put in—

"I'm in luck so far, I thought it was the old woman."

"As he spoke he turned on a dark lantern, and by its light I recognised one of the greatest ruffians in the Buildings, a fellow known as Gipsy Johnson, the leader of a gang who went about at nights stripping roofs of lead, and untenanted houses or unfinished buildings of brass, or other metal fixtures.

"My first feeling on seeing him was one of alarm, and I daresay my face showed it, for he said in a tone meant to be reassuring—

"I begs yer pardon for knockin' of yer out, guv'nor; but it's a case of needs must, as yer may say, and there's no harm meant to you; honour bright on *that!*"

"Well, but what do you want with me?" I asked.

"He seemed to consider for a moment, and then in the tone of a man who had come to a decision with himself, answered—

"Well, the shortest way will be to tell the



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truth; and so here goes, for time's precious. Our lot was doing a strip in a empty house, and just as we were a packin' the swag we was fluttered by a blue, and in making a bolt Caroty Blake tumbled smash out of a second-floor window. We picked him up alive, and we've managed to carry him home, but he's booked for kingdom-come as certain as if it had killed him on the spot, and knowin' as he's done for, pore chap, he's a takin' on badly, which perhaps any of the rest of us would do the same. He's a cryin' out for a parson, but none on us know'd where one lived, and

agen we could a ferreted one out and a persuaded him to trust hisself down here it would be all over, for it don't want no doctor to see as he'll be a dead man within the hour. It comed into my head though as how you was a square party and a go-to-meetinger, which I'd seen you myself stumpin' off with yer books under yer arm. So says I to him, 'I don't see my way for to gettin' a regular parson, but there's Braidy as lives in the street here, he's a proper religious chap according to all accounts, and after all a parson couldn't be much more. I'll knock him up if you like.'

'Do, for God's sake!' he says, 'don't let me die here with no one better than myself to say a word to me.' So here I am to ask you to go in to him; and look here, meanin' no offence, if yer religion is worth anything you'll go, for beside the way he's takin' on in his mind, there is only a old woman with him. We've sent for a doctor, but he ain't come yet, and as what's happened to Carroty will blow the gaff on us, we must step it; the others have gone, and now, as I've done what I promised, I'm off.'

"I'm telling you all this calmly," Braidy went on, "but it passed much more quickly between Gipsy Johnson and me. I was dressing before he had finished speaking, and in a very few minutes after he had gone I was with the dying man. He lay moaning on a bed which nearly filled the little room, while leaning over him with one hand on the bed, and the other holding aloft a spluttering tallow candle stuck in a bottle, was the old woman spoken of by Gipsy. With the hand on the bed forming, so to speak, a pivot, she was swaying slowly to and fro, evidently muddled with drink and fright. On hearing me enter she managed to straighten and steady herself, and in a tone of relief exclaimed—

"'Oh, dear, I'm so glad you've come, I can't make him out a bit, I do believe he's a going off he's 'ead, and in course I couldn't manage him myself; they say—'

"'Who has come?' he asked suddenly, but speaking in a faint tone and without opening his eyes.

"'Why, you know,' she answered; 'the square seller as Gipsy went arter.'

"He opened his eyes on hearing this, and murmuring, 'You are very kind,' motioned me to the bedside, and obeying him, I could see by the dim light of the candle—no, I was in such matters at that time—that he was indeed nigh unto death. I needn't go into the details of what passed. There was the usual terror and hopelessness, the usual questions—was there, could there be any chance for the like of him? what should he do? would I pray for him? would I teach him how to pray? would I read him something out of the Bible? and so forth. His was a very common story in another respect too, namely, that it was 'the drink' that had brought him to crime. He was utterly ignorant as regarded education, but he must have had a fair share of natural understanding, and power of observation, and I always remember what he said on this point of the drink. 'There's plenty,' he said, 'as'll tell you they was fust druv to steal through hunger, and very likely many

on 'em was in want when they laid hands on what wasn't their own, but if you on'y knew all you'd find that drink had in one way or another done the biggest share in bringing on the want with most of 'em. If it hadn't been for drink I might 'a lived and died a 'onest labourin' man as my father did before me. I was a honest working chap till I took to drinking, and then it was all up with me. I drank myself out of work and out of character, and then of course I got hard up, and I actually was in want when I did my fust bit o' thieving, but I was in drink at the very time I did it, and spent most of what I got by the job in drink. I've heard talk of the devil fishing for souls; if he does you may take my sinful word for it drink is his favourite bait."

"Coming from such a man and under such circumstances, those were expressions to be remembered," I said.

Braidy nodded assent, and then went on: "I spoke to him," he said, "in such a manner as it was given me to do, and when about three-quarters of an hour after my arrival had passed away, he was calmer and seemed more hopeful than he had been when I came. I trust that his late repentance was acceptable. I went back to my own bed full of thought. The general conclusion to which my reflections led me, was that the life I had been leading latterly, and which I had intended to continue to lead, though pleasant to myself, was such as I had scarcely a moral right to lead, being as it was utterly useless to my fellow-men; while here I thought was a way pointed out to me in which I might be of use. I determined that I would remain in the Buildings, and try as far as in me lay, and as opportunity should offer, to bring my neighbours to a sense of better things. At first I was very enthusiastic in my new resolution. I gave them tracts, forced myself upon them both in and out of season, and tried to get up open-air preachings among them. But it wouldn't do. I soon found that if I was to do any good among them at all, I must do it, not as I would, but as I could;—as they would let me. At ordinary times they wouldn't listen to 'patter' as they call it; but in times of sickness and death they took to sending for me; and, acting to the best of my judgment, I learned to restrain myself and wait till I was sent for, and then when called upon to try and soothe the dying I was sometimes able to say a fruitful word to the living as well. My being called to see Carroty Blake proved a turning-point in my life, and since that night I can say that—

'By many a death-bed I have been,
And many a sinner's parting scen.'

And terrible partings they were to some of them, for it is most true that 'the way of transgressors is hard.' I remember——" Old Bible was proceeding, when we were disturbed by the sound of some one ascending the stairs, and the next moment Braidy's friend, Larry H——, entered the room. He was a middle-aged man, smart looking, with erect carriage, grizzled hair, smoothly shaven face, clearly cut features, and bright restless eyes. His clothes, though stylish as to cut, were decidedly shabby, despite the "furbishing up" that had evidently been bestowed upon them. In a word, his outward appearance was "seedy," and I was not long in discovering that Shiny Smith had done him no injustice in describing him as "bouncing" and talkative. He slapped Braidy upon the back, and was very effusive in expressing himself "delighted" to meet me. I soon made out that he had in a great measure invited himself upon this occasion. A minor parochial office was vacant, and he was among the candidates for it, and to ascertain whether I had any influence in the matter was palpably the chief object of his visit. He had been canvassing those with whom the election lay, and professed to be astonished to find that they had been unable to realise that he had been conferring an honour upon them by offering himself for so humble an office. If they would only have given him ten minutes each, he went on, he could have demonstrated to a mathematical certainty that they ought to give him the place, and that he was fifty times a better man than the one whom he had reason to believe they did intend to elect. He could get "quoires" of testimonials from people about, he continued, but did I think it would be better for him to get "one master-testimonial signed by a score or so of Members of Parliament and the like." He asked the question with the most matter-of-fact air, and taking the same tone I answered that I thought the master-testimonial would be the best if he could get such signatures as he spoke of. There would be no difficulty about that, he answered, loftily. Though he had been down in the world of late years, he was well connected, had in better days largely devoted himself to literature, and had at one time or another submitted some of his writings to most of the men of note in the religious and political world.

Had his writings been published then?

No, they hadn't been brought out; they were over the heads of your general reader,

and so publishers did not care for them. But he had sent the manuscripts to public men who could not but have been influenced by them, and speaking of that, he might say that some of them had been published after a fashion; for editors, though refusing his articles, had not scrupled to appropriate his ideas. He cited a number of what he chose to consider cases in point, and then proceeded to tell a story so richly illustrative of the overweening self-esteem characterizing him as to be worth relating. Having premised that politically he was "a scathing, he might say, an annihilating writer," he went on to state that he sent an article condemnatory of the character and policy of a prominent public man, to a well-known weekly newspaper. As after a considerable lapse of time it was not printed, he wrote for it to be returned. Getting no answer to his letter, he called at the office, and obtaining no satisfaction there, he resolved to "waste a cane on that same editor's carcase." Armed with a cane, he accordingly paraded in front of the office for some hours; but the editor not coming forth, he went to the police-court to apply for a summons against him. Being asked the name of the person against whom he wanted the summons, he found that he could not give it, and was so enraged at finding himself baffled at every step, that, cane in hand, he rushed back to the office and attempted to force his way to the editor's room. He was prevented from doing so: but was also promised that his manuscript should be looked out and sent back to him; and two days later he received it. But of course by that time it had served the purpose for which it had been kept back.

"What might you suppose that purpose to have been?" I asked.

"Why, don't you see!" he exclaimed. "It was made use of to put the screw upon ——" (naming the statesman reflected upon). "It would be taken down to him, and he would be told, 'Now here is an article that would be a death-blow to you as a public man; if it is printed, down you go. Whether it is printed or not lies with yourself—you understand.'"

To have tried to convince the man that he was talking arrant nonsense would have been simple waste of time, and I did not attempt it. After a number of fruitless endeavours to bring the conversation back to the point at which it had been interrupted by the entry of Larry, I at last succeeded in my object.

"Yes, I should say that Braidy had witnessed

some as curious death-bed scenes as any man living," said Larry, commenting upon an observation of mine, "and heard some strange confessions too; eh, Braidy?"

"I have heard enough," answered Braidy sadly, "to convince me that it is often but too literally true, that 'the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.'"

"Have you shown this gentleman your cabinet of relics, as I call them?" asked Larry, who now that he had been induced to turn to the subject of Braidy's position in the Buildings, seemed disposed to further my views.

"No. I scarcely thought it worth while," answered Braidy with a slight smile.

"What are they?" I asked.

"Well, they are a few trifling—very trifling—things that some of those that I have been with in the hour of death, or relations for them, have given to me as remembrancers. I suppose the wicked, as well as the just, sometimes desire their memory to be kept green; especially those of the wicked who have fallen into, rather than been born to, evil courses; at least, those are the class who have given me the relics, as Larry calls them. There they are."

While speaking he had risen, and going to a box in a corner of the room, had taken a till out of it, and returning placed it upon the table before me as he finished his speech.

The contents of the till were certainly very trifling; but at the same time they formed a very curious little collection of articles. There were two or three *cartes-de-visite*; a German-silver thumb-ring, such as sailors sometimes wear; a necklet of coloured glass beads; a dark lantern, ingeniously constructed so as to fold, so that it could be easily carried in the waistcoat pocket; an ivory tobacconist in the shape of a hand and hammer, a fancy pipe, a snuff-box, two tobacco boxes, a crooked sixpence with a hole in it, that had once been treasured as a lucky sixpence, a pocket knife, a lock of hair, a packet of letters, and two small Bibles.

Each article had its story, most of them, however, being much alike as to their broad outline and the moral to be drawn from them. The story connected with the dark lantern was the most dramatic and "thrilling," being, as it was, the story of the life and death of a noted burglar, of whose "kit" of tools the lantern had formed part; but the saddest stories were those associated with the two Bibles. One of them, as an inscription of the fly-leaf showed, had been a Sunday-school prize to a young girl. She had

been the child of decent labouring people, who had given her a plain education and set her a good home example. When she was of sufficient age, a respectable place of service was obtained for her, and her life seemed in every way to promise fair. But she had fallen—and as the event proved, fallen to rise no more. She had rapidly sunk lower and lower until, while still quite a young woman, she had found her lowest level as an associate of the ruffianly men and abandoned women who constituted the bulk of the inhabitants of Barker's Buildings. In these latter days she had taken to drinking, and in an evil moment, when maddened by drink and the ill-usage of a man with whom she consorted, she took poison with a fatal result. The Bible was the one memorial of the days of her innocence that she had treasured through all her downward career, and with her dying breath she had confided it to old Braidy's hands, as the only one she deemed fit and worthy to receive it.

The other Bible had been the parting gift of a mother to a favourite son about to go out into the world. He had broken that mother's heart—had brought her grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. He had "gone wrong"—had embezzled, and had been imprisoned for his crime. He had come out of gaol only to sink into the position of a habitual criminal, and being of a delicate constitution, that life had soon worn him out, and he was not quite thirty when he died. His last words were of thankfulness that his mother had died without seeing the worst to which he had come, and of bitter regret that he had not acted upon her advice and taken the Bible for his guide. He had meant, he said, that the book should be buried with him, because he had not thought he would again meet with one who was worthy to receive his mother's Bible; but, if Braidy would accept it, he would rather leave it with one who, as his dead mother had done, loved the Bible and lived by it. Braidy had accepted it, and it struck me that it was the one, of all his curious assortment of relics, that he had the most reverence for—and that for sake of the loving and disappointed mother whom he had never seen. From speaking of the death of such as the dwellers in Barker's Buildings, we came to speaking of their lives, and, as I expected, Old Bible's larger, longer, and more intimate experience of the class, confirmed my own opinion that their life is a hard one—not at all the rollicking life, even as regards mere material wants, that some people imagine it to be. It is true, he said,

they have their feasts occasionally, but they have their fasts too, and as a rule, they are, in their own phrase, "hard up." Many of them will tell you, their life is a burden to them; they find by experience that suspicion haunts the guilty mind. They go in constant dread, "fearing each bush an officer," each unknown face a spy, each associate a traitor.

Of course on all these subjects Larry had had his say. Though friendships between men of widely different characters are by no means uncommon, the friendship between these two men—the one so humble and unaffected, the other so vain-glorious and forward—struck me as one of the most curious points in Old Bible's life. That their friendship was genuine there could be no doubt. Judging from circumstances that subsequently came to my knowledge, I am afraid that Larry did occasionally negotiate trifling loans with his friend, and was not always as strict in the repayment

as he might have been; but still he had a true affection for the old man, a warm admiration of his many good qualities; while Braidy was disposed to look upon Larry as an unappreciated genius.

When I took my departure well on in the evening, I left the two still together, and just entering upon the discussion of a theory of Larry's, to the effect—so well as I could make out—that poverty was an artificial evil, a thing which had no *right* to be, and which, were Larry allowed to witch the world with noble statesmanship, would speedily be numbered with the things of the past.

In conclusion, I may be allowed to remark that the life of such a man as Braidy is at once answer and rebuke to the question, "What good can one person do?" so often asked by people desirous of excusing themselves from labouring and sacrificing to help the needy and raise the fallen.

THE LEPERS' LESSON.

BY THE LATE THOMAS GUTHRIE, D.D.

"*QUEM deus vult perdere, prius dementat,*" was the proverb in which the heathen embodied their views of men acting against their manifest interests. Such outrageous folly they attributed to the intervention of the gods; saying, to turn their Latin proverb into our mother-tongue, "Whom God designs to ruin he first makes mad." And Holy Scripture has words much to the same effect. "Stay yourselves and wonder," is the exclamation of Isaiah; "cry ye out, and cry; they are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink. For the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes;—and the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot, for it is sealed: and the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee; and he saith, I am not learned."

There is a sense in which sinners, to use the heathen's expression, are mad. They are deaf to the voice of reason; arguments, however unanswerable, are of no avail; they are proof against the loudest and most solemn warnings; and are neither to be won by the goodness of God, nor subdued by the terrors of his law. In respect both of their character and of their fate they have their type in Benhadad, the king of Syria. He would not be turned from his fatal purpose, but rushed, like one

blindfold, on his doom. "Who was the Lord, that he should serve him?" So he sat down before the walls of Samaria to besiege the city, and measure his strength with Jehovah, and learn to his cost, too late, alas! for his profit, as all God's enemies one day shall do, this truth: "Let the potsherd strive with the potsherd of the earth, but woe to the man that striveth with his Maker."

Benhadad, this king of Syria, had more than once made such skilful arrangements as could hardly fail to have caught his foe, the king of Israel. Somehow or other the bird had been warned, and escaped the net. In these circumstances, with plans that should have succeeded, and yet had been balked, Benhadad suspected that his secret had been betrayed for Hebrew gold. Certain that some one in his council was playing the spy and traitor, able in no other way to account for the discomfiture of his well-concerted plans, he said to his servants, "Will ye not show me which of us is for the king of Israel?" He received for reply an explanation of the mystery that would have warned him, unless he had been bent on his own ruin, to turn his arms against other enemies. "None, my lord and king," was the answer of one who vindicated the loyalty of himself and his companions, "None, my lord, O king, but Elisha the prophet, that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bedchamber."

On hearing this, instead of turning from his purpose, Benhadad became more intent on it. Concluding that a man possessed of such mysterious and mighty power was in himself worth a host, being as valuable as a friend as he was formidable as an enemy, he resolved to seize on the person of the prophet; heedless of this, that if he could not entrap the man whom Elisha warned of his danger, he was less likely to entrap Elisha himself. "Go," he said to his servants, "spy where he is, that I may send and fetch him." They did; and the consequences were such as should have warned him to let Israel alone, and beware of rushing again on the bosses of Jehovah's buckler. His spies informed him that the prophet Elisha was lodged in Dothan. He dispatched a large force to that place, which it reached by a rapid night march; and the inhabitants woke in the morning to see, to their astonishment and terror, the walls of the city encompassed by a mighty host, that seemed to have sprung out of the earth, or dropped from the skies. Seized with the common panic, Elisha's servant rushed into his master's presence, crying, "Alas, my master, how shall we do?" Nor did he wait long for an answer. The prophet opened his eyes to behold another host there besides that whose banners were flaunting and spears were gleaming in the morning sun. The mountain side was all ablaze with chariots and horses, not of flesh, but of fire. God had sent a host from heaven to cover his servant's head; and in an instant the forces of Benhadad were smitten helpless.

Woe, indeed, to the man that striveth with his Maker. "Smite the people, I pray thee, with blindness," cried Elisha, and in answer to his prayer, the Power that instantly opened the eyes of his servant to see things invisible, instantly closed those of all this host to sun and city, earth and sky, friend and foe—all things visible. Thus this single man took an army captive; and, strange spectacle to see, with his staff in his hand, and Elijah's mantle on his shoulders, he places himself at their head, marching them right off into the presence of the king of Israel. So soon as they were conducted into the lion's den, how great was their astonishment! Their eyes being as suddenly opened as they had been shut, they find themselves within the walls of Samaria; in the presence of the king of Israel; surrounded by troops who but wait the signal to cut them in pieces; and now abject terror succeeds astonishment as, knowing that their doom hangs on his lips, they hear the king say to that terrible prophet,

"My father, shall I smite them?" These heathen had seen the terror of the Lord, they were now to see his goodness; goodness that, in this case as in every other, should have led to repentance. Their soul escaped as a bird out of the fowler's snare. "Thou shalt not smite them," replied Elisha; "set bread and water before them, that they may eat and go to their master, and drink"—which they did, to relate events calculated by their terrors to persuade, and by their goodness to melt the heart of Benhadad.

A signal deliverance or a great danger will produce serious and favourable impressions for a time on the most thoughtless and ungodly. So it befell Benhadad; but, as happens with other impenitent sinners, his goodness passed away like the morning cloud and the early dew. Ere long he is the old man again; and his grasping ambition breaking out afresh, he bursts in on the land of Israel with a host that sweeps all before it. They shall not escape him now, for he has both king and prophet now shut up within the walls of Samaria. In consequence of this blockade, there was, as the story tells us, "a great famine in Samaria," as otherwise it could not be, no man being allowed to get out and no provisions to get in.

Fancy paints no picture so terrible to a father's imagination as children with faint cries, hollow eyes, faded cheek, and emaciated forms, perishing through famine. It is terrible to imagine ourselves woke at dead of night by a cry that the ship is sinking, and then father, mother, and children clinging to each other, one sad group, and waiting the time till the vessel giving a sudden lurch, buries them in one watery grave; yet that is but a brief struggle,—one wild scream, one bubbling cry, and all is over. It is terrible also to think of plague or pestilence entering our dwelling, snatching away child after child, till one funeral procession succeeding another the house is emptied and the grave is filled, and an oppressive silence reigns where 'pattering feet and infants' voices, and the merry laughter of boys and girls once filled the rooms. Yet to harrow one's feelings to the utmost we must imagine a family dying of famine,—the roses fading from every cheek, the flesh wasting from the bones, the cries of the infant that hangs on a withered and empty breast, the silent sufferings of those who, despairing of relief, ask for none; and the moans of children, who turn their sunken eyes and stretch out their skinny hands with cries for bread to a mother who has none to give them. Alone—whatever be the pangs of

hunger—suffering them alone, I can fancy a good man, in the majesty and greatness of his faith, soaring above life's darkest clouds, and saying, as he basks in the realms of perpetual sunshine—in the effulgent light of God's reconciled countenance, — “Though the fig-tree should not blossom, and there be no fruit on the vine, though the labour of the olive should fail and the fields yield no meat, though the flock should be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stall, I will rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of my salvation!” But to be surrounded by our nearest and dearest pining before our eyes under the pressure of famine, to hear the cries, as they grow fainter and fainter, of those dear ones who are dying of hunger, were enough, one would think, to drive a father mad.

Yet, what fancy shudders at in the picture was a reality in Samaria. Men lost their reason, women their tenderness, the mother forgot her sucking child and had no compassion on the fruit of her womb, and deeds of horror were done in that city under the pressure of a famine, and as the fruit of war, which we cannot read without praying for the time when the sword shall be turned into a ploughshare, and the spear into a pruning-hook, and wars shall cease.

It has been said that man's extremity is God's opportunity. So it fell out in Samaria, when four lepers read to themselves, and to us also, a lesson we should do well to learn. Having discovered that through a remarkable interposition of Providence the Syrian host was destroyed, the blockade was broken up, and with all the spoil of the Syrians left behind them, Samaria had only to come forth from her gates to find in the deserted camp an ample supply for all her wants. These lepers, so soon as they had gratified their own appetite with Syrian luxuries, and their avarice with the spoils of war, turned in pity to the city, and commiserating the condition of the thousands perishing within its walls, they took shame to themselves, and said one to another, “We do not well; this is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace; if we tarry till the morning light, some mischief will come upon us; now, therefore, come that we may go and tell the king's household.” So, as the history goes on to tell us, they came and called unto the porter of the city, and they told him, saying, “We came to the camp of the Syrians, and, behold, there was no man there, neither voice of man, but horses tied, and asses tied, and the tents as they were.”

1. In the gospel of Jesus Christ we, as these lepers had, have good tidings to communicate to others, and should learn the lesson their conduct teaches.

The sun had set once more on the famine-stricken city. Amid the fading lights of day the sentinels had been planted for the night; and having cut off all hope of escape from the inhabitants of Samaria, the Syrian host had retired to their tents. All of a sudden, a strange noise breaks on the silence of the night. In the name of heaven and earth, what is that? It is not the wail of the famishing, but the hurried rush of many thousand feet, the rattle and crash of armour, the grinding of chariot wheels; mingled with the snorting of horses and the shouts of men. It waxes stronger and stronger: comes nearer and nearer, like the roar of the ocean, pouring on their astonished camp. The outposts fall back, the alarm spreads; it is no time to call a council. Confusion, aggravated by the darkness, fills the ranks; and a cry being raised that the kings of the Hittites and Egyptians—the allies of Israel—were on them, a panic seizes the bravest, and each man intent only on saving himself, one wild crowd—king, counsellors, captains, men-at-arms, women, and slaves—they fly discomfited by a sound, or rather by Him who made the bravest hearts melt within them for fear. “There were they in great fear where no fear was;” at a sound “they were troubled and hasted away; fear took hold upon them there, and pain as of a woman in travail!” So it befell the hosts of Syria. The lepers sought that proud host at night, and the Samaritan sought in the morning, and it could not be found.

Separated from the society of their fellow-men, four lepers sat on an evening at one of the gates of the city. They were starving, and having no hope of relief in their present circumstance, argued thus with themselves:—“Why sit we here until we die? Should we be admitted into the city the famine is there; there we die, and if we sit here we die: one and only one chance is left; let us go over to the camp of the Syrians; they may spare our lives and allow us to share in their abundance; if not, we are none the worse, we but die!”

We but die—suffer a few short-lived pangs, and there is “rest for the weary”—the body is at rest, and the soul in heaven. Such thoughts have inspired the martyr with indomitable courage; and feeling that his persecutors, although they could kill the body, could do no more, he has overcome the

fear of death and trode the reeking scaffold with a firm step. Inspired with the courage of despair at least, reckoning that no worse thing could befall them than that impending over them while they sat starving by the gate, the four lepers rose, and passing the lines, they entered the enemies' camp; wondering why neither outpost nor sentinel challenged. The camp was there, but no enemy; frightened with a sound—as they fancied, the midnight march of a host, the allies of Israel come to raise the siege, man and woman of them had fled, leaving all behind.

What a revel and rejoicing to the poor lepers! They fall like hungry wolves on the plenty spread out before their eyes. Seated at tables prepared for other guests, pledging each other in golden wine-cups, they gorge to the full, and then proceeding to pillage tent after tent, they load themselves with wealth. Betimes their thoughts turn to the city—its horrible and unheard-of sufferings, the homes where children lay dying in their mothers' lap, where hunger had banished sleep, and the wail and moan of famine, wrung from blackened lips, filled the midnight air. Humanity, their pity and patriotism, were kindled. They felt their selfishness a reproach. They might and should carry the good news to their miserable countrymen to the miserable city, and burst in on households dying of famine, with the tidings that the enemy had fled, leaving abundance behind them of provisions and wealth—enough for all and to spare. Yielding to such humane and right convictions, they drag themselves from the tables, and tossing away the foaming cup, lest any should perish by the delay they hurry off to the city, saying, "We do not well; the day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace."

Blessed tidings theirs, and a blessed sight next day, to see the wine-cup pressed to fainting lips, happy mothers hanging with hope over their dying children, and fathers weeping for very joy as they blessed God for the food, which has come to them like manna from the skies. But we have still better tidings, and do not well if we hold our peace, nor go to others to tell how God has interposed to save them—that He is not willing that they, though the chief of sinners, should perish; that He so loved the world as to give up his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life; that Jesus died on the cross to save them, and that now there is forgiveness enough for all—bread enough at our Father's table, and

room enough for all in our Father's house, in the many mansions which Jesus has ascended to prepare for his people's coming. It is an affecting, and yet a blessed spectacle to carry food to a house where we had been horrified to find neither bed, nor bread, nor Bible. To still the cries of hunger, and see hollow-eyed and famishing children fall on the food our bounty has provided, is a feast worth any cost, and such as epicureans never enjoyed. But it were a better and still more blessed sight, when we had carried the message of salvation to some poor perishing sinner to see it, like a rope thrown to a drowning man, thankfully, gladly, eagerly accepted; while on us, the instruments—the happy and honoured instruments—of bringing a sinner to the Saviour, were poured in grateful prayers the blessings of one that was ready to perish.

2. We commit a great crime unless we communicate these blessings to others.

"We do not well! We do not well!" Gentle terms these; much too gentle to describe their guilt, had these lepers tarried in the camp to eat and drink and hold their peace. Close by them lay the city from within whose walls, in the stillness of the night, they may have heard the moans of suffering, varied with the shouts and shrieks of those who fought over a morsel of bread; and had they tarried by the wine-cup, or after a full repast thrown themselves on the royal couch to draw its silken curtains and go to sleep, saying, "It will be time enough in the morning to carry the news to the city," God, and man also, had held them guilty of the death of all who perished that night of hunger. Besides, within these miserable walls pined many a mother and tender child, whose feeble life stood more in need of immediate help than theirs.

There is a most generous and gallant deed—one of many such recorded of British sailors—a castaway in a boat on the wide waste of waters, without water or food, some lying dead, others dying, and all, almost without a hope of meeting a ship or reaching shore, he had reserved for himself, with much pains of self-denial, a morsel of food. Carefully concealing it from the knowledge of others, it was reserved for the last extremity. And along with him and others in that boat sat a mother and her boy—a sweet child, who lay moaning in her lap with his dying head resting on her bosom. With nothing wherewithal to still his cry or moisten those parched and blackened lips, in vain the poor mother strove to sooth her child; but not in vain were her

sad and motherly efforts observed by this rough and hardy seaman. He forgot his own in these greater sufferings. He could die like a man, but his heart gave way before a sight so touching, and ere the cry of "A sail! a sail!" on the far horizon had revived the dying and raised hopes in every bosom, which God's good providence fulfilled, his hand had sought the precious, hidden, hoarded morsel—a shell-fish which he drew from its concealment, to place, amid the silent gratitude of a dying mother, in the mouth of the dying child. And it had been a noble thing to tell of these four lepers, not that they did eat and drink, and enriched themselves with gold and silver and went and hid it, but how, taking only one morsel of bread and one cup of wine to lend them strength, they left all the spoil to hurry off to the city with the blessed tidings; not saying as they did, when they had ate like gluttons, and quaffed the wine-cup, and hoarded up the gold, "We do not well; this is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace!" Better spake Eliezer, when brown with the dust, and worn with the toil of travel, he reached the home of Rebekah in search of a wife for Isaac, saying, in reply to her father's proffered hospitality, "I will not eat till I have told mine errand."

But though the lepers did not rise to that height of humanity, generosity, and patriotism, though they did not play a noble part, they did well. I wish we did all as well! How shall these lepers stand up in judgment against the men of this generation? Absorbed in the pursuit of wealth, in heaping up gold though they know not who shall gather it, they have no pitiful or Christian compassion for the thousands that, near or far away, are perishing for lack of the bread that never perisheth! With such tidings to tell of the pity, the mercy, and the wondrous love of God, of a Saviour, and the blessed story of the Cross, it is not well, but the worst of crimes if we hold our peace. Who would, if he saw the fire bursting from a neighbour's house at the dead of night?—or a blind man with but another step between him and the edge of the dizzy precipice?—or one who, swept off his feet by the red roaring flood, was borne away on its bosom, either wildly crying for help, or—equally pitiful case—insensible, and unconscious of his danger? And if it is not those who kill the body but the soul, that are guilty of the greatest crime, of the greatest inhumanity, who that knows how they may be saved, should hold his peace, where souls are in danger—within the bosom of his family or anywhere beyond its circle, that his efforts

and arm can reach? Let us, as we have freely received, freely give, in the bread of life, in the riches that take not to themselves wings and flee away, bestowing on others what enriches them and does not impoverish us; with our kindly warnings and expostulations, knocking at the door of man's heart, and with our prayers for a blessing knocking at the door of Heaven—ours the charity, that in the words of St. Paul "seeketh not her own."

3. To neglect the salvation of others is a sin which we may expect to be visited with retribution. When the lepers thought of the misery inside the city, the living spectres that walked her streets, and, brave to the last, manned her beleaguered walls, the dead, and the living loving ones who had no strength to bury them, the mother expiring with arms still encircling the wasted form of her lifeless babe, and babes attempting to draw nourishment from fountains death had sealed for ever, how some were praying for death, and others in their wild delirium cursing God and man and the day that they were born, their hearts reproached them. So under the sense of conscious guilt and dread of impending evil, they said one to another, "If we tarry till the morning light some mischief will come on us." What profit to them the gold, silver, and goodly raiment of their midnight plunder, if a people, indignant at their selfishness had seized these guilty wretches and hanged them up before the sun? Right or wrong, famine has driven men to seek even more terrible revenge. Does not history tell of one, who, to realise a still larger fortune when the famine grew harder, concealed great stores of corn in a city where the people were dying for food; and how, on discovering his treasures, they took him, and nailing him to the floor within sight and all but touch of his ill-hoarded stores they left him there, beside plenty, to die of want—in sight of food to pine slowly away—and learn as he suffered the kind of death his selfishness and avarice had inflicted on others. How true the proverb, "He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him!"

Ignorant of the value, and unconscious of the need of salvation, poor sinners may now reserve their curses for such as withhold from them the charities of the world—not those of the gospel, nor the bread which never perisheth, but that which perisheth in the using. So soon, however, as death has unsealed their eyes to the true relations and realities of things, what curses shall they pro-

nounce on those who left them to perish in their sins! And though God's mercy in Jesus Christ be sufficient for the pardon even of so great a sin, and escaping the fate which the lepers dreaded, he should not even "chasten us in his hot displeasure," how painful and awful the thought that some lost soul, some one we tempted to sin and neglected to save, is now cursing us in hell! Fancy one, not one we loved and who loved us, but our bitterest foe, as he is dragged from the bar of judgment to the place of torment turning round on us in his despair, fixing on us looks of horror and hatred, to cry, "Had you done your duty I might have been saved! You left me to perish in my sins—gathering your cursed gold, indulging your appetite, taking your ease—you left me to perish; knowing my danger, you never warned me, nor entreated me, nor prayed with me, nor wept for me, nor told me how I might be saved."

Followers of Jesus, how different his bearing toward sinners!—the lovely, blessed, benevolent, beneficent spirit, of our humane as well as holy faith?—with such lessons as these—"Charity seeketh not her own"—"Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth"—"Look not every man on his own things, but every man on the things of others"—"Let the mind be in you which was also in Jesus Christ." Others' gain is yours; and by a benevolent law which makes a brother's case my own, the very efforts I put forth to bless others are made blessings to myself.

So it happened to the traveller who was pushing his perilous way in early spring along a pass among the higher Alps. Benumbed with cold, exhausted by his exertions, with no help nor human habitation near, a fatal sleep was stealing on his slow and tottering steps. Alarmed, he cried for help; but no other sound fell on his listening ear but the mocking echo of the rocks and the roar of the torrent that far below seemed like the dirge of death. A few steps, a few

struggles more, and he had laid him down to sleep the sleep that knows no waking—but was saved. And how? At a turn of the road his eye fell on a snow-wreath that had something of the form of humanity. He bends over it to find there a fellow-creature in the last gasp of life. Though feebly, the heart is still beating. He forgets his own misery in pity for another; shakes off his lethargy, bends over the unconscious body, chafes into warmth the frozen limbs; and his efforts redoubled as colour returns to the cheek, at length a sigh escapes from the frozen lips, the eyes open, and he who was "ready to perish" rises to his feet to bless and embrace his benefactor.

His efforts on behalf of another he happily found to be not loss but gain to himself; his own cheeks were glowing with ruddy heat, his limbs had lost their numbness and regained their strength, his heart sent its tide of warmth through every limb and organ of his body; and resuming his journey with renewed vigour in the company of one his generous efforts had saved, he by-and-by hails his sweet mountain-home, and, safe in the arms and bosom of its happy family, is seated round the blazing logs to revive exhausted nature and relate the perils of his journey. Blessing another, he had blessed himself. And such is the reward with which God crowns every Christian effort. "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth. There is that withholdeth the hand, and it tendeth to poverty." Let us exhort one another daily. Let us live not for ourselves only, but for others, looking unto Jesus, to find in Him our pattern as well as our propitiation. Let us endeavour by the help of the Spirit of God to tread in his steps, to follow his example, and we shall find that he who converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins. **AND THEY THAT BE WISE SHALL SHINE AS THE BRIGHTNESS OF THE FIRMAMENT; AND THEY THAT TURN MANY TO RIGHTEOUSNESS, AS THE STARS FOR EVER AND EVER.**

THE FISHERMAN'S PRAYERS.

OUR little craft left astern the grey crags and tawny beaches of Loch Carron, with their memories of "A Highland Question-Day," formerly depicted in these pages. Round the "Heads of Skye" we drifted to an anchorage in Loch Pooltiel, open to the Minch and the wild sea that sweeps that strait from Barra Head to Cape Wrath.

Through the summer day the breathless deep plashed wearily about the shores, but the dusky west betokened changing weather. Beyond Ben Eval and the Streak of Benbecula the sunset darkened, while about the verge of Harris touches brightened the northern gloaming; the Hebrides lay a violet belt between the sapphire of the

heavens and the sea; and the Minch was tumbling and fretting in the breeze. It was freshening for a blow out of the west, and squalls were listing our little craft at her chains. Whether in the midnight we should run for Canna, weather Dunvegan Head, or drive upon the beach in-shore, left no long debate. The chain was shortened, the reefed canvas set, and the yacht got under weigh, but the sea lifted us shoreward in the shifty wind. With a blast the yacht gathered speed, and we fetched out under the dusky land. Black and angry the sea swept from Harris, thundering in the darkness and lashing white along the cliffs. From far Uist the smoke of the kelp fires was tainting the air, but the westerling wind would lift us round Dunvegan Head. We stayed and headed for the Point. Into our low canvas the spray was sweeping; but we were nearing the Head, and it might blow as it listed.

Suddenly the yacht lifted, a squall from the shore brought the wind ahead; we were laying for the Sound of Harris with the head-sea coming green across the windlass. With no star in all the sky it was freshening badly, and a harbour must be made at all hazards.

"For three nichts there's been a bricht star near the moon," said the skipper; "and I niver knowed that fail o' a gale. I wish we were in Maddy or the Kallin, for we winna wather Dunvegan Head this nicht!—There's a sail!" and he pointed through the darkness. The black canvas of a low set sail drove across our bow; we could hear shouts as the big lumbering skiff lifted with the sea and left a cloud of spindrift in her wake. "Up helm!" cried our skipper, and with our sail eased we were in the wake of the fishing-boat, running for shelter to the lochs of Uist. We had its shining trail against the dim canvas to guide us, as with anxious hearts we hurried for the land. The wind was again sweeping round with the hills and blowing off the Harris shore. "This is bad, bad!" said the skipper. "I donno if we'll fetch Loch Maddy, but we'll get the boom aboard and follow into some berth about the back of Ronay or the Kallin, for them east-country men are handy at knowin' holes to shove into and disappear like the craws when the wather breaks." The wind and the sea were gaining, and an hour sped slowly before we caught the loom of the land. With lowered canvas the skiff hung for us, and beam to beam we shot through the narrow sound. Through a turmoil of foam we were running, with the black rocks about us, and the roar of the sea in our

ears. With a sudden luff the skiff run under a wall of rock, and following the fishermen's shout, our anchor fetched us up. The spent pulse of the sea lapped all about our haven, a mill-pond within hearing of the storm. And down the stony sides of Ben Eval came the north wind, rending the sea into flying drift, but harmless to hurt us. Lights were shining in the skiff, we forged alongside, and spoke to our friends.

"A bad nicht, but far be ye frae," was our salutation, spoken in the mellow tongue of the Moray coast; and the speaker added, "We were on our passage home, through the Frith, when it came in a lump upon us, and we ran back for a ken't harbour." We told our own trouble, and were invited aboard the fishing boat.

Against the dusky sky the fishing skiff's mast, some forty feet, loomed still higher; how she carried her canvas in such weather was wonderful. The rough decking was tumbled about; the sea had been sweeping over the gunwale from stem to sternpost. The broken water had washed the rough ballast as clean as the stones in a hill burn; nets, canvas, whatever lay about was drenched. One of the crew pumped constantly, while another—the water level with his sea-boots—bailed with a bucket. They had taken the sea in over their bow as badly as it had come over the stern—they had not "a dry stitch" in all the boat.

It was long before the damp matches would light the lamp under the fore-castle deck, the only safety for the open craft. When the glimmer of the light brightened we crawled into the fore-castle, where the crew slept. The den was blackened with tar, and through it the sea had been washing. Wet sacks, filled with wet heather, lay against the planks, and upon these some of the men rested. They were mostly fair, sandy-bearded men, with blue eyes and sharp noses. Under an old "south-wester" shone softer eyes—the hazel eyes of a nice-looking lassie, drenched and dripping like the men. Further from the light, another girl turned to look; she was fair, and freckled with the sun, and had her wet yellow hair bound not ungracefully about her head. A red cravat, a yellow oilskin jacket, a white handkerchief, gave dashes of colour to the limp figure. No art could have hit the chastened touches that faded into the blackness. At our surprise the girls smiled. Why they were there was soon explained. They were sisters to two of the crew, and had been to "keep house" for two crews at the Boisdale fishing. For a

couple of months they had lived in the boat, or in the peat-built hut on shore, cooking and working for the toilers absent on the deep. Living without comfort or motherly care, their gentle voices had only softened the ways of those about them. There was no shelter in the boat but what was theirs; they had the coats and cravats of the mindful men about them; they were cared for as the gently nurtured never are cared for, since they never risk such danger.

Chilled and cold as all the crew were, our whisky flask was handed out. "Nae, thanks," said the fisherman, in return, handing back the flask; "nane here drink whisky, and we get on brawlies without it." The temptations of a "dram" could not be stronger, but they would not be tempted. Among the wet ballast, the fire-place—an old broken pot—was set up, and with trouble the wet peats were kindled. A kettle for coffee was set over the fire, and a slender store of sea biscuit was divided. Before the meal was begun, one of the men said, "We'll take the books."

From crannies behind boarding small hymn-books were brought out by the girls and the men. The books were drenched, were without boards, and the wet leaves were difficult to turn. The hymn was named and the first line sung. "Your owre heich, Wullie!" said one of the girls; to which Willie answered, "I'm nane owre heich, Mary!" and he continued to lead the tune. Under the lamp, in his red night-cap, he sat, with the dull light falling on his weather-beaten cheeks, his tawny beard, and worn oilskin. Beside him sat, as they best could, the other fishermen and the two girls bending towards the light. They were but rugged people to vulgar eyes.

While they sang, through their thin music broke the storm, deadening its pathos in the thunder of the squalls. And the stricken worshippers paused betimes to listen, with their voices silenced in the blasts from Ben Eval, blanching the Minch into spray.

With fervour the old man prayed their sins might be forgiven, and their hearts softened to God, and to one another. He prayed thankfully for the mercies shown to themselves; and it seemed as if that humble service, amid peril and hardship elsewhere unknown, bore another sense from the tutored words spoken in carpeted mansions.

The hot coffee was handed round in tin cans and such dishes as remained unbroken. It was some comfort in the cold and the wet,

and the meal was further helped by timely supplies of bread and butter handed from the yacht by our own skipper. The fishermen laughed over the unexpected succour, and had pleasantries with the girls over their good appetites. There was no want of mirth among these Christian men; but their laugh was neither straitened nor boisterous; they were in all their ways as other men.

When their pipes were lighted we could tell them of later news than they had heard; of scant fishing at Campbelton, and of a heavy fishing at Dunbar. "That's what we have been waiting to hear," said one of the crew. "What say ye, lads, to take the Grangemouth Canal, and send the lassies home with the steamer?" "But fat ken ye of the road?" said one of the men. "Some o' us hae been to Lismore afore," he was answered. "But what about the Gulf?" said the dubious speaker, referring to the whirlpool of Corryvreckan, known as the "Gulf" all about the West Coast. "It is a bad place to fa' in wi'," one said. "It's no' to be recommended," our own skipper hinted, with some humour in his voice.

We offered them a chart; but a hand sketch would better suit their purpose. Not a bit of paper could be found but the blank leaf of the Bible; and not without doubt of irreverence was it torn out, to prevent the sketch being made while the paper was part of the volume. But the touch was not without its own suggestiveness.

At the forecabin stove of the yacht the two girls dried their clothes and warmed themselves. It was proposed they should keep the cabin for the night. "Nae, nae," said the captain of the crew; "the lassies are well enouch in their ain boat." And to press the invitation further would have been rude. But wet soldiers in the trenches were not in poorer shelter than the sisters of these fishermen, who were without thought of repining. In their own homes these fishermen's daughters are spoken of as exemplary, and we were ready to believe the fact. Hardship mates nearer with virtue than vice, and a life of fortitude grows fearless of temptation.

On their wet sacks, in their oilskins and sea-boots, the fishermen lay down to rest with the feeble lamp swinging over their bronzed faces, and the stars of the clearing heavens shining through the open seams of their shelter.

J. D. BELL.

THE EDITOR'S ROOM.

I.—NOTES AND COMMENTS.

CHRISTIAN COMMEMORATION.

AFTER a great part of Christendom has just been engaged in commemorating two of the grandest events in Christian history, one naturally asks, What is the permanent result? It is surely reasonable after such a commemoration to expect to see more beauty, and smell more fragrance in the garden; if the south wind has blown, shall the trees of frankincense, the myrrh and olives, and all the chief spices not make their influence felt? Yet on the outer surface of what is called the Christian world, one finds but little change. It would be hard to say that society at large shows any sign of being more impressed with sin, or more alive to its obligation to the Redeemer, or more intent on a purer, less selfish, more godly and loving life at this time than at any other period of the year. The number, we fear, would be reduced in something like the proportion of Gideon's army if none were left but those whom each commemoration of Calvary and the Sepulchre urges steadily and visibly to a purer and better life. Yet, beyond doubt, no commemoration of the kind ever passes without some such results. Could we trace the history of the hidden life we should doubtless discover instances not a few of holy resolution and blessed change: men and women laying their lives at the feet of Him who gave his life for them. Who knows how many have at this time entered on this life of holy service, catching up the spirit of Him who came not to be ministered unto but to minister? Would only that such instances were the rule, not the exception, and that as the seasons roll on, we could see some visible progress towards a truly redeemed and risen world! Would that the vision of Him "who liveth and was dead and is alive for ever" would rouse a slumbering world, and a half-slumbering church, and urge them to pray for the coming of the Holy Ghost, like the little Christian band in the upper chamber. The change that would then come over the moral world would be but feebly shadowed by the beautiful transformation which the breath of Spring is now working in the world of nature.

THE NATIONAL CORNUCOPIA.

In its financial reckoning, the nation sticks to the old and, as we think, true plan,—beginning the year, not in the depth of winter, but in the dawn of spring. The first week of April strikes the national balance, and sets us forward on a new estimate of income and expenditure. Looking back, we find ourselves in receipt of a national income from four to five millions beyond what was estimated. It is a great sign of abundance, but as a great part of the income is derived from the duty on spirits, it is not a sign of abundance well applied. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, who might naturally be disposed to take the most hopeful view of the increase, finds him-

self obliged to rejoice with trembling; and while glad that the labouring masses have had so much more to spend, has had to regret that so many of them have spent it with but little wisdom. Lord Shaftesbury expresses his opinion that increased wages bring no increase of comfort, but rather an increase of misery, and refers to the testimony of an engineer who was induced to give an extra half-crown weekly to his workmen, and found that, in almost every case, it went to the public-house. Master engineers, however, are not likely to state the case either very accurately or very favourably for the men, and it ought to be admitted that a great body of the working class spend their earnings with admirable propriety. Lord Shaftesbury hit the nail on the head when he gave it as his conviction that self-control was one of the most indispensable lessons for the workman of the present day. Without this, indeed, his elevation is hopeless. If he cannot be brought to turn aside from that which is ultimately pernicious because for the moment it is agreeable, he can never rise. Self is often an ugly word; yet no threefold cord, constructed of human material, can be more serviceable than that formed by three members of the *self* family—self-respect, self-reliance, and self-control. Upper, middle, and lower classes alike need this cord; and they need it very specially at this time, when one of the greatest risks of the nation arises from prosperity ill employed.

SIR HENRY THOMPSON ON TEMPERANCE.

In our last number, we adverted to certain special efforts within the English Church on behalf of temperance. For the encouragement of these efforts, an eminent medical authority, Sir Henry Thompson, has written an important letter, giving a medical view of alcohol and its effects, worthy of the most earnest study of all. The matter belongs to what is beyond all doubt the true province of the physician, and not, like a suggestion on another subject commonly ascribed to the same gentleman, to a region beyond his proper beat. "I have long had the conviction," says Sir Henry, "that there is no greater cause of evil, moral or physical, in this country than the use of alcoholic beverages. . . . I have no hesitation in attributing a very large proportion of some of the most painful and dangerous maladies which come under my notice, as well as of those which every medical man has to treat, to the ordinary and daily use of fermented drink, taken in the quantity which is conventionally deemed moderate." He then expresses his great satisfaction at efforts being made against drunkenness in connection with the English Church, believing that no society in the world has power to do so much in this way, if it earnestly takes the matter up. Further, he expresses his belief that there is "no single habit in this country which so much tends to deteriorate the qualities of the race, and so much dis-

qualifies it for endurance in that competition which in the nature of things must exist, and in which struggle the prize of superiority will fall to the best and to the strongest."

We are glad to observe the earnestness with which the Primate of England has taken up this matter. Though the line is one somewhat new to an archbishop, we are persuaded that it is entirely worthy of his earnest efforts. The advancement of a cause which pertains not to one section of the church only, but to humanity at large, is eminently suitable, and, we may add, truly honourable.

THE SCOTTISH SCHOOL BOARDS.

Many are the prophecies that have been hazarded during the last twenty years as to the probable effect of handing over to ratepayers the management of the parish schools and other schools in Scotland. The direst results have been apprehended by some, the banishment of religion from the schools, and the predominance of utter secularism and ungodliness. The result of the elections has quieted such fears. In the overwhelming majority of cases the School Boards elected consist of men and women favourable to the mode of instruction formerly prevalent in the schools. In cases where efforts have been made by secularists to get in, the result has in almost every case been defeat. In the large towns the Roman Catholics have obtained one or two members, the qualification of a four pound rent having admitted shoals of Irish voters, and the cumulative method of voting having enabled them to plump for their priest. But the general result is fitted greatly to reassure the friends of religious education. The conviction held by many that religion ought to be supported wholly and solely from private resources, has not been carried to the extreme of making public education wholly secular. Common sense has shown that tyranny of logic needs some check, and that any logical position that would exclude the Bible from the education of the young is an extreme position needing to be modified by more practical considerations.

The manner in which the School Boards will do their work, of course, remains to be seen. A great deal of trouble will be required, and some confusion may ensue before the new machinery gets into smooth working order. But a great opportunity presents itself of working out a system that will give to Scotland a complete education. Though the question of religious education has been the only one at the front in the election contests, the Boards must give very earnest attention to other questions, prominent among which is the improvement of the matter of instruction, and its adaptation to the purposes of life. We hope, too, that the School Boards will not interfere unduly with the teachers, but act largely on the principle of reposing a generous trust in a body of men who, by being trusted and encouraged, are more likely to have a good influence than if they were constantly interfered with. And then we hope that something efficient will next be done for dovetailing the parts of the system into each other—forming full

and regular steps of communication between all the schools of the country, from the humblest infant-school in the Highlands up to the highest classes in the universities of the country.

DR. MOFFAT'S TESTIMONIAL.

No public testimonial, we are sure, that has been recently given can have been more approved of than the gift of nearly six thousand pounds recently presented to Dr. Moffat, the missionary of South Africa. It is true that no money testimonial can repay such men for their services. But something was unquestionably due to Dr. Moffat in the shape of money. In the early stage of his career his pay was on a truly apostolic scale; the sum allowed to an unmarried man being just £18 7s., with £5 5s. added if he took a wife. Some £25 were allowed for building a house and stocking a farm, by which the missionary was to be supported.

It was well for Robert Moffat that in his youth he had been accustomed to live on the plain fare of a Scotch workman, and that he knew, like the Apostle of the Gentiles, how to labour with his own hands. The life of Dr. Moffat has been a singularly beneficent one. We think it was Sir Bartle Frere that told the story of an English officer who used always to scoff at missions and missionaries, till something took him to Mr. Moffat's neighbourhood, after which his mind became totally changed. It is a most convenient thing in argument to be able to utter one well-known name that represents in the best form the whole argument on the subject. It is like one of those microscopic photographs that appear to the naked eye like a speck, but are found, under the magnifying glass, to contain the whole Decalogue or the whole Sermon on the Mount. Happy the Christian church that contains in its firmament many such stars. Such men are indeed worthy of whatever recognition the Church at home can offer them. Mr. Moffat has, we believe, touched the patriarchal age of fourscore; it cannot be long ere he enter on a higher reward; but one cannot refrain the wish that ere he is called thither, he may yet have the privilege of embracing his son-in-law, David Livingstone, and blending his prayers with his for the true good and happiness of Africa.

II.—GLANCES AT WHAT IS DOING ABROAD.

FRANCE.

That France should have been able to arrange for the payment of the last instalment of her enormous indemnity to Germany two years earlier than she at first agreed, was a surprise and a joy to all her friends, who saw in this circumstance a proof of her energy as well as her resources, and a hopeful omen for future prosperity and tranquillity. It is a pity that the satisfaction arising from this circumstance should have been clouded by the too characteristic scene that took place almost immediately after in the chamber of Versailles—one member scornfully calling out "bagage" to characterize a speech, another

vehemently protesting that the use of such a term was an "impertinence," the President vainly attempting to exercise his authority, resigning his office in consequence, and giving occasion, in connection with the election of his successor, to the excitement of a little political crisis. Such proceedings hardly exemplify the dignity and self-restraint, the moral discipline and elevation of tone, which seem so emphatically needed in the present condition of France. In some quarters, however, we see great efforts to arouse the country to a sound moral tone. The conviction is proclaimed that unless such a tone is realised, there is nothing for the country but anarchy on the one hand, or despotism on the other, and either of the two alternatives is sufficiently horrible.

ULTRAMONTANISM AND ITS GERMAN ANTAGONIST.

The struggle in Germany against Ultramontanism goes on with the greatest earnestness. Prince Bismarck has evidently one conviction on the subject, that if Germany does not crush Ultramontanism, Ultramontanism will crush Germany. Each side in the conflict seems resolved to carry it on to the bitter end—the State to enforce its extremest penalties on rebellious ecclesiastics; the Church to launch its most ghostly missiles at sacrilegious statesmen, as well as at compromising and hesitating churchmen. The sympathies of the Protestant world are much divided. The general feeling is that Bismarck's violence is excessive, and that it will bring about a reaction in favour of the cause which he is so fiercely opposing. On the other hand, there is a feeling that undoubtedly there is something both in the assumptions and tactics of Ultramontanism that deprives it of the toleration to which a religion is entitled, and places it in the category of a rebellion against the lawful authority of the State. The employment by the Ultramontanists of a body of men so notoriously associated in past history with treachery and disloyalty as the Jesuits gives to Bismarck a powerful popular argument, and greatly aids the policy of antagonism. As a proof how full men's minds are of the subject, it may be noticed that the late political crisis in England has been regarded in Germany as a proof of the impossibility of any friendly compromise with the Roman Catholic bishops, and the necessity of abandoning any such hope for the future.

SPECULATIONS ON A NEW REFORMATION.

Father Hyacinthe has been in some degree disappointing the more eager sections of Protestantism. While addressing meetings in Protestant chapels and in Reformation halls, he declines to commit himself to Protestantism. He longs for a reformation of the Church from within, and seems to believe in the possibility of a Catholic Church emancipated from the leadership of the Pope. It is the old dream,—the dream of Huss, the dream of Luther in his earlier days, with the superadded feature of getting rid of the headship of the Pope. It agrees substantially

with the notion of the Anglicans, and it is not far from the position of the Alt-Catholics. But in many minds it will be an insuperable difficulty to such a scheme that the supremacy of the Pope is the natural culmination of the Romish hierarchy, and that it has been for many centuries so clearly in accordance with the mind of the Church, that if the mind of the Church Catholic in all ages is to be the recognised authority, the supremacy of the Pope cannot be got quit of.

Some well-known Protestants lean to the opinion that the conservation of the Church of Rome in some sense is indispensable. Guizot has long been identified with this view, and in a recent work he reiterates it, counselling that the Catholic Church and Protestantism should unite, without being identified with each other. M. de Pressensé, too, holds that the Roman Church must be transformed from within, and seems to cherish the thought of the possibility of such a transformation as would turn it into a branch of the great community to which the Protestant churches belong.

THE COLLAPSE OF MORMONISM.

Brigham Young, it appears, has addressed a letter to the American community announcing his resignation of his offices at Utah, and his intention of retiring from the scene of all his labours there, and founding a new settlement at Arizona. The pressure of the outer world on him has been too strong. Mormonism is a system which revolts every sympathy, and even in its disaster forbids all compassionate feeling. We are rather disposed, on the occasion of its downfall, to adopt the Apocalyptic congratulation, "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her." Its history has certainly been most singular. In the midst of the light of the nineteenth century, a coarse delusion was propagated, received, and followed. A system of life, combining the laxity of the East with the energy and industry of the West, received the highest encouragement. The new sect had its persecutions and even its martyrs. Persecuted in one city, the Mormons fled to another, and settling at last in the far West, in a territory too barren to attract any covetous eye, they seemed to find the repose and solitude they desired. But man proposes, God disposes. A new and most unexpected occurrence, the discovery of gold in California, has eventually proved the means of their overthrow. We remember, on one occasion, remonstrating with a leading American statesman on his Government not taking steps to suppress Mormonism. His reply was, that the Pacific Railway would suppress it for them. Utah became a thoroughfare. Gentile eyes looked freely on the sacred enclosure. Gentile pens exposed it. Gentile missionaries bearded it on its own ground. It has proved unable to endure the exposure. We only hope that its extinction, so far as it gives sanction to immorality, will now be root and branch, and that any attempt to revive it at Arizona will be dealt with

energetically. Sure we are that every American patriot and every friend of America will breathe more freely when it is numbered among the things that were.

III.—OUR MEMORIAL RECORD.

BISHOP M'ILVAINE OF OHIO.

The name of Bishop M'Ilvaine is one of those that clearly belong to the catholic church. Sprung from a family of Scotch origin, he was born in New Jersey in 1799, and educated at the college of Princeton. During a remarkable revival there, he was won to Christ along with Dr. Charles Hodge and other men well known in the American Churches. Having studied divinity in the Presbyterian seminary of Princeton, he was ordained to the ministry of the Episcopal Church of America, and in 1825 was appointed chaplain and professor of ethics in the military seminary of West Point. Here he laboured with much earnestness, but during the first year, he was so little in favour that the cadets seemed all to avoid him. At last, however, they began to come to him, one by one, under the influence of religious anxiety, and by-and-by an awakening took place among them, calm and earnest, which gave many Christian men to the service of the church, both in civil and military life. In 1832 he became Bishop of Ohio, and during an episcopate of unusual length, besides governing his diocese with great success, he rendered many services to Christian literature, and to the Christian Church. His name has long been a household word as that of an eminently consistent, faithful, and devoted minister of Christ. His writings too have been useful and popular. Failing health led him last winter to the continent of Europe, but instead of finding the improvement he hoped for, he was called while there to his Father's house. The church of the old world joins with that of the new in honouring the memory of so good and faithful a servant.

ARCHDEACON SANDFORD.

The Archdeacon of Coventry is known to the general public chiefly in connection with his labours in the cause of temperance. Born at Edinburgh in 1801, the third son of the late Bishop Sandford, he held various positions in the Church of England, became Archdeacon of Coventry in 1851, and Bampton Lecturer in 1861. The subject of his Bampton Lectures was—The Mission and Extension of the Church at Home. The bent of his mind led him to desire that the influence of Christianity should be more felt in society, in repressing evils and promoting benefits connected with our ordinary life. It is not of such clergymen as Mr. Sandford that Mr. Froude would have found occasion to make the complaint that they "withdraw into the affairs of the other world, and leave the present world to the men of business and to

the devil." When he moved for the appointment of a Committee of Convocation to inquire into the prevalence of intemperance, some opposed him on the ground that such matters were not the proper function of Convocation. Afterwards, when his report appeared, containing a most valuable mass of accurate information, and showing how closely the subject bore on the cause of religion, some who had opposed him bore a cordial testimony to the value of his labours. It is acknowledged that he contributed in a very marked degree to gain for the subject the increased attention which it has recently received in the Church of England.

FATHER JACKSON.

We give the familiar title of a well-known Wesleyan minister, who had touched the patriarchal age of ninety, and been a preacher in that Connexion for eight-and-sixty years. The son of an agricultural labourer, he came under religious impressions through the influence of his mother and of a female Methodist preacher. Besides serving for a long time in the ordinary ministry, he was, during another period, an editor of Wesleyan publications, and during still another, a tutor in a theological college. Twice he filled the office of President of the Conference, and in the course of his public life he wrote several works, mostly connected with the history of Methodism. His sagacious counsels, patriarchal years, venerable appearance, and winning manner made him an object of universal interest and regard among Wesleyans, and constituted him, in more senses than one, the father of his Connexion. Living calmly, he died peacefully and happily, in the full hope of that gospel which he had spent such an unusual period in proclaiming.

BENJAMIN HOBSON, M.B.

The name of this gentleman is well known in connection with his labours as a medical missionary employed by the London Missionary Society, and still more as a medical author in China. Independently of his constant labour in the Chinese hospitals, the great work of his life was the writing out and translating into Chinese of certain medical works. These consist of five treatises—on Anatomy, Surgery, Medicine, Midwifery, and Natural Philosophy—largely illustrated. These works have had a very wide circulation, and been remarkably well received. They have also been translated into the Corean and Japanese languages, and had great popularity in these countries. The demand for them is still on the increase, and edition after edition has been called for.

Dr. Hobson had to return some years ago to this country on account of health, and while suffering from heart disease, was cut off, at the age of fifty-seven, by a somewhat sudden and sharp attack of bronchitis.





"CROOKED PLACES."

CROOKED PLACES:

A Story of Struggles and Hopes.

By EDWARD GARRETT, AUTHOR OF "OCCUPATIONS OF A RETIRED LIFE," ETC.

PART III.—MILLICENT'S ROMANCE, AND WHAT IT WAS MADE OF.

CHAPTER XIII.—MILLICENT'S WAYS.



ALL those years Mrs. Harvey, Miss Brook, and Milly had still continued to live in the same pretty, leaf-covered cottage, which they

had taken in the early days of George's prosperity. It was much prettier now. They had never spent much upon it. But very small spendings for many years fast accumulate in beauty and comfort. And Milly's taste was never idle, and her mother's fingers were always busy. And now that the family had grown so small, there was room for elegance of arrangement, and there were a little dining-room and drawing-room, and each had a chamber to herself. Milly had the largest, with a big closet off it, because she made it serve as a studio as well. Mrs. Harvey had the one with a western window.

It was a very pleasant, peaceful home. The old ladies seldom went out, except to George's or Harriet's, but Milly's professional life kept the house astir with plenty of interest and excitement. Her mother and Miss Brook enjoyed it more than she did herself.

For the bright fragile girl had developed into a pale, keen-eyed woman. Strangers thought that she must be very delicate, but in truth she had the high-bred strength of a fine tempered blade. Altogether Milly was not unlike a swift, sharp sword.

Her habits were much the same as they had always been. She had never been a

notably early riser, like Hatty, but still she was always punctual at the breakfast table, as scrupulously neat in her attire as when she was going out to dine. Nay, more so; for Milly's personal neatness could never pass a certain point, and always failed where details grew elaborate. That was one sign of her impatience:

There was a little shelf at her bedside, filled with the quaint devotional books that were still her favourite religious reading. Perhaps, if anything were omitted from her daily orisons, it might be the Bible itself rather than these. Perhaps because, in it, she was left free to choose, instead of a passage being marked hard and fast for each day. But if Milly omitted the Bible occasionally from her morning and evening devotions, she studied it earnestly at other times. She almost knew the Psalms by heart, and even the book of Job, and some of the minor prophets. In her Bible the Old Testament was much more worn than the New.

Her professional work seldom occupied her more than four or five hours a day, often not so much. She was a rapid worker, one who was accustomed to say, "that if she was not doing a thing quickly, she knew she was not doing it well." She made no scruple of speaking about her methods, for she was wholly devoid of that professed humility which is often masked conceit. She did not work constantly, but with frequent intermissions, varying from a single day to a whole month. Her own explanation was that she "waited" for new ideas. "When I have done all that is in me, I stop till more comes," she said.

"Do you feel it coming?" people would ask her.

"No," she replied with a mysterious half-smile. "There is no need to watch the pitcher at the well; it is time enough to move it when it brims. All of a sudden I want to go to work again; and then I go."

"And you have not been thinking about it all the time?" they would inquire.

"No," she said. "At least, if I do, I have to wait just twice as long."

"Arn't you frightened lest it should not come?" said some.

"I should be if I could help it," she answered. "But it does not depend on me."

And that faith of Milly's always seemed to Mrs. Harvey to be the best part of her daughter's special inheritance. It was like a parent's letter sent with a birthday present. It was the very hand of God conveying his gift. And we cannot see all of any blessing that we have, unless we see also the hand that holds it. Mrs. Harvey herself, secretly confessed to some slight uneasiness, when Milly first indulged in these intermissions of labour, which was almost immediately after the household became mainly dependent upon her exertions. For though George still persisted in his allowance to his mother, Milly, in her turn, proudly insisted on returning him as much as she could, in presents to his little Robert, so named after his wife's uncle, and his own first benefactor. But Mrs. Harvey presently learnt that there are still barrels of meal and cruses of oil that do not fail. It inspired her with confidence to find that her daughter looked upon these snatches of leisure with calm delight, and planned little pleasures to occupy them. But even when Mrs. Harvey shared her daughter's faith she never ceased to wonder at and admire it. It was a comfort to her for Milly's own sake. For Milly seemed to trust herself rather than God in so many things.

Milly still continued fond of needlework. But when Mrs. Harvey ceased to be a breadwinner, she took the family mending upon herself, and Milly now entirely eschewed all repairing, altering, or trimming. In honest truth, her mother even mended her gloves, and sewed on her straying buttons. But whenever new white work was needed, especially if the seams were long and the material tough, Milly took it in her charge and got it done in an incredibly short space of time.

She never dabbled in household matters, as they arose day by day. In "spring-cleanings" Milly would give herself up for a week, as if there were no such thing in the world as art, and as if she had wielded brushes and spied out "corners" every day of her life. But once the house was set straight again, she retired into her own duties, oblivious of all beside them. She would wait for her mother to make tea or order dinner with quite masculine helplessness. Yet when her mother went away for a week to stay with Christian, she guided the house well, and Mrs. Harvey found nothing neglected during her absence. She was not an useless woman, but an absorbed one, who could set herself aside for a time, but could not bear to be broken in upon. She could make her own little crosses of spiritual disci-

pline after her own ideal, but shirked those which God makes for each of us, and puts where we are sure to find them, unless we turn out of our way to avoid them. It would have been easier for Milly to wear sackcloth, or to fast utterly on certain self-appointed days, than to bear with good humour an unexpectedly spoiled dinner or an accidentally torn dress. Perhaps she was no wiser than those housewives who shut out the healthy fresh air lest its current should raise the dust! It might be that Hatty was somewhat right, when she said to her husband and in her abrupt, off-hand way—

"If our Milly would sometimes infuse the tea, and go to market, she would find there is something else in the world beside those Lauries."

Milly kept up a pleasant chatter with her mother and Miss Brook, and many strangers would have thought her an unreserved woman. But her mother, at any rate, knew better. Milly's life and heart were large, and had many open chambers, some free to all, others cheerily open to those she loved. But her mother knew that there were many unaccounted for spaces among the windings of her daughter's experience.

Milly received and paid many visits, and had a wide circle of acquaintance. But there were very few who rose above this level. Milly herself was in the habit of saying "that she had not patience with people." Clearly she did not cultivate it. Where she had no affectionate prejudice she was quick to see faults and unsparing to condemn them.

"She can't take folks as she finds them," Hatty would say. "She makes their characters out of her own head, and when they don't fit, she just throws them away."

The few people who did get near Milly's heart were a strange jumble. She and Miss Brook were always sparring, but Miss Brook's voice was in all Milly's thoughts, and one light would die off Milly's world whenever her keen eyes were withdrawn.

Milly did not care much for David Maxwell. He was somebody who might be always invited when there were visitors, and he would never feel himself neglected if other people had to be entertained, and would be sure to entertain anybody else in danger of feeling neglected. Milly always said that "Mr. Maxwell was very kind." But she had never "made up" any character for David. Such of his early history as she knew had repelled rather than interested her. It did not clearly manifest those lines of independence, and struggle, and daring, to which

Milly's sympathies ran. Its manifold virtues were rather patience and submission, which were set down in Milly's secret heart as rather poor things, the resort of those who had nowhere else to go. Then the ugly rumour in the old local paper, which Milly would never have happened to see if Fergus Laurie had not shown it, with a hinting explanation, would return upon her mind sometimes, like a nameless horror between her and David, and give her an almost physical shrinking.

But Milly enjoyed Phoebe Winter. Her voice at the back door, discussing some kitchen loan, or other business, would always bring Milly down from her studio. Milly called her "a grand type," and revelled in her old-world shrewdness and dogged loyalty. It was perhaps a proof how much Milly's faith in ideals was, after all, as George had once warned her, rather a faith in her own opinion, that she never thought the more highly of David Maxwell for Phoebe's great love and belief in him. She only delighted in the love and belief as part of Phoebe's own character.

Perhaps Milly's nearest friend was her sister-in-law, Christian, with whom she had much more in common than with her own sister Hatty. In this she was under the disadvantage which every maiden has, in friendship with a wife, especially a happy one—the idle heart claiming something more than the busy heart has left in its power to give. Yet Millicent was unusually fortunate in Christian, who, though she kept a lover's romance in her wifely affection, and was a very madonna whenever she looked at her boy—nay, rather because of this—was still never a mere "married woman," but had a strong, sweet individuality of her own, which the influence of husband and child only raised and softened, as saints' names give human interest to churches sacred to far higher worship. Millicent had always been free from any taint of small sister-in-law jealousy, and now she felt that she loved and knew her brother far better in Christian than she could ever have done without her.

Christian herself had a growing love for Millicent, and enjoyed far more of her confidence than Millicent guessed. In their talks over fiction and politics, poetry and pictures, Christian always felt when Millicent was giving out her very self, could always detect whether the blood of a thought came from the head or the heart. Out of her own full, happy married life, Christian Harvey pitied Millicent, not for her maidenhood—

Christian had no "married woman's" pity for that, but would even tell George sometimes, with a smile dying into gentle gravity, that she was sure she would have made a very happy old maid herself, if he would have left her alone! But she pitied Millicent for her overflowing heart, sealed up, and for all the pathetic heresies with which she tried to make herself believe that this was best. She felt that Millicent was like a foolish miser storing gold in a bottomless well, while lives around were famishing for lack of a single coin, and thinking himself rich only to find some day that he was as poor as the poorest. She would try to give Milly suggestive warnings, just as kindly physicians may strive to convey wholesome hints about sufferings that are not absolutely presented for their cure. But Millicent's intuitions were almost as quick as her own, and she so proudly shrank into herself, that it was precisely the point where Christian could have helped her most that she withheld from Christian.

But Millicent had still some confidants, who poured out their souls to her without any limit. Not Fergus Laurie. Limits there had always been to his confidence, and now it had nothing but limits. He still liked to talk with her, but it was very much "a talk of the lips." But she kept her faith in the sacred secrets of the heart that was all shut up now. She would not defend much that others blamed in him—his arrogance, his recklessness, the high-handed, forgetful spirit that so often brought inconvenience to others and loss to himself. But the woman who was generally so impatient, was patient here.

"I know him," she would say. "Everybody has faults, and his are just the faults that everybody is severe upon. You all have patience with the helpless, and the ne'er-do-wells; you all stand still to pick up the man who has tumbled down, and to heal his scars. Let me trust in the man who tumbles up, and let me at least pity the scars which his reserved and sensitive spirit hides unhealed."

"I should think it was the will of God, for it seems a beautiful idea, and a sweet softening in Milly," said poor Mrs. Harvey to Miss Brook, "only it does not grow in her. It stays just there. When patience and pity begin, anyhow they generally spread."

"This isn't patience or pity," retorted Miss Brook. "It's just pride. But it isn't the worst kind."

No. Fergus Laurie had ceased to be

Milly's familiar friend, in the old, pleasant way. The freshest breeze that now blew into her guarded life, came from the lives of her sister's step-children.

The Webbers' home was quite uncommon, because it was directly matter-of-fact. It was a very comfortable, well-to-do home, but all affectation was left outside the door. Artistic taste might have scorned every detail of that house, but the best artists would have loved the whole. It was a jovial place, where one might put everything to the use it was intended, and where nothing was too good to wear out, but had a curious trick of improving in the process. How the bright big-patterned carpets had horrified Millicent, and drawn forth sneering jests from Mr. Laurie and his sister! Yet how handsome and respectable they looked, when the bustle of active feet had toned their hues and melted down their lines! But perhaps the peculiar style and spirit of the house is best revealed by the fact, that the boys' friends delighted to frequent it, and that those who elsewhere seemed all arms and legs, shyness and titter, astonished themselves and everybody else, by appearing respectable members of society in Mrs. Webber's "sitting-room."

The young people all adored their step-mother, and hung about her in all her rapid busy ways. The worst of Hatty was, that her immense capacities of loving service seemed to leave her no leisure to be served by love. All their affection had to be concentrated in the morning and evening kiss, an occasional five minute's hand-clasp in the twilight, and a yearly birthday present. And so they repaid her vicariously, by pouring out the love she awoke, on others whom she loved—"dear Grannie," and "Aunt Millicent."

Yes, it was really to Hatty's lowly, loving ways that Milly owed the bright, wholesome affection of these lads and lass. She would never have won it for herself,—nay, her absorbed heart scarcely knew that it was worth the winning. She would have often preferred a solitary walk, to their volunteered companionship, while their eager confidences, the hopes and dreams of their young lives, seldom seemed to her really worth the smile or the sigh which she gave them.

Milly was a great walker. Hatty took her exercise chiefly "running in and out," as she called it, bargaining in the market, looking up sick neighbours, slipping round for a half-hour's chat with Mrs. Harvey. Mr. Webber was not a walking man. His wife said he stood too much in the shop, to care for any-

thing but sitting down when he was out of it. Once or twice a year Hatty would dress herself ceremoniously, and go with Milly for a long walk. It was a true test of the healthfulness of her general "running in and out" exercise, that Milly, the pedestrian, never outwalked her. On her return from these excursions, Hatty would confide to whoever came nearest.

"I've enjoyed myself very much. Milly and I always talk more freely walking side by side than sitting opposite each other. But it is one thing for me to enjoy myself walking with her, and it is quite another to understand how she enjoys flying along by herself, as she does—just up one way and down another, as if she was hunting something."

It was a touching revelation, that as her brother George had walked and wandered in the days of his restless, yearning youth, so his sister Millicent walked and wandered in her middle age.

For Milly was middle-aged now, and knew it, and ached wearily as she knew it. Happy women do not sigh to know their youth is past. The blossom is better than the bud. But if the bud has never blossomed?

People would turn to look at Milly as she passed them in her lonely walks. She went so swift and straight that they wondered where she was going, and what she was going to do. But she was going nowhere, and to do nothing, except to turn back at an appointed time!

CHAPTER XIV.—A PAIN AND A DOUBT.

NOBODY ever knew anything about Milly's business transactions. She never talked them over. She never asked advice. Mrs. Harvey herself had always shrunk from pointed inquiry, feeling, from her own experience, that the burden of responsibility is often increased by the lightest touch, and that some hard things that must be done are easier to do in silence. Latterly—that is to say, for years past—she had been silent and uninquiring, out of utter satisfaction and content, just as in the earlier and prosperous years of her own married life.

But, at last, Christian began to detect in Milly a despondency that was quite a new thing. Sundry extreme economies, long laid by, began to reappear. Not any that touched her mother or the home, but Millicent wore her gloves shabbier, and bought no new dresses. She spoke more tenderly of failing people, whose work was not quite what it had been, but was still strong on the truth

that they should be ready to acknowledge the fact, nor feel wronged when they were put aside. Once, when Christian accidentally entered Milly's studio, she found her practising the old humble kind of work she had done in her early girlhood. Milly thrust it out of sight, and nothing was said on the subject.

The fact was, business matters had not been going quite brightly between Millicent and Fergus Laurie. He had reduced the payment for several of her last designs, saying that their success had not been what he had expected, vaguely hinting at certain losses as if they had been incurred through these. Then his orders had come at farther intervals. But when Milly ventured to tell him, what had happened often before, but had hitherto been passed over in silence, that the old firm of his former masters had been looking her up, and inquiring if her hands were still too full to do anything for them, this was the response she got—

"Ah, they are wanting something cheap! But your real friends feel that you need the repose which brings fresh ideas rather than to go slaving on in the old groove, Miss Millicent. Don't have anything to say to those people."

And Milly obeyed, but with sundry puzzled, painful reflections as to what was hidden under the phrase of her "needing repose."

She thought she needed no further explanation when another new discovery of David's was put before the world, not this time in her designs, but in those of a young lady, upon whose head Mr. Laurie heaped the praises he had once showered upon herself, with the addition that this artist worked *con amore*, being wealthy, and having no mercenary needs mingling in her ambition to soil and impoverish it.

On the same evening that Millicent heard all this, sitting in the splendid drawing-room of Acre Hall, Robina, chatting, as it seemed, quite naturally over the affairs of some third parties, was full of praises of her brother's tenderness and loyalty of heart, which made him strive "to keep on" *employés* whom anybody else would throw off to sink to lower and fitter levels of work.

That night, Millicent, sitting in her studio, shed some very bitter tears. She said to herself that, after all, like most other failing people, she was not aware of her present falling off, though all the work she had ever done suddenly seemed poor, mean, and pretentious. But at any rate—and she shook back her high-bred head till the streaming

tears flew right and left—she would be royally proud in her readiness to submit to the judgment of others, in a case where she had so often seen that it was worth so much more than the judgment of the person nearest concerned.

Poor, haughty, humble Millicent! How could she dream that Fergus would have been only too glad to put her drawings into this newest discovery, but that one of his largest creditors claimed this honour for his daughter, the *con-amore* artist, who for all her wealth demanded and obtained, for work which none but a debtor would have taken as a gift, twice the sum which would have satisfied Millicent? How could she, blinded by preconceived partialities, perceive that all Mr. Laurie's praises, past and present, were due not to a work in itself, but as done for him, and issued under his auspices—that Fergus was really scarcely a wiser art-critic than poor old Mr. Smith, of the "Leech-gatherer" order, and not half so simple and honest an one?

But all of a sudden Milly felt that her affectionate gratitude, which she had hitherto so proudly displayed, as if it were the very crown of life, had become a crown of thorns. The fact is, there are very fine lines drawn about gratitude, and it is well that it is so. The higher natures cannot easily be gracefully and contentedly grateful for any relief that comes to them by the pain of another. They can be bountifully grateful for the superior strength that can lift off, and carry readily the burden that was crushing themselves, but if they see that it is also a burden to its new bearer, their first impulse is to snatch it back crying, "Let me, rather than another, perish under mine own burdens."

This is one reason how it is that so many think they get least gratitude where they seem to have earned most. Noble hearts, such only as are capable of gratitude, would never have allowed themselves to get so deep in debt. The man whom we dare not help, except by a letter of recommendation, which we are ashamed to remember, feels himself indebted to us for ever. The other, who allows us to maintain him, shakes off the dust of his feet upon us, whenever we at last venture to hint that he may be self-supporting.

Nor can any man be grateful for what is done for him consciously, painfully, and with a grudge. Few of us could be made happy by the hospitality of a host, who kept an account of all we cost him—breakfast, dinner, bed, boots, and attendance, just like an inn-keeper, although he never sent in his bill,

and only expected us to pay him by an exact return of his civilities! The fact is, we are grateful not so much for what we receive, as for the love or kindness which makes our benefactor feel it a pleasure to give. If any man does not feel it infinitely "more blessed to give than to receive," let him expect no thanks. It is doubtful whether we should weep for a man who died for us, if he claimed our tears as the reward of his sacrifice. The Great Sacrifice of the World, the just who died for the unjust, bade his mourners, "Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children."

But poor Milly, sitting there in her darkened chamber, could not think—she could only suffer. Feelings came to her heart, rather than reflection to her head. Now it was a wild wish to repay Fergus for all the kindness he had shown her, and the inconvenience he must have suffered through it. Next it was a stabbing wish that she had found the truth out entirely for herself, instead of receiving it through the Lauries' hints. It would have been so easy to say to Fergus, "My powers have disappointed you; let me go," and all his kindness, and all her gratitude could have gone with her, stainless and unflawed, treasures for the rest of life to keep, if not to use. The terrible pity of it was, that Milly felt already they could never be so now. They had received a blow, and at the least touch they would fall to pieces, and however she might afterwards gather them up and mend them, they could never again be unbroken.

Other feelings would come. If Fergus were disappointed in her—if he had measured her powers amiss, and put her in places too high for her, had he been really kind to her after all? If in mistake, a man dubs a plain mister "his lordship," has he done him real honour? Milly almost felt as if she had small reason to be grateful to Fergus for taking her from the quiet, regular duties where she had always given boundless satisfaction, and that it was a poor thing to be raised to a pedestal only to be tumbled from it. She caught herself actually calculating that one year with the other, and one chance with another, she might easily have made as large an income with the old firm as she had with Fergus. It was true that she might not have saved as much, for Fergus' times of payment were always so dreadfully uncertain, that while the more improvident of those who worked for him were constantly out-at-elbows and living on borrowed money, Milly, from the experience of her youth, and her heredi-

tary horror of debt, diligently kept down expenses in every way, so as to be forearmed against ever such long periods of waiting, a process which, regularly repeated for many years, had now resulted in a very respectable sum of savings. Out of considerate desire to save troubling Robina Laurie's brother, Milly's one black silk dress had worn out half a score of Robina's.

Then again, if Fergus was sometimes very liberal in his payments, Milly had long since been forced to own to herself that it was under particular conditions. If he had at first given her a higher class of work and paid her more highly for it, he had since paid her absolutely less than she would have got elsewhere. She had not heeded that—she had been glad of it—proud of it—delighted to feel that it was a fitting reward for his kindly faith in a beginner. But now she felt—and despised herself for feeling—that she would like to let Robina know this side of the subject, as well as the side of her brother's magnanimity.

Then again, she knew that Fergus was in the habit of indulging his generosity at the expense of justice, that lately he had been doing two or three showily magnificent liberalities, while she herself was very wearily waiting for her rightful payment. Once or twice, against her will, she had actually caught herself wondering if anybody—and who—had suffered in the long-ago days when her own receipts were always prompt and ample. Little did she guess the light that David Maxwell could have thrown on this question!

These shadows had fitted across her mind sometimes, just now and then, and only for a moment. Now they mustered in force. But the old, wilful womanly faith, roused itself from fainting, and gathered itself up to repel them. They seemed mean and paltry and below it, and it would drive them down and banish them as was fit. It was surely but the shadow of her disappointment in herself which was darkening over Fergus. Better to think one's sight is wrong than that the sun is growing black!

There are senses in which Millicent was both right and wrong. Common sense is one of the best of things, but there are grander things than it is. There are times when its dictates are the dictates of the devil. Poor Don Quixote appears a fool beside his Sancho Panza, but that is because he is wasting his knightliness in Sancho's proper domain of windmills and kitchen wenches. On Don Quixote's own level of daring and sacrifice,

Sancho would be not only ridiculous, but contemptible into the bargain. Which would you prefer to be within ear-shot, if you were really a distressed damsel in extreme danger? But the mischief is—and it is a mischief—that Don Quixote will waste his heroisms on the windmills!

And so, all Milly's pain and doubt and bitterness ended in a conclusion and a wish. A conclusion that it was Robina and not Fergus himself, who made gratitude galling. And a wish to make some return, which without effacing her own gratitude—to which she clung like a drowning mariner to his last spar—should make Fergus grateful to her, and set them both once more on a noble equality, to be friends as they used to be!

So little did she know what it really was that had come between them!

CHAPTER XV.—A WOMAN'S GRATITUDE.

BUT at last, as the complications of "Laurie & Co." thickened and deepened, the creditors began to watch the business so carefully, that Fergus Laurie could snatch from it no more than barely sufficed to keep the wolves of last year at bay, while those of the present were clamouring at the door. The firm still kept up in respectable working order. Its creditors took care of that, for it was their only chance of repaying themselves. It was Fergus's private income alone which came to a dead lock. He was still deriving a tolerable sum from the business, but what was any sum with limits to a man who had launched into extravagance on borrowed money, and extricated himself from one loan after another, by contracting new and larger ones, at higher and higher interest?

One expedient by which he had often kept a little ready money in hand, was to defer the payment of those who worked for him, more especially those who were on friendly and trustful terms. Some of his people, with small means and heavy charges, had been driven to ask payment. They did it very reluctantly. He had held forth such brilliant pictures of his idea of the relation of employer and employed, that they absolutely forgot they had never derived any benefit therefrom. And if they forgot, how much more did he! Fergus's mind grew sore with his constant reflections on ingratitude.

Fergus had a special grievance against David Maxwell. David's minimum salary was in arrear, and he had received absolutely no bonus for the last twelve months. David had said nothing about this, and had not asked for any money for himself. But

Fergus's old friend and faithful coadjutor had committed what Fergus held to be unpardonable sin. He could and did easily forgive some of the more thriftless of his people, who asked for money before they had earned it, and these often got it from him, while the others went without. He liked their "trust" in him; and to pay money that was not earned, in a dashing, unledger-like fashion, fostered the sense of magnificent autocracy, into which all Fergus's ambitions had finally resolved themselves. Paying what was due was a humdrum affair. Everybody did that!

But David, though kept in profound ignorance of all the larger concerns of Laurie & Co., could guess at something, by such fragments as from time to time accidentally dropped before him. And David would constantly remind Fergus that it was the date to pay this one or that one; nay, in cases where the people were elderly, needy, or unprotected, would so press the matter that Fergus could not shirk it without a plainer statement than it suited his pride to make. It was David's constant hints which had long kept Millicent's accounts from falling into hopeless arrear and confusion.

But, as the rude old saying has it, "one cannot get more from a cat than her skin;" and when there was positively no money in Fergus's hands (not even to pay Robina's dressmaker), David's hints on even this matter became ineffectual. Only the higher Millicent's debt rose, the more Fergus insinuated and insisted on the gratitude due from her to himself, the more he criticized her work, and the less he gave her of it.

Millicent writhed in secret tortures. If she could only recompense Fergus for the loss, which, rightly or wrongly, he and his family seemed to feel he had incurred through "taking her up," she would go forth happily, and earn her bread cheerfully elsewhere, wherever she could find it.

A chance remark developed in her an idea on the subject. Somebody said—it was the wife of a wealthy tradesman in the neighbourhood—"that for all the wonderful way Mr. Laurie had got on, he seemed always very short of money; perhaps his business took it all up."

Millicent turned this over in her mind; and it seemed to her that both the fact and the supposition were likely to be well founded.

Then it occurred to her that it might really be in her power to do Fergus a service. The savings of her lifetime amounted to seven or eight hundred pounds, duly

invested in the Three per Cents. Her family knew she had money there, but they did not know how much. She had not allowed even her brother George to know the fluctuations of her affairs, having a proud fear lest he might at some time want to help her where she could help herself.

Milly knew nothing of the loan still existing between Fergus and her brother-in-law, Webber. She had heard something at the time, but had supposed that it was all settled long ago, as "of course" all the earlier matters of the firm must be. Hatty had never told her otherwise. Hatty knew how to keep counsel. In her own words, "she might gossip about what she guessed of her own wit; but when she was fairly told anything, she held her tongue."

Millicent thought to herself that she might really oblige Fergus by putting her little fortune at his disposal. She was a sensible woman, and at another time and with another person, would have understood that it could be no particular service to lend him a sum which he could have easily at command, simply by leaving Acre Hall, and living in a way more consistent with his antecedents and means. But pain, and grief, and pride blinded Millicent.

She had no wish to humiliate Fergus, by letting him think for a moment that she believed he needed the money. She wished to make it appear a mere business transaction, by which she might get a trifle more interest than from her stocks. Millicent was a magnanimous woman, and rejoiced in the hope of repaying something of whatever she might owe for the ease of her own heart, not for the pain of another's. She only hoped to make Fergus think of her, as a serviceable friend, as of old, instead of the burden which she had lately appeared. The moment that her plan formed within her, she said within herself that kindness can never be repaid, and that every kindness given in return is a new blessing bestowed by the first benefactor.

As she made up her mind to follow out this sudden plan, which seemed to her like an inspiration, the soreness died out of her heart, and she remembered it only as one remembers a fevered dream. Now it felt easy to accept much with which she had been fighting fiercely. After all, what did it matter if her drawings had never come up to the standard which Fergus had set for them. Having done this service in return, it would be quite bearable to go back to the old humble ways of toiling. Life was not in

these things; the soul had a history distinct from these. To bind it to them was scarcely less ignoble slavery, than to bind existence to its trappings of dress and furniture—like—poor Robina!

For as she sat at her desk, planning her letter to Mr. Laurie, Millicent could not help thinking of Robina. She could forgive Robina now, for many a sting which had once seemed as if it must rankle for ever. Robina had a habit—common to most who know nothing of the real bliss of near ties—of making her relationship to Fergus a vaunt and a taunt to outsiders. Whenever there came forward any of those little questions, whether financial, legal, or political, which specially interest women, Robina was addicted to dismiss them from discussion because "they could not matter to her. She had her brother; she need not trouble herself about such things, though it was only natural that other people should do so, who had nobody to look after them." But Milly remembered this now with a smile, and forgave it. Poor Robina! Her idle, selfish life would never enjoy the privilege of offering even such a little service as this to her brother. Millicent thought of her in her heart as "poor Robina," and felt she would be able to bear all the helpless sister's boasts for the future.

She had no fears for the worldly wisdom of what she was doing. Amid all her doubts and anguishes, she still trusted Fergus. And in those events of life and death in which human faith and trustworthiness avail nothing, she felt she was willing and able to take all risk.

Her letter was very brief:—

"DEAR MR. LAURIE,—Forgive me for troubling you about a little matter of my own private business. I have saved money to the amount of nearly eight hundred pounds. It is now invested in Three per Cents.; but I think I might get a little higher interest. I believe some merchants consent to receive such loans from people at about four or five per cent. Would you do this for me? I do not ask my brother-in-law, Mr. Webber, because I do not like my family to know every up and down of my business life. Their knowledge, and perhaps wish to help me would be a pain and a burden to me. Will you let me have a speedy answer, as, if you consent, I shall like to make the change as soon as possible.

"Faithfully yours,

"MILlicENT HARVEY."

She put on her bonnet to post the letter herself. As she passed through the little hall, she found her mother dealing with an itinerant flower-vendor for groundsel for the canary. The man had some primroses and violets at the other end of his basket, and Millicent paused to admire them, and bought a dozen of the tiny bunches. It was a long

time since she had spent even such a trifle on pure pleasure. But with her letter in her hand, Millicent Harvey felt rich.

Then she went swiftly down the long sunny road. She encountered a neighbour whom she had generally passed with a civil nod, but to-day she paused to say something about the bright, spring weather.



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"It agrees with you, I can see, Miss Harvey," responded the old lady, "for you are looking quite blooming!"

Millicent smiled. She knew it was true. And yet it was only yesterday that somebody else had warned her that she should take great care of herself, she looked so fragile! Millicent's frame was like a transparent sheath—when the sword within was bright, the sheath was illumined.

Two or three hours later, the postman delivered her letter at the counting-house. At the same moment, a servant girl came running up, breathless, with another. The office boy carried them both to Fergus.

Fergus Laurie read them, one after the other. That which was delivered by hand he crumpled up, and tore into twenty pieces. He would need no memoranda to keep its purport in mind. For it was much like this:—

"The man has got in. I stayed on guard, as you told me, all the morning, but nobody came. I had only just gone to my room to try on my blue silk when a man came and said his boy had dropped his cap over our wall, and might he look for it; and the donkey of a cook let him in, and here he is. It is no use scolding me. You ought to be ashamed of yourself for leaving me in such a plight, and getting us into such disgrace. The man is smoking, and his vile tobacco poisons me. I do not see why I am to bear these things for you. I am dying.

"Your injured sister,

"ROBINA."

"Is the girl who brought this waiting for an answer?" Fergus inquired of the office-boy, with a coolness as perfect as if it had related only to the hour fixed for dinner.

"Yes, sir," said the lad. "I told her you was busy, but she said she daren't go back without something."

Fergus took up an envelope, and wrote inside:—

"Don't die till I return. Take a glass of wine, and go up-stairs and try on your blue silk again. Have not you any eau-de-cologne in the house?"

And having dispatched this cynical mis-sive, he re-perused Millicent's letter.

"There are women and women," he said to himself.

CHAPTER XVII.—FRIENDS AND LOVERS.

It was quite true that Acre-Hall had just received a new and very disagreeable tenant—a man in a brown great coat with frayed sleeves, who said it was thirsty weather, and asked where the beer was kept, and laid a long clay pipe on the beautiful hall table. He was not an unexpected visitor.

One of Fergus Laurie's private creditors had been pressing hard for a long while. He had written half a score of letters, civil and almost kindly in their very sternness. Anybody but Fergus would have seen that the writer meant to carry out his will, and so framed his demand like a request, and did not bluster. But Fergus thought this calmness augured patience, and superbly took no notice, till one day he found that legal processes were commenced, and next, that that sort of domestic barricade was necessary, which so often begins among ormolu and choice wines, to be set up again and again till at last there is nothing behind it but a pawn-ticket and a corpse!

To Fergus the bitterness of the blow lay

in the fact that it happened to come from a man whose connection Fergus had scorned, and whose kindness he had slighted in his old lofty days. This was the kind of pang that Fergus really felt. He had grown callous to most but the sting of personal pique.

Fergus was always vaguely expecting a shower of gold to fall and fill the gaping purses of his creditors. The wonderful indomitable hopefulness, which might have been the greatest blessing of his life, had grown into his greatest bane, as great blessings have it in them to grow. Several times things had happened, as he put it, "just as they should," and he had found unexpected ways—though they might not be the cleanest—out of bogs of difficulty.

It seemed to Fergus, standing there with Robina's letter in fragments at his feet, and Millicent's in his hand, that the one might be the "providential" solution of the other.

Not that he thought of robbing Millicent of the savings of her patient laborious life. He expected that something else would happen which would enable him to pay her again, or at least to pay her interest in due course. He felt quite sure that he could get plenty of money from other quarters if he only tried hard enough, and he had a delusion that there were securities in his power to offer. Alas, a man is a poor deceiver if he is not the first person to be deceived by himself!

At that instant, he hastily thrust the letter away, for David came into the room. He looked even unusually quiet and grave. But Fergus could read a knowledge in his eyes and a regret in his voice, which made him say, within himself, as it seemed, inconsequently—

"Where would Maxwell be now if it had not been for me?"

"It is more than two months ago since you ought to have paid Miss Harvey, Fergus," David began.

"Well, I know it is," Fergus said tartly; "but she can wait. She has been too well paid to be in such extreme want of money."

"It is not a question of want of money or no," David went on. "It is a question of justice."

"Well, she cannot be paid now, and that must be the end of it," said Fergus.

"She must be paid," David returned steadily. "I have just found out what is going on in Acre Hall at this moment. It is known in the office somehow, and I heard it there. After this, there will be sure to be a settlement of everything. At the present time, Millicent Harvey is the only one

among those who work for you whose debt is very considerable. The others have got into the habit of asking you for money, while my representations of her case have lately gone quite unheeded."

"So this is the end of your friendship, is it?" said Fergus. "To turn upon me in my day of difficulty!"

David's face quivered just for a moment. "I am Millicent Harvey's friend as well as yours, Fergus," he said. "And I am more your friend in this than you think. I want you to do what you will be glad to remember you have done, Fergus."

"How can I pay her?" Fergus asked restively. "I shall have to borrow money to pay this execution out of the Hall. It is a terrible revelation to find one's friends taking advantage of an awkward shortness of ready money, although there is plenty behind the scenes."

"I will advance you what is needed to pay Miss Harvey," said David. "It is just a hundred and fifty pounds. It can be set down to my account against the firm, and I can wait indefinitely. Call upon her to-night, Laurie, and tell her candidly how things are, and the circumstances under which you cannot give her so much work as formerly, and set her free from all tie to us; and tell her that if she calls here to-morrow, she shall be paid all up. It is the plain truth, Fergus, and you will never repent speaking it. If you will not tell her, Fergus, I will go and tell her myself. I had no idea how bad things were, or I should have said this before. Perhaps I ought to have known, so as to be able to help you to take the brave and right course. If there was any indolence and over-easiness in my ignorance, I hope you will forgive me."

Fergus looked up at David with a bright eager gaze, and David's heart leaped within him, as he thought that perhaps this time of hard facts and plain speaking might be also a time for the renewing of the old true, open friendship.

But this was the only interpretation of Fergus's eyes.

"Why not lend me this one hundred and fifty to pay out the execution, old friend? The debt is not so much as that. And then whatever measures I would have to take to pay it off, I will take to pay Millicent instead. It will not be so hard to sell something to pay her as to pay that fellow."

David shook his head sadly. "I am but a poor man," he said. "All my means could not extricate you from your difficulties,

even if such extrication, by itself, would be any real service to you."

"But I am your old friend, Maxwell," said Fergus. "Why should not you wish to help me, as far as you can, as much as Miss Harvey? Miss Harvey is not in need. She can always be independent; and she has helpful friends. I don't know that I have any—unless it be you."

A faint flush passed swiftly over David's face. Through all these years his old boyish love for Millicent had seemed to linger in his heart, only as the faint perfume of faded flowers lingers in a shut-up room. But now it was as if a door was opened, and the flowers lifted up their heads as the breeze rushed through.

He walked slowly up and down the room.

"I have never said a word to anybody all these years," he said; "indeed, there is nothing to say. It is only a folly of mine. But I bless God for it notwithstanding. A man does not ask a woman to marry him if he is sure she would refuse. If I had thought there was the least chance for me, I would have asked Millicent Harvey to be my wife years, and years, and years ago. She is the only woman I ever loved in my life. There, Fergus, old boy, if I did not think of you as of a dearest friend, would I tell you this?"

He held out his hand to Fergus, who put his into it, saying, "I believe you are a good fellow, Maxwell. I know you are. I will see Miss Harvey to-night, or if not to-night, to-morrow. It will all be well again. And though I tell her she need not tie herself down to us, that's no reason why we should not give her so much to do that she won't think of any one else. I'll manage matters very differently to what I have done; and you'll stick by me, won't you, David?"

In those words—the suggested endearment, the fatally ready admission, the half-promise, and the groundless hopefulness—lay all the danger and all the promise of poor Fergus Laurie's character! David's words came to him like a guardian angel's whisper in a dream. The worst of it was that the world, represented by Robina's clamorous voice, was sure to seem to him the waking reality, to which he would turn, with half a sigh, for the sweet ideal gone out of his reach.

And so the two parted.

David went off to his lonely home thinking, "We will save him yet—we two, Millicent and I. He has been walking in dangerous paths; that he chose them for himself only made their greatest danger. I think he

will confide in me now, as he used to do. And when he once begins to speak with her, he will be sure to confide in her, and she will give him so much help. Who knows but that this time of revelation and humiliation may be the very sealing of a life-long bond between Millicent and Fergus? If he has been false to himself and unkind to her, I am sure there are depths of pitiful loving-kindness and tender mercy in her."

David himself had forgiven the unknown mother who had left him but a legacy of shame: he had forgiven the father who had blighted his youth, and the woman who had embittered it. David had practised forgiveness till the power had grown so easy that he never even noticed when he exercised it!

Only as he went along, David thought within himself how selfish he was, and what an especial blessing it was to him that no goodness of one's own is any item in one's acceptance with God. For out of all the shock and pain, he felt a little bit of happiness shooting like a blue mountain flower from the devastation of an avalanche. In this time of trouble, he was the one who could advise Fergus, and shield Millicent. There was a sense in which, after all, he was useful and necessary to the two—man and woman—in whose life he had lived far more than in his own. He did not think he had ever wanted much more than this. At any rate, nothing else could have been half so good. Of other dreams, other hopes, he thought now as a grown man thinks of the toys he coveted in childhood!

Fergus Laurie went home to Acre Hall. He gave a contemptuous grunt at the clumsy salutation of the disagreeable man seated in the hall, and passed on to the drawing-room. There seemed something in the very atmosphere of the house which made him think within himself that David Maxwell's way of talk was all very fine and well-meant, doubtless, but that it must be modified in such a world as the real one.

Mrs. Laurie was in bed. She had retired thither on the first appearance of the disagreeable man. But Robina was ready to receive him, with a grievance longer than herself.

"What other woman has to endure such treatment as this?" she cried. "Is the vicar's daughter expected to entertain a man in possession? Does your fine Miss Harvey have to put up with such a humiliation in the sight of her servant?"

"Miss Harvey is in altogether different circumstances. You can't compare her with

yourself," said Fergus. "If she had a man in possession, it would be of her own goods; she is the real mistress of her house."

"Then you ought to be ashamed of yourself to bring your house to such a pass," Robina retorted. "As you say, it isn't my affair, and I'm sure it is not my fault. Nobody can say I'm extravagant. I've never had more than a half-pennyworth of milk taken in for tea, just for the sake of saving; and whenever chance visitors have happened to come, I have had to send out for more; and one half the time they have known it, so they couldn't think me extravagant. And I've never given a single present,—so different to you who are always throwing away on strangers! You had no right to set yourself up in such grandeur if you can't keep it up."

"That's a true word, Robina," said Fergus carelessly.

"But you ought to be able to keep it up," she went on, only more angrily. "I don't believe it is a bit more than we have a right to. And now I suppose we shall have to go and live in some hokey-pokey hole, hardly better than the Harveys' cottage. Of course, it is easy enough for them who have never been used to anything else; but after what I have been accustomed to, it will be very hard. It will be unendurable!"

"What have you been accustomed to?" asked Fergus, with his provoking calmness. "Do you mean to Acre Hall, or to the single room over the tripe shop, where we all lived in father's time, when there were five of us to be supported on the pension that mother spends on her own washing bill nowadays?"

Robina gave him one unutterable look, and went out of the room, leaving him alone in the splendid saloon,—the same, only still more resplendent with satin and gilding, where, on that far-away summer evening, he had sat with Millicent Harvey, while the soft early moonlight came stealing down through the elm-tree, and he was very near saying to her that all beauty and all success would be nothing to him without her. He was not the first man who, having to choose between the princess and the palace, chooses the palace, only to find that all crumbles away without the princess, while she makes a palace wherever she goes.

Fergus had not sat there long before he rang the bell hard, and bade the servant bring up some brandy and soda-water. That was no unusual order. The excited, feverish life he was leading, deprived him of appetite.

Wholesome food had grown thoroughly distasteful, and the highly-seasoned, artificial morsels he could still enjoy, only fostered his craving for stimulants.

Fergus sat there sipping his glass, and felt himself a bitterly ill-used man. He took up the grand visions of his aspiring youth, and put them side by side with his blasted present, and set the two down as cause and effect, without reference to anything between them. He thought his ambition had been to make business but a wider and truer philanthropy, "therefore" he was a ruined man. Others had only aimed at fortunes for themselves, and so had made them. But it never struck Fergus that this purely unselfish philanthropy of his had grasped at the glories of fortune, without even the trouble of making it.

It was no new thing for Fergus to say to himself that "something must be done." What he had never yet dreamed of doing was to give up Acre Hall, and reduce his expenses to whatever trifle there might be to meet them. That alternative seemed now staring him in the face.

He had spoken truly—truer than he meant or knew—when he said to David that he was his only friend. He had given up his Friend in heaven. That sounds an awful thing to say: alas, that men find it the easiest thing to do! What can a man have to do with God who only wants help to pay for the wine that is destroying him, defence against claims which are just, wisdom and counsel to scheme for wrong and selfish ends? These are not the "crooked places" which the Lord has promised to straighten. And who were Fergus's friends on earth? Not the two hard selfish women who were ready to make up their minds that whatever he did was right, because it was his doings that fed them daintily and clothed them softly. Chance words of theirs were never likely to cast a gleam of sunlight on any storm-battered soul as the chance words of some women might. Help and inspiration did not grow wild in their conversation. Oh, had Fergus raised his eyes from the mean and sordid plague-spot that had crept over his young ambition, to see such a woman as Christian Harvey smiling love and peace beside his hearth, perchance he would long ago have started as from an evil dream, and awaked to his better self. But it was Fergus's own wilfulness which had shut him up with those two women as the genii of his life.

Gradually thoughts began to rise out of the whirl of heated feelings, and to link themselves together.

At first, "I am tired of this kind of life. What the better am I now that I am sitting on a carved and velvet chair? It might as well be a wooden one with a chintz cushion!"

Then, "I have never enjoyed what I have had in this way. There has been no time for anything but worry."

"Oh I wish I was young again! I wish I was just starting in business. What a different plan I should lay out!"

"And so David Maxwell has had a liking for Millicent Harvey. I used to think so. Lately I've forgotten all about it. She has never cared a straw for him. He was a wise man to know it. It would have been different with somebody else, I think. I did not refrain from proposing to her, because I thought there was no chance of acceptance" (and in all his misery, Fergus, alone in the twilight, smiled a vain man's smile). "I only wish I had proposed to her at the very beginning. I believe I should have got on better. At any rate, she would not be such a squeaking idiot as Robina."

"And so David Maxwell is paying my debt to her out of his romantic affection! Well, I can believe things of that sort of David better than of most men. But I shouldn't wonder that he has a sneaking idea that he will help her to get work, and so on, and that somehow she'll find out this is his money, and so forth! I don't say he does it for that, or that he knows in his heart he wants it, but yet he'll work it round so."

"And after that she might marry him, just out of gratitude. Women will do that sometimes. She'll think it is too late for her to do any better. What a pity!"

"I really do not see why I shouldn't marry her myself, after all. If I go myself to-night and tell her that we are going out of business, and that she will be paid to-morrow, that is what I promised David, and he will have no excuse to go there bungling himself. I shall say what he said I ought to say, and what more I say is my own business. I won't borrow her money—that, under the circumstances, would be only putting myself in a dangerous position. But once we are married, it would enable me to settle up these two or three little personal debts to people whom I can't bear to triumph over me. And then my business will be wound up, and I shall get a share of something, somehow. And then I'll begin again, in the quietest of ways. How can one be wise without experience? Robina must go away. She has never been satisfied with what I've done for her, and she can't expect me to

forget her reproaches now. She can take a situation of some kind. Her manners have been polished up by the society she has met here, so she has lost nothing by being with me. It don't matter much to me what she is, for I won't set up in business in London again, but far down in the country. I'll allow mother a little if I can, but, anyhow, she has her pension, and must have more clothes by her now than she can ever wear out."

But while this undercurrent of thought really flowed through Fergus's soul, his self-knowledge went no deeper than the surface whereon rippled such self-delusions as these:—

"I have gone wrong for want of such a woman as Millicent to be my household friend. I don't think she is happy. Why should we not both endeavour to make the best of what remains for each other? She must be lonely, poor thing, for all the rest of her family have their own private interests. I can't be marrying her for her money—nobody can say that. What are her seven or eight hundred pounds to a man in my position? And I could get them if I liked without marrying her. If I wanted to marry money, I would marry tens of thousands. No, I want herself. I could face poverty, or any change with her; and I am sure I shall be a great comfort and stronghold to her. I'll tell her at once that I won't borrow her money, nor have anything to do with it, except by our both having one purse hence-

forth. We'll be married as soon as possible—in about a week, say. And there is no need to trouble her about my business arrangements. I'll tell her the truth that I'm going out of business, and really she could not understand the ins and outs if I tried to explain them; and, besides, I myself know everything will be all right, though she, as a woman, might be nervous. We shall be in Acre Hall for another six months, while things are wound up. Mother and Robina can go and stay at the seaside for that while."

The thought of six months in the glories of Acre Hall, in Milly's society, and with the responsibilities, at least, of business lifted off his shoulders, was a prospect beyond which such a mind as Fergus's did not care to look. To others, it might have seemed only a respite. But that was all his ambition now. He lived in such a hot momentary struggle, that the thought of even a week's freedom was like ages of paradise.

The last ray of spring daylight had just faded as he took his hat from the rail in the hall, and started off for the Harveys' cottage. He seemed no longer to notice the presence of the disagreeable man in the hall—an omission which that worthy resented by grunting to himself.

"I should think that difficulties is that gemman's native air. His eye seemed to take me in as natural as if I was a walking-stick."

LENDING UNTO THE LORD.

IN the year 1858, I was sent by the Home Mission Committee to evangelize in the north of Scotland, among the fishermen around Aberdeen. My head-quarters were in the "Granite City," where I lodged in Marischal Street. Going up and down the street, my attention was attracted by an old blind man who sat by the bridge there, with a dog with a tin cup in its mouth. There he sat, day after day, chanting in a very dolorous way, these grand old words, in Proverbs xix. 17: "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will He pay him again."

Again in 1859, I was sent upon the same mission still farther north. I halted for a night in Aberdeen, on my way, and passing through the same street, I found the old man still by the bridge, with his dog and tin cup, crying as before: "He that hath pity upon

the poor lendeth unto the Lord," &c. One was with me the second time, who dropped by my side ere twelve months more had gone. The Master came, all unlooked for, and called her, and she passed away into the unseen, to join the great company in the better country. Oft this old blind man, chanting these grand, but much-forgotten words, has come before my mind embalmed with endearing associations, telling alike of this high and holy duty, and of the shortness of the time given us to pursue this work of love, and how near the glorious reaping time may be, in which every deed of kindness will be rewarded a hundred-fold.

This old blind man, crying for alms, was just the tangible proof of our Lord's words, "The poor ye have always with you," and that a great part of practical Christianity is to act aright towards them. We have not

the living Christ to minister to personally upon earth; nor his dead body to embalm with sweet spices now; but we have the poor with us always, and them He commends to the dearest sympathies of all who love Him. He himself was truly the friend of the poor when He was in the world, and all who follow Him are moved by the same spirit.

HE WHO HATH PITY UPON THE POOR.

This is the man we have set before us. He pities the poor. Poverty, poorness, is one of the evils which are found in a fallen world. But for sin it would have had no place. It would have been quite unknown, for there would have been all store of blessing in the Father's love. It was not in the father's house the prodigal son began to be in want, but in the strange country afar off, when he had spent all his living.

Poorness, "*poorteth*," is the outward characteristic type of the state of misery into which man has fallen by forsaking God. It is not, however, in all cases immediately associated with sin, though it is oft directly caused by it. The poor are in want of all that nature urgently calls for. They lack bread and raiment—the two great common wants. They are in sore straits, having no resources—no power to help themselves. They are sunk in deep misery—their homes are desolate. All is sad, and full of sorrow, and weakness, and disease. No joy casts its light across their paths—cold and chilling shadows are ever over them.

But here is one who *pities the poor*. Pity is one of the noblest features which characterize our common nature. It is that which binds the heart of a mother to her child in loving affection, leading her to sacrifice her own comfort for its life, and to watch over it night and day with untiring, uncomplaining care.

The pitiful man is a *gracious* man, full of tender mercy, ever ready to help. His heart beats responsive to every cry of distress. He locks not up his sympathies in unlovely, base selfishness. He is a man of a warm heart, which guides and constrains him unto all loving ways. He seeks not his own, but another's wealth. He looks out for the distressed and needy. He thinks of his "poor brother," and he, whatever priest or Levite may do, does *not* pass by on the other side. His is an operative, *giving* pity, which cannot be satisfied with saying, "Be ye warmed and filled." His gracious heart opens his hand, and even his home for the needy.

We should note this well, it is pity which

gives, and it is given in *pity*. The pitying heart bestows the gift, and the gift is given in a loving, delicate way—so unlike the bishop who would not give a penny to a beggar, but when asked was quite ready to bestow his blessing: "Keep thy blessing," said the beggar, "for were it worth a penny I should not have it." No, he who pitieth the poor is like good Bishop Wilson, of Sodor and Man, who prayed God thus: "Give me grace that, while I am able, I shall never turn away my face from any poor man, that thy face, and the light of thy countenance, may never be turned away from me."

HE LENDETH UNTO THE LORD.

We have hitherto had before us only these two; the poor with their sad wants, and him who has pity upon them. But now another appears upon the scene—the Mighty God! Though he who pitieth is unconscious of any other, save the poor one whom he has helped, being privy to his kindness, and though he would be pained to think of its being known, it is yet known to Him who is over both rich and poor. Strange as it doubtless is, all which he did, as he thought to the poor alone, has in reality been done to the Lord. His pitying kindness, which made their hearts to rejoice, has made the Lord his debtor! We have his own word for it: "He that hath pity upon the poor leendeth unto the Lord."

How beautiful is the illustration our Lord gives of this in his account of the awards of the judgment day!—"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me." Why, they know nothing whatever of this, and cannot understand what He means. "Lord," say they, "when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?" They are amazed at his words, but He explains the whole: "And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

How wondrous is this, in entertaining the

poor, they have entertained not angels, but the Lord himself! Having given of the substance with which He endowed them to those in need, not thinking of anything further, they have lent unto the Lord. For all He counts himself their debtor.

THE LORD WILL PAY HIM AGAIN.

The light in which the Lord regards it is remarkable; it is as a *debt* which He is due. He might indeed have looked upon it simply as the discharge of a *duty* to our common humanity, an act also imperatively *due* to himself, from whom life and all its endowments are received. Yet He esteems this kindness to the poor so highly that He is pleased to charge it as something done to himself, which He will pay again.

How this ennoble all deeds of kindness! Again and again in Scripture we have the same assurance: "Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. He shall be blessed upon the earth. . . . The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing," "He that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he." "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed towards his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister." Here all is remembered, and shall be paid with interest, and with what blessed coin! The perishing gold of earth is transmuted into heavenly treasure, conferring happiness now, and insuring deliverance when dark days of trouble come. The Lord will remember all, when *they* are poor, and stand in need of the help and comfort which earth cannot bestow. Then He will appear for their help, and will sustain, and comfort, and deliver, and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, will keep their hearts and minds through Jesus Christ, assuring them of life and joy for evermore. "Let the hands of the widow," says an old writer, "the bowels of the poor, be thy storehouse. Here it is sure, no thief can steal it, no time can rust it, no change can lose it, and here it is improved. A temporal gift is here turned into an eternal reward. No ground so fruitful as the bosom of the poor, that brings forth an hundredfold."

The Rev. Thomas Scott, the "Commentator," gives a striking illustration of the Lord's paying again, in the case of an estimable female servant in whom he was interested. She had in her early days laid past some money for the time when she could no longer labour. But her aged parents, falling into want, she unhesitatingly devoted all her savings to their

support, in the full confidence that if she ever came to stand in need of help, the Lord, in whom she trusted, would provide for her necessity. She found, years after, that her confidence was not misplaced, for though she was entirely laid aside for many years, in the latter part of her life, with an incurable disease, and might have been forced to seek a home in the workhouse, the Lord, who is ever faithful to his promise, raised up a friend for her in Mr. Scott, who, knowing her worth, and feeling how uncongenial the workhouse would be to her, determined to take her into his own home. He felt, during the seventeen or eighteen years that he kept her, that he was preserving from very great distress a poor sufferer whom, he doubted not, the Saviour and Judge of the world would own, in the great day of retribution, as intimately related to himself, and an heir of his kingdom.

And Thomas Scott himself, who was far from being in affluent circumstances, found also a gracious reward. He was not left to bear this burden alone. Different persons, whom she had served, sent him sums of money on her account, and at one time, when he was quite in a strait for funds for his parsonage-house, which he was building, one of them left him a legacy of £200, which quite tided him over his difficulty, "the whole forming," as he said, "a remarkable illustration of the text, 'He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will He pay him again.'"

The first great thing to make sure of is to get right with God, to be reconciled unto Him by Jesus Christ, that we may have a happy sense of his love, and be under the gracious guidance of his Spirit. Then let us seek to live out this life, following Him who, though "He was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich." This is true Christianity, which even the world can understand and appreciate.

Let the rich know their great responsibilities. The good of riches lieth in its use. "Charge them that are rich," said the Apostle Paul, "that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate." "He is not rich that lays up much, but that gives much." "There is a sore evil," says Solomon, "which I have seen under the sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt."

May God grant that we, knowing his Son, and filled with his Spirit, may rise to all the nobleness of this heavenly life upon earth, going about doing good, as we have opportunity.

J. BARBOUR JOHNSTONE.

DEATH AND BIRTH.

"The day of death is better than the day of one's birth."—ECCLES. vii. 1.

THY tasselled clouds, O Morn, are bright,
Hung in the amber of the sky ;
When on the world dawns thy young light,
And day walks forth in majesty !

But richer hues those clouds o'erspread,
Which gather round the glowing west ;
When day's great monarch stoops his head,
In curtained glory to his rest.



And bright, O Spring, thy myriad leaves,
Checkering the earth with gold and green ;
When year's young sunlight through them
weaves
Its robe of many-coloured sheen !
But colours, deeper in their dye,
Golden and glorious, gleaming wide,
Clothe Autumn's woods, while through them
sigh
The winds which mourn their short-lived
pride.
II. N.S.

Each passing year, each parting day,
The radiance of its youth outvies,
And Nature, swan-like, pours her lay,
In sweetest measures, when she
dies.
Soul, fear not, though thy day declines !
Life's echoes wake from dying earth ;
Heaven's gold in every sere leaf
shines,
"Thy death is better than thy birth !"

JOHN KER.

OUR DISTRICT.

BY A RIVER-SIDE VISITOR.

IX.—SHINY SMITH.

ALTHOUGH, as my readers will have inferred, I often met "Shiny" Smith in my walks abroad, and generally entered into conversation with him when we did meet, it was all in vain when I attempted to gratify my curiosity regarding him. Whenever I tried to "draw" him, either as to his antecedents or any detailed explanation as to the means whereby he then "knocked out" a living, I found that he was not to be "had." I tried others with little better result. "You see," explained one worthy to whom I spoke, and who had sought Shiny's advice on sundry occasions when he had been "in trouble," "you see Shiny came into this quarter promiscuous like, and though we could guess as he must a' been up to some cross game, none of us knew exactly what it was, and he worn't the chap to tell. And right he is! A cove as is on the cross shouldn't let no one—neighbour, nor pal, nor no one—know any more about him than he can help. The more they know about you, the more likely they are to have a pull over you; and I pities the feller as a pal can put the screw on. Very often you'd be skinned alive almost, only it mostly happens as it's a case of screw for screw, so as the one's afraid, the other daren't. Any one would have to get up early though, to get a pull on Shiny. He's the knowigest cove as ever I come across. He's up to every move on the board; he can talk like a book, and do anythink that needs to be done with a pen. Them's his tools,—his head-piece, and his tongue, and his pen, I mean,—and whether you're square, or whether you're cross, them seems to be the best tools to make your way with. He does a lot better than any of us roughs,—you should see his crib, it's quite a spicy affair."

This was the most I could learn at second hand. After my unsuccessful attempts to "draw" Shiny himself, I wished I had accepted the invitation to enter his dwelling, which he gave me on the morning on which he suggested the organization of the Sugar-Bags Defence Fund. I would, no doubt, in the mood in which he then was, have got his story from him. I fully determined that if another such chance occurred I would not fail to avail myself of it; and at length, by the merest accident, the opportunity did offer.

One day, when passing through the street in which Shiny lived, I came upon a crowd that had been drawn together by the sight of "a horse down." It was attached to a cart heavily laden with stone, and had fallen in a painful position. Shiny, with his coat off and his shoulder literally to the wheel, was giving directions to a number of the men, who worked with a will—harder probably than they had worked for many a day before—to release and raise the horse. After a great deal of pulling and tugging and a little cutting of straps, the poor creature was loosed from its harness, and lay, only held down by the shafts, while Shiny called for all who could find room to bear a hand in backing the cart. I joined in the work. I got a station at one of the wheels, and when, after several unsuccessful attempts, we at last effected our purpose, I found—the day being wet—my hands and parts of my clothing covered with mud. It was not till the horse was upon its legs that Shiny noticed me, and then he greeted me with—

"Halloo, sir! I see you've been putting your pound in like the rest of us. I didn't know we had one of the broad-cloth brigade among the helpers."

He spoke with the utmost good humour, and in the same way I answered—

"Oh, people don't think of their cloth in such an affair as this!"

"Say, some people," he answered; "I think I've known 'highly respectables' who would have thought twice—and had 'don't' for their second thought—over any such idea as soiling hands or garments to lift a poor old cart horse out of the mud. Save me from such men, say I. However, I see you stand in need of a wash and a brush like me. Will you step into my place?"

I replied that I would be glad to do so; whereupon Shiny, nodding an adieu to the knot of men who were still standing by, led the way to his home. When we had, in Shiny's phrase, put ourselves straight, in a neatly appointed little bed-room, we returned to the second of Shiny's apartments, which was furnished partly as a sitting-room, partly as an office. It was carpeted, there was an array of glass ware on a cupboard-sideboard in one corner of it, and a number of fairly good engravings hanging upon the

walls, a good-sized pier-glass over the chimney-piece, and on the chimney-piece, by way of smaller ornaments, were a tobacco-jar, with lucifer and spill-holders to match, a fancy cigar-case, and a number of pipes. But across the window stood a pedestal writing-table plentifully bestrewn with papers; a smaller writing-table for fireside use was put away in a recess, and against the wall opposite to the fire-place was a small, well-polished, mahogany book-case. Stepping over to the book-case, I saw that two out of its three shelves were filled with cheap novels; the other with a number of law books, several volumes of a racing calendar, and a few other works also bearing upon horse-racing. Having before heard that Shiny was a sort of irregular lawyer, I was not surprised at seeing the law books, but I was at seeing the racing ones. Though slangy, Shiny was not *horsey* in his talk, and I knew sufficient of his habits of life to be certain that he did not, in racing phrase, "follow the horses." My curiosity was excited, and by way of saying something that might induce him to talk on the point, I observed, running my finger over the backs of the books as I spoke—

"Law and racing is a rather curious combination, isn't it?"

"Not more curious than racing and commerce, or racing and almost any other profession or calling you might name would be. Horse-racing—or I should say *betting*, the end to which horse-racing is the means—is a disease that has affected members of every class, as few know better than I do. It has just struck me," he added, laughing, though in a forced manner, and with a tone of bitterness, "that law and betting, for that is really what racing comes to, are rather an appropriate combination. They are both games of chance, only while law ruins its thousands, betting ruins its tens of thousands." He paused for a moment, and then, looking me hard in the face, slowly added, "betting brought me to be what I am—made first a fool and then a rogue of me." As he uttered the last words it seemed to occur to him suddenly that he had said too much, and, instantly resuming his usual jerky, voluble, don't-careish manner of talk, he went on—

"But as the poet says, 'thereby hangs a tale,' which there is no need to tell now. This"—waving his hand round the room—"is my little crib, not exactly in the marble-hall style, but I think I may say cosey, eh?"

"It is a comfortable little room," I said.

"Ah, yes!" he exclaimed, "the room is

well enough, but what sort of things are done in it, *that's* about what you are thinking, eh?"

"Well, something of that sort," I answered, imitating his own bluntness; "I was thinking that you were a strange character, and that, for more reasons than curiosity, I would like to know more about you."

For about a minute's space he stood biting the corners of his moustache silently, then, with the air of one come to a resolution, he placed a chair for me—we had been standing up till this time—and, seating himself on the other side of the fireplace, said quietly—

"Well, you shall, and I'll tell you why! Not because I can give you a tip or two about 'things not generally known,' but because mine is a horrid example story, and you may be in a position to turn such a story to good account. I know I'm a bad lot, but, I'm not quite so far gone as to wish to see others come down as I have. To give you a touch of the flowery—you know my weakness—'I know myself a villain,' but I do *not*

'Deem
The rest no better than the thing I seem.'

And now here goes! In the first place, my name is not Smith, but as in this case there is nothing in a name, I'll still be Smith to you—for my parents' sake, though they are now in their quiet grave. My father was a tradesman in one of the smaller county towns, and was a bit of a somebody there—was twice elected a member of the Town Council, and that sort of thing, you know. He died while I was a boy at school, but left my mother sufficient for what her friends styled 'a genteel subsistence.' It wasn't so much, however, but what she had to pinch hard to be able to article me to a solicitor in the town, and find me in clothes and pocket-money while I was serving my articles. She did her duty by me like the loving, self-denying mother she was, but I did not do my duty by myself, and, above all, I did not do it by her. I was a handsome, healthy young fellow, and I went in for being a dashing, go-a-head one. I formed acquaintance with a set made up of fast clerks and tradesmen's sons, and a number of well-dressed loafers, who hung on to rich relations. In company with this set, I took to haunting the billiard-rooms of one of the hotels in the town, and soon fell into bad habits—late hours, drinking, playing, and betting; especially betting. From joining in lotteries on the big races, I gradually progressed to 'backing my fancy' for them, and 'making a book' upon them. I took to studying the sporting papers—to watching

the betting on and results of races, and looking forward for the 'tips' of the 'prophets.' From betting half-crowns and crowns, I got to half-sovereigns, and sovereigns, and so on to 'fivers' and 'tenners.' Occasionally I 'picked up a trifle,' but as a rule I lost, and was consequently nearly always hard up, and drawing upon my mother to the utmost extent that she could let me, for, fortunately for her, a part of her money was 'tied up.' At last—for though it was three years before the smash came, there is no use in dwelling upon details—I had got hold of what I was assured was a 'dead certainty,' and I had an opportunity of backing it at a long price. If I could only raise twenty pounds I could 'put it on' to win me a thousand, and then I could put myself straight, and drop betting. But how to get the twenty pounds? that was the rub. I had pumped my mother dry for the time being, and I was already in debt to every friend who had anything to lend; and yet it was such a pity to miss this chance for the sake of a paltry twenty-pound note. Well, I dare say you guess the rest! Satan finds mischief for wicked brains, as well as idle hands, to do. By this time I had got to such a position in the office that most of the money paid in to it passed through my hands, and—to make a long story short—being in a position to do so, I *borrowed* twenty pounds of the money of my principal. Of course I said to myself that it was only borrowing, for I would pay it back out of my winnings the moment they were paid to me. I had scarcely sent the money to the agent who was to 'put it on' for me, when I repented having taken it. My sin was swift in finding me out. My bet was made a month before the race on which it depended, and during that month I was in an agony of suspense, and was tortured by the recollection, which I had managed to stifle till the wrong was done, of the many other 'tips' that had been given to me as dead certainties, that had turned out to be dead losses, and I vowed that if this only *did* prove a win, it should be my last betting transaction."

Before he had reached this point, Shiny's usual jaunty manner had deserted him. He spoke earnestly and was evidently agitated, and now paused to moisten his parched lips; and having done this and drawn a long breath, he resumed his narrative.

"I dare say I shouldn't have kept these vows," he said, "but anyway, I wasn't put to the test on that score. I went a hundred miles to see the race run. There were seventeen started for it, but practically it was re-

duced to a match between my horse—as I called it—and another, and during the greater part of the race mine looked as if it was going to win. As it led the way round the last turn, I was already mentally disposing of my gains, and saying what a fool I should have been to have missed such a chance; but it was a case of counting chickens before they were hatched. The other horse began to gain inch by inch, till at a hundred yards from the winning post they were head and head; and they ran the rest of the distance so closely locked together that it was impossible for any one but the judge to be certain which had won until the numbers were hoisted on the telegraph board. When the numbers did go up that of my horse was second; and as I had backed it for an absolute win, it might as well have been last so far as I was concerned. When I looked at the numbers I felt my heart grow cold and my head dizzy. I *felt* like a branded man, but neither on the race-course nor when I got home did any one seem to notice anything special in my appearance. All the same, I suffered horribly in my mind. I couldn't sleep at night or rest by day. My one thought was that I must make up the stolen money *somehow*, and I saw but one way;—to take more money and continue betting, in the hope that luck would turn, and that by some fortunate hit I should be able to replace all. This was the plan I acted upon; but I no longer called it borrowing even to myself. I had got to the desperate stage; and only argued that, if luck didn't turn, I might as well be hung for a sheep as a lamb. Well, luck didn't turn; I lost bet after bet. I grew more and more reckless and dissipated; so much so that my governor received a very pointed hint that I was going fast, and people were wondering how I did it. That meant, Look into your accounts; he interpreted it aright, and the result was the discovery of my defalcations. I was given into custody. I had, of course, been in a certain measure prepared for such a possibility; and I can honestly say, that I believe my chief feeling on being arrested was a sense of relief. But to my poor mother the news was a terrible blow. She almost lost her reason. She offered to pay the money and more; to sacrifice all she had in the world if I was only allowed to go free. She went down on her knees to the man, and grovelled at his feet to beg for mercy for me; but he was not to be turned. I was taken before the magistrate, and then for the first time I felt the full bitterness of my humiliation. It was on all hands voted an

interesting case, and the little court was crowded; and as I glanced round it I saw scores of faces that I knew looking down on me, and scarcely one with a touch of pity on it; and yet, guilty as I was, I might well have been pitied, for I was utterly bowed down with shame and remorse. In one place were my boon companions sneering and sniggering; in another, a group of my mother's friends, looking sad for her sake; and the magistrate himself had been a friend of my father's. I pleaded guilty, was committed for trial, and sent to prison till the assizes.

"At the assize trial there was much the same scene, but with one difference, that was very material to me. My mother had, despite the advice of her friends, insisted upon being present; and when I was sentenced, her grief found vent in a cry that told her heart was broken. I shall never forget that cry; it has rang in my ears a thousand times since in my sleeping as well as my waking hours, and I believe I shall hear it when I am dying."

He spoke in a quiet, even tone, but with a depth of feeling that one would have thought him incapable of under *any* circumstances. Despite his efforts to master his emotion, for some moments he was unable to proceed; and, to fill up the pause, I observed—

"Well, seeing with what fair chances you started, yours is a sad story."

"Yes, as bitterly bad and sad as it is true," he answered, "and none the less sad a story from being a common one. I've no doubt that, as in my case, it often means ruin for more than one, and the bringing of grey heads with sorrow to the grave. However, to go on with my own story! The judge argued—justly enough, I dare say—that my being educated and in a fair position was an aggravation of my offence, and gave me five years penal. I served it out within fifteen months, and then I got my ticket. My mother had died a year before that, and had left me what little she had by that time to leave; for, what with the drag I had been upon her, her having been under the doctor's hands from the day on which she heard me sentenced, part of her income dying with her, and one thing and another, a little over a clear hundred was all I had to draw. What I ought to have done when I got the money was of course to have gone to a new world and started life afresh as a new man; but I didn't. While I was doing my time I gave full rein to the very tidy share of devil-may-careishness that was in my nature; and I went back to my native town in high-flying style, dressed within an inch of my

life, looking in the 'I-care-for-nobody-not-I' style, and fully determined not to knuckle-down. I spoke to old acquaintances as if nothing had happened; but it wouldn't act; those of them whose good opinion was worth having cold-shouldered me. So, shrugging my shoulders, I said to myself 'Very well, good people all, so let it be. If you won't have me at any less a price than doing the "umble," you shan't have me at all. You go in for treating me as a black sheep, and I shall go in for being one. So here goes for some racket in the world's-mine-oyster line.'

During the latter part of his speech, his manner again underwent a change. The earnestness and sadness that had previously characterized it vanished, and he was again the rattling, slangy, self-possessed customer I had always found him before. Marking the change, I could not refrain from exclaiming—

"Shiny's himself again!"

"Yes, Shiny's himself again," he answered promptly. "We've all at least one weak joint in our armour, and you've just seen me touched in mine. When I speak of my mother I am for the moment another self than Shiny Smith—the self I might have been. And now we had, perhaps, better drop the subject; what I have told you is really the horrid example part of my story; the only part of it I expect that you would ever be able to turn to any beneficial purpose. I don't see myself that what else I have to tell is calculated to point a moral; still, as I've broken the ice, I'm good to go on if you wish it."

As it was to know something of his present way of life that I was chiefly curious, I replied that I would like him to proceed.

"All right, then," he answered; "anything to oblige, so here goes. In the first place, I had quite made up my mind not to put myself within the clutches of the law again; and being limited to that extent, I came to the conclusion that Flat-catching must be my game."

"And what might flat-catching be?" I interrupted, seeing that he was taking it for granted that I knew the meaning of the term.

"Well, broadly," he answered, smiling, "it means swindling—in detail it may mean anything, from promoting bubble companies, down to revealing the future for seven stamps. The only question with me was, what particular line of the business I should take to. Circumstanced as I was, the bubble company sort of thing was several cuts above me, while I felt several cuts above the lowest

branches ; such, for instance, as professing to sell purses with a couple of half-crowns in them at a shilling each, or doing the sham smuggler, who tackles your neither-man-nor-boy flat, saluting him as 'shipmate,' and 'having' him over lettuce-leaf cigars, which he tells him are the real right sort, and have never paid duty, shiver his old timbers. At length came the right idea! You've been pretty well fleeced over horse-racing, it said, now take to fleecing—turn tipster."

"Tipster!" I interrupted again, as Shiny would have hurried on.

"Yes, advertising prophet, you know," he rejoined. "'The certain winner of any race sent on receipt of thirty stamps and a stamped addressed envelope. Fortune-maker. Box A.' That's about the simplest style of it, but you generally stick it in warmer than that. However, that's a digression at the present moment. Having decided on the tipster line, I went in for it scientifically. I had about sixty pounds of my money left, and I went and took a lodging in the neighbourhood of a great training district, in order that my address might have a business-like smack about it. I bought those volumes of racing matter that attracted your attention just now, and I may say for myself that I studied them and the sporting papers, and otherwise did what I could to form a sound judgment on the coming events, for the benefit of my especial flats. It was then too, I ought to mention, that I took the not uncommon name of Smith—for the benefit of those I came in contact with, understand, not as my advertising signature, that was of a more flowery character. By way of a start I put forth a special 'draw,' running in this style: 'The advertiser, who has long been connected with racing stables, has got hold of so great a "moral" for the C— Handicap, that he has backed it for all he is worth ; but, as it is still at long odds, and is such a chance as only offers once in a life-time, he is anxious to raise a little more to put on, and in order to do so is willing to send the name of the horse to a limited number of subscribers, on receipt of sixty stamps, and a promise of ten per cent. on winnings from each. Address, &c., &c.' I put this into half-a-dozen sporting papers, and though a first web I flatter myself it looked as pretty a little parlour as ever any sportingly inclined fly was invited to walk into. They walked into it to the tune of fourteen pound over and above the cost of advertising. Nor was that all ; I sent the name of one horse to some, and of other horses to

others, and lo, and behold, one of them did prove the winner ; and those who had received that name sent me something like another ten pound, as the promised percentage on their winnings. I did a number of other 'specials,' with much the same profitable result. Then as that line could only be followed over some half-dozen of the biggest races of the year, I adopted a signature, and started as regular professional tipster, offering to tell the winners of every race of the season, and coming down to a thirteen stamp 'inspirer' for ordinary events, and thirty for the more important ones. I flatter myself that my advertisements in that character were second to few in their draw-power. I seasoned high, come what would. Whether I happened to spot the winner or failed to name it in the half-dozen or dozen that I sent out to my 'subscribers,' it was all the same. I always promised the *certain* winner, and invariably announced 'Glorious success! Glorious success!' and the flats gorged the bait freely. I used to have fifty and sixty letters a week in a general way, and sometimes a hundred or more."

At this point I once more interrupted the flow of his narrative to observe that it was surprising that any person capable of writing a letter should be so easily duped.

"Ah, that's where you make a mistake," laughed Shiny ; "it's seeming surprising to you only shows your innocence. It's true some of the letters show their writers to be ignorant, but the majority of them are from people of fair education and position. If you had seen the names and callings of some of the writers you'd have been a lot more surprised than you are now. But there, it's only at a first glance that there appears anything wonderful about it ; if you look into it you'll see it's only a case of 'poor human nature.' The man that said there was so many million people in the world mostly fools, was a deal nearer the mark than I dare say he supposed—you must be a knave to know how many fools there really are in the world, and how very foolish they are. As another flat-catcher that I was acquainted with used to say, fools make knaves ; they are so plentiful and so tempting."

"And did you never experience any compunction in the matter?" I asked.

"Well, compunction is a weakness in a flat-catcher," he answered, smiling ; "still, I don't mind owning that I did have sharp touches of it at times. In some of the letters it was easy enough to detect the germs of a case of bankruptcy, or embezzlement, or

robbery from an employer, and when I came across these a fellow-feeling made me wondrous kind. But, to have warned the flats I should have had to blow the gaff upon myself; to have written saying that tipping was all humbug, tipsters all rogues, and that the only really reliable and profitable advice I could give in connection with betting was not to bet at all. If I had possessed courage and principle enough to have acted in that self-sacrificing manner, I should have had a lot too much principle to have ever been a flat-catcher. When, over some particular letter, my conscience did prick me, I always got cornered by the thought that to warn the flat meant to extinguish myself. So in the end I just let things drift, salving my conscience by saying to myself that perhaps my warning would be of no use if I did send it; for to tell a flat that he is a flat, is, generally speaking, to put his back up, as he is the man of all others who is most given to think himself a sharper; and that as fools will part with their money, they might as well part with a little of it to me as to anybody else. If it had only been the thirteen or thirty stamps they sent me, I should never have had a second thought about the matter in any case; but sending for the tip is only the beginning of the bad end—it's backing the tip that does the mischief. The tipster tells his subscribers that the horse he names can't lose, and advises them to 'lump the money on it,' back it for all they are worth, and the like. Acting upon the advice, they in too many instances lose all they are worth; and then, as was the case with me, they console themselves by thinking 'better luck next time,' and 'borrow' some one else's money to perform with, and, as I did, come to grief through it. I'm doing the open confession business with you now, and you may take my word for it that thousands are ruined through betting who are never seen on a racecourse, and could scarcely tell the difference between a race-horse and a towel-horse, simply through the facilities that the sporting papers give for ruination. If I had happened to be a lawmaker instead of a law-breaker, it is one of the things I would have gone in for putting down."

"As it was, you appear to have made a pretty good thing out of it," I said.

"Very fair," he answered, quite unabashed. "But it turned out to be too good to last. I received letters accusing me of not having given tips in return for stamps sent, and some complaints of the same kind were sent to the sporting papers. As a matter of fact I had never received the letters. I said so. The

others could only repeat that they had certainly sent them, and the upshot was that a sorter in the local post-office was taken up for stealing letters addressed to me. It was his own superiors who entrapped him; but I was obliged to give evidence before the magistrate, and this gave an opportunity to the solicitor for the defence to show me up as a flat-catcher. The case attracted notice, and turned public attention for a moment to the subject of racing tipsters: and then, behold, the sporting newspaper, without which I should have been powerless and the flats safe, turned moral against me. It certainly assumed a virtue when it had it not. I fancy people had been writing to it about its share in the business, for it was through its answers to correspondents that it attacked me. It would look better of the fellow, it said, to disgorge some of his own plunder than to help to send a poor sorter to prison. It suggested that I probably knew as much about the points of a race-horse, as a race-horse did about shorthand; and finally it intimated that it would insert no more of the fellow's advertisements. Under these circumstances I changed my signature, changed my newspaper, and varied the style of my advertisements. That would have been quite sufficient as far as the flats were concerned; but it wasn't good enough to take in the paper that was down on me. The fellow was at it again, it said, and pointed out how and where, and it stuck to me so close that there was nothing left for me but to shut up shop as a tipster."

"What did you take to then?" I asked, as Shiny made a rather lengthy pause.

"I didn't take to anything for a while, though I thought over a good many things. My first idea was to start a loan office."

"Had you capital enough to turn money-lender then?" I exclaimed in surprise.

"No, not to turn money-lender," he answered, with significant emphasis; "but more than enough to work the inquiry fee dodge with."

"And how might the inquiry fee dodge be worked?" I asked.

"Well, it's done on the bounce," he replied. "You advertise yourself as say 'The Metropolitan and Provincial Discount and Loan Association. Money advanced in sums of from £5 to £500, at five per cent. interest, with or without security. Forms of proposal on application.' Of course your forms of proposal are immensely business-looking papers. They are form 16, number 30,814, are officially headed, and printed in

with as much legal and financial sounding jargon as they can well stand. You send them to all who ask, and when they come back filled up, you strike your fish. On another form you write to say that the Board of Directors having considered the proposal are prepared to advance the sum required immediately upon receiving the report of their district agent, who will be instructed to forward the

business, on receipt of the usual inquiry fee, which, owing to the extensive character of their business, the directors of the M. and P. Association were enabled to fix at half a guinea instead of the guinea charged by other offices. In nine cases out of ten the half-guinea is sent, and then, after waiting a day or two, you write regretting that the report of the district agent is such that the directors



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have decided that they cannot make the advance at the low rate of interest at which they do business, and as they strictly confine themselves to the one class of business, they must decline the proposal."

"Then the inquiry-fee dodge, as you call it, is simply a more elaborate system of flat-catching than the racing one," I said.

"Just so," he said, "more elaborate and

more profitable. I knew two who were in the line, and their worst weeks used to be better than my best at the tipping."

"How was it you didn't take to it, then; not from tenderness of conscience, I suppose?"

"No, but from tenderness of feeling about myself," he answered. "I had had enough of penal servitude to be extra cautious about running the risk of *that* again. It was a

hundred to one that the game could be carried on safely, but still, by being the secretary, the board of directors, the district agent, and everything else all in one, you did leave yourself open to a charge of obtaining money under false pretences. This made me hesitate about the inquiry fee business and other things of the kind that I thought of, though I dare say I should have gone in for something of the kind at last, if I hadn't drifted into this quarter of the world."

As he finished speaking, he pushed his chair back from the fire a little way, took a pipe from his pocket and began to fill it, like a man who had come to the end of his subject; but adopting something of his own freedom of manner, I said—

"But how did you come to drift into this quarter of the world? It's hardly fair of you to want to leave off just at the part of your story in which, you must know, I am most likely to be interested."

"Well, it's not that," he said; "I don't want to come the to-be-continued-in-our next stroke over you."

"Of course, if there is anything you think it would be imprudent to tell me," I answered, "I have nothing further to say."

"Well, what further I have to tell of myself is, I suppose, neither better nor worse than what I have already told, as it is all to the same effect—that I am a bad lot. I hesitated about speaking about the game I'm up to at present because it occurred to me that I might let out something that I had no right to do about others. However, I can tell you in a general way, and put you fly to a wrinkle or two without injuring any one. While I was still thinking about what I should do, after being knocked out of time as a tipster, I met a publican with whom I was acquainted through having been in the habit of going into his booth at race meetings. I found that his publichouse was down here, and had a small music hall attached to it, and that he was in search of a person to act as chairman and manager of this hall. After some talk it was arranged that I was to have the berth at a pound a week and my board and lodgings, and so I came into the neighbourhood. The hall was a very low one, its chief frequenters being the thieves, crimps, and other queer characters of the district; drunken sailors, and the sort of women that are likely to be found in such company. And here I got to know all the 'queer' set. Well, as I dare say you know, in most queer districts there is a character known among the initiated as the Penman, or the 'Scolard.' He is Jack

the penman, or Scolard Johnson, or some such name; and he is usually a man of blown character, but of some education and cleverness. I soon found out that there was no such character in this district, and on the other hand, some of the cleverer and more high-flying customers among the queer set soon found out not only that I was a bit of a penman, and a bit of a 'scolard,' but a bit of a lawyer too. They took to coming to ask me just to write them that bit of a thing, or advise them over the other; and sometimes they voluntarily paid very liberally for those slight services. This suggested to me that here was an opening, and acting on the idea, I set up as what I may call attorney and correspondent general to the neighbourhood, giving up the managership but retaining the chairmanship of the music hall, which brings me in fifteen shillings a week."

"What might an attorney and correspondent general of your stamp do?" I asked.

"Oh, a thousand and one odd things."

"But name some of them," I persisted.

"Well, he will advise with the friends or relations of people 'in trouble;' he will give opinions upon cases which, if he knows his business, he will have put to him supposititious ones, he will—if he can—explain the nature or value of papers which a client may have chanced to find. He will write—for friends who are not able to write—to people who are under hiding because they are 'wanted;' he will read the answers when there are any; and in the way of smaller things he will draw out subscription-list headings, cards for 'Friendly Leads,'—that is, raffles for the benefit of people who have just got into or out of 'trouble,'—and begging petitions. Sometimes, too, he may do a little in the way of such things as 'touching up' a rent book which is going to be used as a reference by a person seeking a house, and which would be the reverse of a recommendation if not touched up; or putting a crimp's accounts against sailors into shape."

Such was the story of Shiny Smith's life, as told by himself, such the chances he had thrown away, such the misery he had brought upon himself and others, such the disreputable means by which he had lived—by which he was living. I felt that it was a most wretched story—a story which he who had told it had well classed as of the "horrid example" class. At first, as I have mentioned, he spoke with evident feeling, but during the latter part of his discourse he had spoken in much his usual manner. It was apparent, however, that to a certain extent the manner was on this occa-

sion forced ; that "the still small voice" was making itself heard : that he felt, if not remorse, at least some sense of his degradation. Seeing this, and remembering that I had more than once heard of his doing really kind acts, I felt that there must still be some good in him, and while I could not but condemn, neither could I but pity him. I appealed to the good that I believe was yet left in him. I urged upon him to give up the life he was leading ; to seek out some honest way of earning a livelihood. He admitted that his present mode of life *was* degraded, that at times he keenly felt it to be so, and that an honest life would be infinitely preferable. But that sin of pride by which so many have fallen, prevented him from attempting to raise himself out of the slough into which he had sunk. To be admitted into the ranks of honest men again, he said, he would have to do the humble and penitential, and start at the very bottom of the ladder. It was what he ought to do, perhaps, might be a fitting part of his punishment, but for all that he couldn't bring himself to do it—he wouldn't "knuckle down." This was all I could get out of him, either on this or the several subsequent occasions when as opportunity offered I renewed the subject with him, and again urged him to turn from his wickedness.

But what my weak endeavours had failed to effect, a Higher Power brought about in its own good time and manner. The hand of affliction was laid upon Shiny. He was prostrated upon a sick-bed, and for the rainy day of sickness he had made no preparation. In the course of a few weeks he was reduced to a state of destitution, and might have died of want and neglect had it not been for the kindness of Bible Braidy. The old man assisted him so far as his own scanty means would allow, and finally got him removed to the workhouse infirmary. There, after many weeks of suffering, the disease was mastered. At this stage, Braidy informed me that Shiny wished to see me. I found him much broken down, and very weak ; and I could see tears gather in his eyes as I shook hands with him, and expressed my sorrow at seeing him so ill. He murmured some expression of thanks ; and then, having lain still for a few minutes, he said, in a trembling voice, but with a faint smile creeping over his wasted features—

"I hope you believe in the old adage that it is never too late to mend."

"I do," I answered.

"Well, I'm sorry I should have left it so late ; but I do mean, with God's help, to mend

now. I have been brought back from the verge of the grave, so that I may call myself a new man ; I feel as if a new heart had been given to me, and when I get about again, I want to lead a better life. Will you help me?"

"Willingly ! In any way that I can," I answered promptly. "What is your own idea?"

Briefly put, his views were that he must leave the neighbourhood, and that he would like to leave England altogether, and commence a new life in a new world.

The latter idea I thought was a good one ; and, after I had left him, it occurred to me that I could perhaps enable him to carry it out.

I had, a week or two previously, made the acquaintance of an agent of a large firm of railway contractors, who had come down to our district to superintend the fitting out and loading of a vessel that was to take out a number of men who had been engaged for the construction of a railway in New Zealand. Report said he had been a navy, and had worked his way up to his present position. He was a big, burly fellow, rather coarse of feature, and rather blustering in manner, but, under his roughness of exterior, there was a good deal of shrewdness and kindness of heart. To this man I spoke about Shiny ; and the result was that, after some little negotiation, he agreed to take him out as his own clerk. On the day of sailing, Braidy and I saw him off, and, though, being still weak, he was much affected at parting, he went away in a hopeful spirit. He arrived safely at his destination, and occasionally wrote to old Braidy. From his letters—which were very modestly written—we gathered that he was doing very well, and was faithful to the good resolves he had made. Three years after his departure, the agent who had so kindly afforded him the opportunity of retrieving himself, returned to England, bringing with him from Shiny a handsome present for old Braidy, and a graceful little token of remembrance for myself. He amply confirmed all that Shiny's letters had said. He had been so satisfied with Shiny's behaviour, and so pleased with his ability, that he had been strongly desirous of retaining him as his clerk ; but Shiny had not cared about coming back to the old country. He had got another engagement in the colony, and there, liked by all who knew him, he was leading an honest, respectable, God-fearing life. The path of reformation had been made easy for him ; he was humbly thankful that it had been so, and grateful to all who had helped him in that path.

GOD'S JUDGMENTS.

Being Thoughts on the Fiftieth Psalm.

BY PRINCIPAL CANDLISH, D.D.

II.

THE judicial dealing itself is now to be considered. It is a dealing, first, with the true Israel of God (vers. 7—15); then, secondly, with worldly professors, or believers lapsing, or in danger of lapsing into worldly conformity (vers. 16—23).

This division of the parties cited for trial and judgment is not perhaps very distinctly marked. The description of the entire company placed at the bar (ver. 5) might seem to single out and identify only the honest and truly godly portion of the Church, or of Zion's children, to the exclusion of all mere pretenders and false professors; while, on the other hand, the affectionate appeal made in the first instance (ver. 7) to the true-hearted, on behalf of true and spiritual worship, as distinguished from the stern rebuke of hypocrisy and formalism at its close (ver. 16), is so general as apparently to embrace the whole nation or community of Israel; the entire professing church.

There is a meaning in this. It is of set purpose that this relaxation in the style of address is considerably made.

When the citation is issued generally to all and sundry in Israel, it is framed in language appropriate strictly and properly to the spiritual portion of the Church. For that describes, and that alone can describe, the mark to which they are all required to come up; the standard by which they must all be tested and tried. But when the truly sincere and spiritual in the mixed nation or society of professed believers are singled out, as they are the first who are required to stand for judgment, they are invited under a less precise form of citation:—in more vague and general terms.

There is here an important practical lesson.

When God comes forth to deal judicially with his Church, as visible on the earth,—embracing all who profess the true religion and their households,—he is entitled to take his stand upon the highest estimate that can be formed of the position which they profess to occupy. That must be the standard of his judgment. It is in the view of that standard that the collective Church is brought to trial. But it is otherwise when a distinction is recognised; when the true and real members of the Church are viewed as separate from mere nominal professors, and are singled out

in the first instance, and called upon for some special dealing. These, the more conscientious and earnest-minded of the body,—whose very conscientiousness and earnestness of mind may cause undue timidity or scrupulosity,—the Lord may with great condescension, and a kind and considerate accommodation to their infirmity, summon upon a somewhat lower or wider call. He may call them simply in the character common to all, without any special designation of distinguishing spirituality such as they themselves might be the last to recognise and appropriate as theirs. ~

Thus, to give an illustration. If, as an officer, I have to review the entire troop under my command, I summon them all collectively in terms descriptive of the highest style and standard of qualification, and the highest code of honour, which true and genuine soldiership knows. But if I have to make a selection, and single out the *élite* of my company for admonition and encouragement, I may avoid, of set purpose, the mode of address which I used before;—that which, in its fullest import, the very men whom I wish to gather round me might be the most apt to hesitate about applying to themselves. I invite them therefore now in the most general terms I can find, to indicate simply their position as soldiers, and their relation to me as their captain. In the one case, I wish to deepen the feeling of responsibility. In the other case, my desire is to overcome bashfulness and encourage freedom of access. When I call the whole body miscellaneously, I call them in terms fitted to raise to the highest pitch their sense of what they ought to be. When I seek to win the well-conditioned and well-disposed among them, that I may hold a separate and special dealing with them, as to anything I have to allege against their general conduct, or anything I have to complain of particularly in their intercourse personally with myself, I appeal to them in language to which they may readily respond. I do not say, Come to me as heroes; but, Come to me simply as soldiers. All who are willing to appear before me as soldiers, I am prepared to examine, and try, and judge; according to the fair tests, not of highest heroism, but of simple soldiership. "Hear,

therefore, O my people, and I will speak ; O Israel, and I will testify against thee."

I. "I am God, even thy God" (ver. 7). This opening of the appeal is in the same gracious line. It is fitted to encourage an approach to the throne of judgment, as being still the throne of grace. In the near view of this solemn scene, the Church, the tried and spiritual Church, embraced in the mixed company professing godliness, had been moved to say, "Our God shall come." And He comes as her God accordingly. I am God, greatly to be feared. I am thy God, on whom thou canst rely, even when I have occasion to plead with thee.

Thus, before I speak of anything I have to testify concerning thee ; before I set in order my case or my complaint ; I must remind thee of what I am in myself, and of what I am in my relation to thee. Thou must be prepared to recognise, both my sovereignty and my grace ; my sovereignty as God, and my grace as thy God.

If I am to thee God merely, and not thy God ; if thou regardest me vaguely and generally as God ; with no definite apprehension of what personally and relatively I am to thee ; then, whatever emotions of wonder, gratitude, and awe may occasionally visit thy bosom, I can have no real place in thy heart. Thou feelest as if thou wert in the presence of a goodly picture or imposing statue. Thou art affected as by a touching tale or poem. But real and actual fellowship between me and thee—mind with mind and heart with heart—there cannot be. I am a sort of abstraction or abstract idea to thee ; and when I speak to thee of what I most of all desire to have from thee, and indeed cannot bear to want,—the intelligent, confiding love of thy whole soul,—it is as if I asked thee to adore an image or embrace a cloud.

If, again, I am thy God merely, and not in thy esteem God over all ; if thou simply reckonest on me as accommodating myself to thee, and becoming what thy natural mind would wish me to be ; if thou makest a convenience of me, and conceivest of me as if I had nothing to care for but only thy ease and safety, and existed in fact only for thee and for thy sake ; then, whatever dreamy ideas of gratitude may flit across thy selfish fancy, thou canst have no real sense of what must ever be the uppermost consideration when, as the one only living and true God, I come to plead with my creatures and my children ; made originally in my image, and through grace remade in that likeness again ; made thus, and re-made for my service, and for the glory of my great

name. Know therefore, and understand, that when I come forth to search and try and judge thee, in order to the clearing up of all that may be outstanding between us, I come as "God, even thy God."

II. In accordance with this principle, the Lord indicates what he will not make matter of complaint in this trial:—"I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices or thy burnt offerings, to have been continually before me. I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he goats out of thy folds. For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof. Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?" (Vers. 8—13.)

We have here one of the many passages in which sacrificial offerings and observances are spoken of, as it might seem, in disparaging terms. This is to be accounted for in one or other of two different ways. Sometimes these services are brought into comparison with the atoning work of Christ. In the anticipated glory and excellency, the fulness and sufficiency of that great propitiation, by the blood of the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world, all the legal and Levitical methods of expiation are swallowed up and superseded. On other occasions, they are brought, as mere outward observances, into contrast with the inward and spiritual graces of faith and love; the religion of the heart as distinguished from that of form and ceremony. The previous explanation, however, is never to be overlooked. It is always assumed that the question of the expiation of our guilt and our consequent peace with God, is settled upon the footing of an adequate substitutionary sacrifice, offered and accepted on our behalf, and appropriated by us as ours. The only outstanding inquiry is held to be, what kind of offering or service is now to be rendered; not in order to the making of our peace with God, but upon the faith of our peace with God being already and otherwise secured. That is evidently the case here.

To the question thus put, the uniform and only answer is that all ritual observances whatever must give place to the cultivation of a pure heart and a holy life. Even when the law appointing them remained in force, they were utterly worthless when weighed in the balance against godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity. And under the more spiritual dispensation of the gospel,

the pre-eminence of the moral over the formal, the obedience of the inner man over the bodily exercise of mere routine, which indeed profiteth nothing, is still more clearly and conspicuously seen.

Hence, such passages as Samuel's rebuke of Saül (1 Sam. xv. 22); the query and reply in Micah's prophecy (chap. vi. 5—8); or David's pathetic and plaintive strain of penitence (Psalm li. 16, 17). And hence the grave, indignant irony of the Lord's pleading here with his holy ones, who have made a covenant with him by sacrifice, the one all-sufficient sacrifice of the great atonement.

The irony, if so solemn an expostulation may be so characterized, has in it a twofold argument. It is based, first, on the Lord's independence of them (vers. 10—12), and secondly, on their unprofitableness to Him (ver. 13). It thus gives the double death-blow to the religion of ceremony, whatever guise it may assume. For beneath every formal system of worship, underlying it and pervading it, these two elements of self-deception are to be always found. On the one hand, I have the presumption to imagine that somehow God has occasion for me and for my services; while, on the other hand, I have the lurking impression that what I offer may be something that, for its own sake, God will value. With strong disdain the Lord, as it were, spurns away both of these delusions. Have I any need of you or your gifts? Can you minister to my gratification or aggrandisement? Are you not at the very best unprofitable servants? It is a humbling and mortifying remonstrance! Yes; in one view. But in another view, it is altogether gracious. It sets you free, if only you are guileless and true-hearted, from all embarrassment in drawing near to God: all uneasiness that might spring out of an apprehension of failure in some circumstance of state or point of form. There is relief as well as rebuke in this affectionate appeal.

Let me be called into the audience-hall, or rather invited into the secret chamber, of one whom I hold in highest esteem, and with whom it is the first desire of my heart to stand well. I linger long on the threshold of the door. I have undefined misgivings and alarms. And these are apt to turn far more on the formal details and ceremonials of the anticipated interview than on the essential merits of any question that is likely to be raised. I fear lest I may be found wanting in the observance of some of the rules of courtly etiquette, and should fail to render some customary act of homage, some minute

outward expression of respect, in the confusion of mind and manners caused by my being ushered into so august a presence. What a deliverance to hear from the great and good man's own lips that I am not to stand upon ceremony with him; that he has no intention of dealing with me on the score of any of those civilities about which I have been so nervous. He graciously assures me that in regard to mere external matters of that sort, he is not at all fastidious, or sensitive, or ready to take offence. He desires and encourages me to lay aside form or state; to get out of it and beyond it. He has something else to confer with me about, and something far more serious. There is no time for trifling scruples of "meats or drinks." The essentials of the kingdom are the real matters at issue, the only subjects of consideration and conversation; "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."

III. Thus the Lord, in this kindly but yet faithful judicial reckoning with you, comes at once to the point. And what is the point? The answer is, like himself, full of grace and truth, "Offer unto God thanksgivings." Sacrifice to God praise.

There is to be a sacrifice. Only let it be the sacrifice of praise; the offering of thankfulness; a thank-offering. Other kinds of sacrifice he asks not. He will not accept them at your hands. Most certainly he will not upbraid you for the want of them. But thanksgiving is grateful to him. Praise is welcome. Your thankful hearts may have the satisfaction of presenting to him something with which he will really be well pleased. Some acknowledgment, some expression of your dependence on him and his goodness to you, may be expected from you as an unburdening of your own grateful souls and a tribute due to him. What is the acknowledgment, the expression to be?

1. "Pay thy vows unto the Most High." Let there be fidelity to your covenant engagements. It is assumed that you are under covenant engagements; having "made a covenant with God by sacrifice." That implies, not only his covenanting with you, but your covenanting with him. You have, therefore, vows to pay. They may be vows of a special sort, on special occasions. You have been in trouble, and have experienced seasonable and signal deliverance. It has been manifestly all of grace. Under a grateful sense of it, you have been moved at the time to make vows to the Lord. That must have been your experience under your first apprehension of the grace of God, in your

being persuaded and enabled to embrace the offered Saviour, and believe in him as loving you and giving himself up for you. It must have been your experience often since. It should be your experience now. It is your position under every new instance of the Lord's mercy. You are under vow. It cannot be otherwise. You cannot help it. There may be no articulate utterance of a promise in words; no signing and sealing of a written pledge; no registered deed of formal and explicit engagement. Still, virtually and substantially, there must be what is equivalent to vowing, in your "making a covenant with God by sacrifice." There must be a recognition of the obligations under which your thus making a covenant lays you. You do form, you cannot help forming, you ought to be forming, suitable resolutions. You may not, perhaps, cast them into the technical mould of formal oaths. You may choose rather, and it may be safer, to frame them after the fashion of prayers. Still, to all intents and purposes, they are vows; and they bind your consciences as vows. And your first sacrifice thanksgiving consists in your paying your vows. Let it be a prompt and honest paying of them.

(1.) Let it be prompt. "When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for He hath no pleasure in fools; pay that which thou hast vowed" (Eccles. v. 4.) For surely it is folly to defer or postpone the paying of your vow; to think of gaining time or gathering courage for the carrying out of measures, upon which, in an hour of seriousness or a day of awakening, you have been led and moved to resolve. Proverbially, delays are dangerous. Your only safety in this matter lies in your obeying the precept, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." If you have a right hand to cut off, or a right eye to pluck out, what do you gain by temporising? What but the ebbing of your fortitude and firmness, and the relaxing of your determination? Whatever, at any season of your spiritual history, whether your first coming to Christ, or any subsequent instance of his gracious dealing with you; whatever here and now occurs to you as in your present frame and in your present circumstances right and expedient, in a spiritual point of view; right, as the owning of grace got; expedient, as a precaution against the risk of grace being lost; be it but a dim and doubtful idea that is now presenting itself to you, that if you were in some one slight particular to change or modify your course of life,—your way of thinking, studying, feeling, acting,—it would be the better with you and for you;

and you might the better hope rightly to own the past mercy of God, and to see more of that mercy still: entering more into the full blessedness of the "covenant which you make with Him by sacrifice." Brother! It is a vow! It is as truly and solemnly a vow as if it were written with thy blood. It is written for thee with the blood of that awful sacrifice. Trifle not with it. Pay it now.

(2.) Let the paying of your vows be not only prompt and instant, but honest and full. "It is a snare, after vows, to make inquiry" (Prov. xx. 25). That is a seasonable and most needful admonition of wisdom. There is indeed a snare here. Did I commit myself so far? Am I so deeply pledged? Did I after all mean to go all the length in the way of a close walk with God, a complete separation from the world, and a strenuous course of good-doing, as some of my Christian friends would persuade me, and even my own heart testifies, or all but testifies, that I did? Surely there must be some exaggeration here, or I was too enthusiastic and too sanguine. There must be room for reconsideration in cool blood. I may have been misled by the persuasion of others, and by my own excitement. I can judge more calmly and more coolly now.

Yes, brother. And thou canst judge more heartlessly too, and more selfishly, and more dishonestly and dishonourably.

Pay that which thou hast vowed. It is to the Most High that thou hast sworn. It is with him that thou hast made a covenant by sacrifice. "Neither say thou before the angel that it was an error" (Eccles. v. 6). No human witness may be forthcoming to convict thee of unfaithfulness in saying that. But the Angel of the covenant knows what thy vow was. And any angel sent to minister to thee knows it too. Make no inquiry after vowing, neither say, It was an error. Grieve not the Holy Spirit.

2. All the more may you be moved thus promptly and honourably to pay your vows unto the Most High, when you take into account the other part of the offering of thanksgiving about which the Lord is dealing with you; "Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me" (ver. 15).

There is a natural connection and sequence here. Faithfulness in paying your vows, out of gratitude for deliverances already experienced, must tend in its very exercise to give you confidence and courage in addressing to God renewed applications for fresh deliverances, as they are needed from time to time.

That, however, is a low view to take of this singularly loving word of God to you.

For what rich grace is here! What tender condescension! What fatherly consideration! To make your calling upon him in the time of trouble, not a privilege merely, but a duty! Nay, to make it a part, and the chief, the crowning part, of the only service or sacrifice of praise which he is inclined to ask or cares to accept at your hands! What amazing kindness!

And yet, if I am indeed his child, understanding and entering into his fatherly heart, I can partly comprehend and sympathize with it.

I am myself a father, and my son has fallen into grief or met with misfortune, out of which it has been my joy to get him extricated. At a great cost of time and treasure, of tears and pains, and it may be even of blood, I have rescued him from destruction, retrieved his ruined fortunes, repaired his shattered health, and placed him on a right footing before all men. Well. He is not ungrateful. He loves my house and company. He is desirous of testifying his sense of my bounty and his attachment to my person. I see him always as he goes in and out, anxious to devise means and methods of showing his thankfulness; ever

having recourse to new ways of proving that he is not ungrateful, or reproaching himself for the inadequacy of the returns he makes to me for all my favours. But I cut short his uneasy efforts to repay me. I put an end to his misgivings and his strainings. No, my son! I want no such gifts or offerings—no such acts of homage or humiliation—as you are troubling yourself about. You and I are surely now on such terms with one another as to make unnecessary all mere formal state on my part, and all mere formal services on your part. All I am concerned for is, that you should faithfully fulfil the good purposes you formed in the day of your deliverance from the calamity that was overwhelming you; and that if a similar calamity befalls you again—if a like serious crisis meets you again—or, indeed, any trial, be it ever so trivial—you will pay me the compliment, do me the favour or the justice, give me the pleasure, of helping you again as I have helped you before. So you gratify me by giving me the opportunity of delivering you again. So you best honour me by showing that you know and trust me. “Call, therefore, upon me in the time of trouble. I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.”

CHRISTMAS DAY IN PARIS,

1871.

TWO GIRLS.

CHRISTMAS again! One year ago
I danced these dreary streets along,
As if a bird should thrust its song
Against the bosom of the snow;
Birds hold their peace, by winter smit,
But we sang spring-time into it.
I had forgotten till to-day
That we had ever been so gay.
But when the bells, so tender then,
Rained through our dim and deadly air
Their irony of Peace and Prayer,
The Past leapt back to me again,
And I remembered and believed
There was a life before we grieved.
Only a year ago that chime
Crept to our pillow like a kiss,
Waking to hope and light and bliss,
And sweetness of the holy time;
(Silence it now, it wrings my soul—
Our Christmas bells should only toll.)

Forlorn Cécile, who, by my side
Wins one late hour of pale repose,
Was then as radiant as a rose,
And kept her state, a promised bride;
(O! touch her not! Perchance her eyes
See Christmas kept in Paradise,
Where he for whom she lived, forgets
The last long misery of Metz!)
Then daybreak shouted, “Wake! Arouse!
The gap between two joys is past!”
And up we answered to the blast,
And shook the sleep-dew from our brows,
And smoothed our robes, and tressed our hair,
And found the harvest of the night,
Greeting and gift and quick delight,
Like manna, fallen everywhere.
I, gathering all with laugh and jest,
While she, all breathless, in her breast,
Hid his first ring, nor wore it till
He bent her blushes to his will;

(You see, she hides it there this morn ;
 His mother weeps to see it worn.)
 Then forth, scarce reining in our smiles,
 We went to worship—we were nine—
 The chorus seemed to soar and shine
 Like summer through the misty aisles ;
 We knew each other's tones, and leant
 On all the spreading links of love,
 While the great windows blazed above
 Like doors into the firmament,
 And taught our heavenward hopes to climb,
 Because our hearts were then so bright
 We might have thought that upper Light
 Less than the loveliness of Time.—
 Christmas again ! Oh, day of woe !
 Can that have been one year ago ?
 The habit of this daily weight,
 Which is so heavy and so great,
 Has grown about us till we deem
 That our lost life was but a dream ;
 And yet we had it ; well I know,
 The loss and the remembrance rise
 Bare, black, and leafless through the snow,
 Confronting our bewildered eyes
 With all we had one year ago,
 Without a trace, except the pain,
 Of what can never come again.

When first we knew what was to be
 They bade us go, Cécile and me,
 We were too young, they said, to bear
 The torture of this slow despair ;
 Ay, even my father bade us go ;
 " You are but flowers," he said, " and so
 What can you do ? Go hence and bloom,
 That is your business." We repeat,
 " Flowers let us be about your feet
 To make a pleasance through the gloom."
 And then he yielded, and we stayed,
 And, hour by hour, the world decayed.
 We know it now ; the secret touch
 Of Death reveals itself at length,
 And all the signs of failing strength
 We would not recognise as such,
 We can interpret now. It seems
 They all meant dying ! Shallow gleams
 Flitted around us in the haze,
 And clarions made a noise of hope,
 Which fell to silence, and the rays
 Sank to that night wherein we grope,
 For Doom is speaking loud and clear,
 " Watchers give up ! The end is here."

" Why," cries my father, " have you stayed ?
 You are but flowers, and you must fade."
 So be it,—grace us with a glance,
 Flowers, cast upon the corpse of France.

The day begins again, and we
 Go forth to worship—we are three ;
 The mothers, his and ours, abide
 At home, made feeble by their tears,
 For each has lost a son, and fears
 Lest any tell her how he died
 Where, in the battle-twilight, lie
 Those dread dark heaps of agony.
 Victor—he's just eighteen—we know
 Was with D'Aurelles ten weeks ago,
 But walls of silence round us close
 Even harder than the wall of foes,
 And when they bring the wounded in,
 And, with unpractised hands, we strive
 To keep some gasping soul alive,
 Or soothe his passage out of sin,
 'Mid all the sights we dare not see,
 And sounds we cannot cease to hear,
 " Lies Victor in such jeopardy ?"
 We think, " and are there helpers near ?"
 Thérèse we name not ; she lay dead
 Before the siege was two months old—
 Our little lamb, that brooked not cold,
 Slain by the strangeness and the dread.
 To hide her with our hearts we thought—
 She took them from us, and is gone ;
 What can we pray for now, since nought
 Is left for hope to fix upon ?
 Vague though our knowledge be of all
 Beyond the inexorable wall,
 The curtain which no cry can lift,
 We know the wreck is there, adrift
 Against some sinking strip of light,
 And dropping into desperate night,
 We know God's promise is made void,
 Seed-time and harvest are destroyed ;
 The common heart, the simple home,
 Are wrung with fameless martyrdom ;
 The days to come die in their birth,
 And the great Past, with all its names,
 Shrunk to an epitaph, proclaims
 " Here was the Joy of all the earth."
 Lord Christ, thou art so long withdrawn
 The faithless world forgets Thy face—
 Break through upon this bitter place,
 And tread our darkness into Dawn !

M. B. SMEDLEY.



AGAINST THE STREAM:

The Story of an Heroic Age in England.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE SCHONBERG-COTTA FAMILY."

CHAPTER XX.

THAT letter of my father's made me passionately long to return, not from its words so much as for the absence of any of the dry little sayings which were natural to him, when no weight was on him. And I could not bear the humility. Clapham was *not* better than he was.

However, engagements had been made for us until June; and through May, at all events, we must stay.

Moreover, at the period when that letter arrived, I was a little indignant with Clapham on more grounds than one. I had expressed a wish to see the chapel in which John Wesley preached. Cousin Crichton had replied by some disparaging remarks about the Methodists,—excellent people, he admitted, in their way, in their day, and in their place. Also, one of my cousins (it was dear good Phœbe the reformer) had said to me something that offended me about Piers. I cannot remember the words. They were, I know, very circumspect and very kind; but they implied that Piers was not up to the Clapham standard of religious experience. I was very indignant, and as that was the first time I had appeared in that character at Clapham, my cousins were proportionately astonished.

I said they were as bad as the people who would not tolerate any one if he lisped, or said *sh* instead of *s*; that they would not have recognised St. Andrew, or Nathanael, or any of the dear quiet saints, who would not protest and talk;—that they would have believed in Apollon more than in St. Paul.

I said there was the Age of the Heroes who fought the dragons and founded the cities, and the Age of the settled, comfortable citizens, who lived in the cities and kept festivals over the skeletons of the slain dragons; that King David had his "first three," and then his thirties, and his thousands; that Clapham and its citizens and its festivals were excellent, but where would Clapham have been, unless the Wesleys and Whitefield had faced the mobs of heathen miners and colliers, led on sometimes by worse than heathen rich people, had drawn the colliers out of their dens and holes, and conquered them for Christ—risking life

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over and over again, "being destitute, afflicted, tormented;" hunted out of the church they loved—for too much love to her lost children; hunted down by lost multitudes for determining to save them from their sins; avenging themselves on the church by bringing back to her countless of her lost, to inspire her with new life,—avenging themselves on the savage mob by bringing back thousands of them to God. I said it was not true that the Wesleys were separatists. They had been hunted out for beginning the very work the Church was now waking up to share. England had driven the loyal colonists in America into becoming a nation, and the Church of England had driven the orthodox Methodists into becoming a sect.

I said it was excellent to preach good things to reverent hearers in orderly pulpits, and to contend in great meetings against great wrongs; but that it was something more to go alone after one lost sheep into perilous wildernesses, and to face alone for Christ's love a crowd of angry men ready to stone you.

I said that the men and women who welcomed shipwrecked men to the shore, and fed and clothed and attended them—were dear and good and Christian; but that the *one man* who swam through the surf with the rope to the wreck was *more*, and his work such as the shipwrecked men and those who helped them should never forget.

I said, finally, that Piers was better ten thousand times than I was, who was always imposing on people just because I had a miserable, un-English way of saying out all I felt, whilst he never could say a tithe of what he felt, and so *did* it. I said I did think there might be too much religious talk, and I was sure there might be too much religious judging; and that there were good people in the world at other places besides Clapham, and there had been in other ages before 1801, and in other churches besides our own.

And I said I did sometimes wish that every one at Clapham was not so terribly rich; and that if the apostles, even, had had to live among them, I thought after a little while it must have been hard for them not to have felt it a sin of omission not to have some thousands a year.

Cousin Phœbe was evidently a little tempted

to admit me among her company of impracticable people to be reformed. She said, with a funny little buttoning of her lips, "that, at all events, there was no danger of mistaking me for one of the silent saints."

But they had all the sunniest and sweetest tempers. Cousin Matilda at once adopted me as one of her "uncomfortable people to comfort;" and Cousin Harriet, the most open to new convictions and new admirations, generously conceded that she did think, from my descriptions, Abbot's Weir must have some of the best people possible in it.

And afterwards, dear little Martha having heard of the little passage of arms, put her thin arms round me and said—

"I like you for being in a little fury about your brother, Cousin Bride; for I think there never was any one, any boy, I mean, so kind and helpful and gentle. He saw why it was my head was a little uncomfortable on this couch, and he made me that little wooden support, you know, to keep up the pillows. I do wish he could have been a doctor! He says so little, and does so quietly and exactly the right thing. It is such a rest!"

The little sufferer had attracted out of Piers the secret he so rarely spoke of, of the studies and ambitions he had freely relinquished without ever letting my father know he had sacrificed anything—to be able to help him in his business, and that Francis might go to the University.

But Piers was the most trying of all. For when I told him of these fears of Phœbe's (being anxious moreover to draw him out of a little cloud of reserve and gravity which I had observed on him lately), he only said—"Perhaps she is more than half right, Bride. I am sure I am not what I want to be; and *will* be, I trust," he added softly.

This humility of Piers, and now of my father's, in this letter, were too provoking; more especially because they really meant it.

Humility was not precisely the characteristic of my cousin Crichtons, or of Clapham, as I saw it, except of dear Cousin Barbara, who was not "gifted" in any way, she said, and greatly marvelled at and delighted in the powers of utterance of her daughters. In secret, no doubt, they thought humbly of themselves; but then I did not see them in secret; the diaries which, no doubt, they all kept, not being yet published. But in public the whole active, benevolent, flourishing community admired each other too sincerely and too demonstratively not to see reflected in themselves some of the glow they shed on others. They did not blow trumpets before

themselves, but they did liberally serenade each other.

And I considered that Piers and my father had been over-impressed by those triumphant clarions.

However, it was only when summoned by such self-depreciation or such suspicions, to little counter trumpeting of my own, that I lost the joyous sense of the stir and the victory around me, and left for a minute that Gulf Stream of love and life which swept me on in its full warm tides, and swept summer to so many shores.

CHAPTER XXI.

CLAIRE wrote of the shady violet-banks and primroses in the dear old fields and lanes around Abbot's Weir, and of the carpets of hyacinths in the woods by the river.

At Clapham, too, it was May; and what May meant at Clapham was indeed as unknown to Abbot's Weir as the sudden rush of floral life in the springs of Lapland. Externally, Clapham had its own share of the glories of spring. Ranges of real country-fields, and of useful farm buildings (picturesque, if picturesque at all, by necessity or accident, not by self-conscious design), lay between the Common and London.

Every garden overflowed with treasures of blossom into the roads, laburnums, "dropping wells of fire," thorns, pink and white, lilacs, and, in the regions around, avenues of horse-chestnut, like processions awaiting some joyous bridal,—trees unknown to Abbot's Weir, embosomed in its ancient oak-woods. And in sunny nooks, under those walked paradises, beds of sweet violets, crocuses, clusters of anemones. And harmonizing all, the green of well-kept lawns, penetrating in little creeks and bays under the shadow of the groves and shrubberies.

Little paradises walled in from the wilderness, where certainly no thorns and briars, and apparently no serpent could enter; between these paradises incessant interchanges of kindness and friendly intercourse; and from these paradises, full of "all that was pleasant to the eye or good for food," incessant ministrations of mercy towards the wilderness which, unhappily, still existed outside, through ministering men and women who frankly recognised each other as little less than angelic; rivers of beneficence, flowing forth East and West and North and South, and "glad tidings of great joy," sincerely dearer to many of the happy dwellers than any treasures besides, sounding forth far and wide from that oasis of exceptional bliss.

As to me, I felt often, during that May, altogether lapped in paradise, body, soul, and spirit. Never can I forget the effect of the first of those May meetings, since become the butts of so many witticisms, on me. Exeter Hall was not built until thirty years afterwards, but the human materials of Exeter Hall were there. It was the meeting of the London Missionary Society to which I was first taken.

We met in Freemasons' Hall.

The Church Missionary Society had been established three years before, in 1798. The Bible Society, to meet a dearth of the Scriptures, to which all existing means of supply were inadequate, was instituted two years later (1803). The Baptist Missions had been commenced, with their first subscriptions of £132s. 6d., and their *one man ready for any sacrifice*, William Carey, in 1786. Earliest of all in this new spring-tide, many years before, in 1731, the Moravian Brethren had sent out their first missionaries, and had sent them to the most despised and rejected of all—the slaves in the West Indies.

The London Missionary Society had been in existence five years, called into being by the dying request of Lady Huntingdon. It was intended to embrace all sections of the Christian Church. This original purpose has been, in a great measure, frustrated, partly perhaps by the narrowness of human prejudice, but chiefly, I think, by the largeness of Divine purpose, working out that deeper unity which is to be attained, not by a neutralising mixture of all the elements in a mild and ineffective compound, but by a free development of all in the fulness of life. It was found impossible for the various Christian societies to work together, when the proclamation of the gospel of the common Christianity had drawn together communities of converts. But in those days the various societies not having increased to the dimensions they afterwards reached, there was leisure and good-will for each to sympathize with all.

Accordingly my Cousin Crichton, although a firm and orderly churchman, took us all to the London Missionary Meeting.

Those who think Christian missions have effected nothing, would do well to consider the state of the world outside Christendom at the commencement of this century. At that time all the societies were groping their way in the thick darkness. In India, the British merchants were still strenuously opposing the disturbing of the natives, and of their own commerce, by the introduction of Christianity.

A year before, barred out by England from all her stations, Carey had landed at the Danish settlement at Serampore.

Except a few scattered converts of Schwarz, there was not a native Protestant church in India. The words of Carey, on his outward voyage, "that Africa, for missionary work, was not far from England, and Madagascar very little farther," seemed to us then a wild visionary speculation.

There was not a single Christian in the Pacific Islands, or in Madagascar, scarcely in Africa; not one in connection with the reformed churches in China or Japan. It was not until nearly three centuries after the Reformation era, that the Protestant churches awoke collectively, to the fact of the existence of an outside world to be evangelized.

And now at length, at the beginning of the century, England, "mistress of the seas," and mother of almost all the European colonies that live, had wakened up to her great work of evangelization.

At that time the societies had yet to investigate the distinctions of heathenism, ranging from savage fetish worship to religions with systems more subtle than any European philosophies, and with sacred books older than the New Testament; and had yet to invent the various weapons needed to meet these various antagonists. All the battle-field had to be reconnoitred; all the weapons had to be forged. The Bible had to be translated into almost every language of the heathen world. Carey alone translated the whole, or portions of it, into thirty of the dialects of India. For this purpose the grand armoury of the Bible Society was gradually extended.

In many cases the written language had to be created. Between the translation of the Bible into Gothic by Ulphilas in the fourth century and the work of the Bible Society in the nineteenth, not a translation of the Scriptures had been made for the instruction and conversion of races outside Christendom.

It is true that only three centuries since the third—namely the tenth, eleventh, and fifteenth—are unmarked by fresh translations; but these were made for people already within the pale of Christendom.

Nearly three hundred years ago Luther's "German Bible for the German Folk" had begun to create a German people and a German language; but now first the Christian church arose to place the Testament of her Lord in the hands of the whole race. He came to redeem and to rule.

In India the missionaries found the Sacred

Books of the Buddhist and of Mahomet, but not that of Christ. In Africa and the islands of the Pacific they found not only no Bible, but no grammar, no alphabet, no written language. In other regions of the East they found indeed translations of the Scriptures, but in ancient forms of speech which had died out of the comprehension of the people for more than a thousand years.

Every missionary in those days went on a voyage of discovery. What missionary meetings and reports were in those days it is difficult almost to recall in these. The centuries of slumber were over—

"And all the long pent stream of life
Dashed downward in a cataract."

All this was embodied to me, and to hundreds besides me, in that unpicturesque assembly in Freemasons' Hall.

Do we not, indeed, often aim too low, in our æsthetics and symbolisms? Is not sculpture higher than architecture? Is not a statue of Phidias, a Venus of Milo, more than the temple which may enshrine it? What do we mean by a shrine, but the sacred casket which the temple, as an outer case, enshrines? What do we mean by a shrine, unless the jewel is more precious than the casket?

And through the religion which centres in the Incarnation, the truth that "the true Shechinah is man," receives a new force which is simply infinite. More precious, capable of a diviner beauty than the most glorious cathedral, is the simplest, the lowliest of the crowd of human beings gathered in it.

To me, in those youthful days, when the hymn of glory to Christ was sung in unison, it seemed like nothing so much as that "voice of a great multitude, and of many waters, and of mighty thunderings," heard of old in heaven.

I knew some of the quiet fountains from which those many waters flowed, the little clouds, "no bigger than a man's hand," in which the electric force was gathered, which burst forth in that thunder of thanksgiving. I knew not only the Claphams, but the Abbot's Weirs.

This crowd had not been formed, did not live as a crowd. It was gathered, the best part of it, one by one from quiet hidden places, scattered through the land, where the little band, and the solitary worker, were pulling "against the stream" of their own little district. It had been gathered, one by one, as I believed, in quiet hidden hours, when each human spirit there had been brought into solitary communion with the Divine Spirit.

Fastidious criticism may pull its rhythm and symbolism to pieces; but to me the

"Crown Him, crown Him, crown Him Lord of all!"

sung by the thousand earnest voices, was like a great coronation anthem.

I seemed visibly, audibly, as well as inwardly—"body, soul, and spirit"—translated into some glorious cathedral, into the temple which all cathedrals symbolize, "the pattern showed in the Mount of God."

I thought, I felt—all Clapham, all "evangelical" England felt—that the whole Church was entering on a new era, a new spring-tide, a new outpouring from the pure well of life, a new enkindling of the divine fires.

Were we altogether wrong? Was there nothing of Pentecost in the fire which has cleansed the actual literal hell of our prisons, consumed the devilish iniquity of slavery out of nation after nation, enkindled the light of the love of Christ in countless dark places which knew not a ray of it, in India, China, Africa, and the islands of the sea, given the Bible in nearly eighty new tongues to those who speak them?

Has there arisen before or afterwards, since apostolic days, a movement which has accomplished more in the divine literature written on "the tables of the heart," which, as we believe, shall never be superseded and become obsolete? or in that Church Architecture which no fires of Advent judgment shall dissolve?

CHAPTER XXII.

It was on the last day of May; the day which at Abbot's Weir troops of children still celebrated by singing old songs from door to door, carrying garlands festooned with strings of eggs. Every incident of that day is as clear to my memory as a proof-engraving, bitten-in by the event of its close.

I was sitting by the open window in Cousin Crichton's drawing-room, all kinds of sweet English fragrance wafted in from the garden, and all kinds of delicate aromatic exotic perfumes breathing out of the conservatory.

Mr. Twistleton, the curate, has just come in, and was hovering about in an indefinite way. At length he approached the window, and looking out on the sunny lawn, turned to me and exclaimed, in a kind of mild rapture—

"Ah, Miss Danescombe, 'all this, and heaven afterwards!'"

The last words were a quotation from a tract about a thankful old woman.

"Oh, please not, Mr. Twistleton!" I said. "It was just the old woman's 'all this' being her poor bare old solitary room, that made it so beautiful in her to say it. Please not to talk of our 'all this'; it makes me so afraid heaven might be like it."

"My dear Miss Danescombe," he replied, surprised, apparently, at the vehemence of my tone, "surely such foretastes of Paradise are given to prepare us for the reality."

"Oh, I trust not," I said; "I think not, I am sure not. God will never let heaven be just a little bit of exclusive bliss, without even as much power of spreading it as we have here. It is so unlike Himself."

He looked perplexed at my ideas, and a little hurt at my fervour. I believe he thought I was getting into dangerous speculations, and had rather a dangerous temper, and in a short time, after a few indifferent observations, he left. My cousins always insisted I had unconsciously checked a declaration. But I never thought so. And if I had, it was very fortunate for us both, inasmuch as he married very wisely and well a month or two afterwards.

All day my cousins and I were busy about some of their countless bountiful and considerate kindnesses; cutting and binding up flowers to take to invalids, hunting out truant Sunday-school children, carrying little dainties and tracts to the sick poor. It was one of Cousin Barbara's plans always to connect body and soul in her distributions, especially because, tracts not being expensive luxuries, she could not bear that her pensioners should think she commuted costly temporal help for cheap religious benefactions. Political economy did not trouble her any more than it did St. Francis. How to sustain without weakening is a problem at no time easy to solve, with which she did not perplex herself.

My cousin Harriet and I were coming in at the garden-gate after our last expedition, when we met Piers. He was walking with a languor quite unlike himself. Something in his face smote through me like a sword. He looked stricken.

"Where have you been?" I said.

"Through some of the gaols with John."

"They were very terrible?" I asked.

"Too terrible to speak of, sister," he said.

There was something in his voice, and in his going back to that old name of our childhood, which touched me unaccountably.

"You are ill, Piers," I said, clinging to his arm. It felt no support. He needed support from me. He let me go silently up with him to his room, and then he lay down on the bed and closed his eyes.

And so that terrible time began; unannounced, unforeseen, as the terrible things do come to us in life, whether they creep on us with footsteps slow and noiseless as those of Time, or crash on us in the earthquake.

The earth opening her mouth in the midst of the tents where the family meal is preparing and the little children are at play!

Down into the dreadful chasm we went, Piers and I; the valley of the shadow of death, so close always to us all; he lying on the bed of fever, I watching beside him hour by hour and day by day, watching every look and movement, yet separated from him all the while farther than by continents.

Week followed week, unnoticed, in that land where Time was no more. Delirium came; and the secrets of that brave tender heart were unveiled. My father joined us; and we watched together, yet still apart from each other as from Piers, afraid to murmur our fears, unwilling to enfeeble the little gossamer thread of hope to which we clung by trusting it to words.

* * * *

We watched together, yet alone, in that land of chaos and thick darkness, where all the billows and waves go over us, yet we live, if it can be called living to lie, breathing, but stunned and blinded; that land of desolation where every one is alone, where prayer becomes nothing but a cry without words, a lifting up of the soul like the eyes blinded with tears, not to *see*, but to *appeal*, or at best (if such faith is given), a helpless, speechless falling on the heart of the Father, and resting for a sustaining moment there.

* * * *

And at last we touched the ground at the bottom of that awful chasm, and found that this time it was not to be unfathomable; that this time the earth was not to close over him visibly, and over us in soul.

At last, one morning, after a quiet sleep, he said in a quiet, feeble, natural voice—

"Sister, I have been very ill. I must have given a great deal of trouble."

Then I called my father, who was trying to sleep in the next room; and with quiet voices, as if it was all a matter of course, but with hearts beating with a tumult of joy, we spoke to him—to him—yes, to himself, once more, and he answered. The dreadful chasm cleaving us into separate existence was gone.

We were one once more; we lived, and our lives flowed together; and oh, how much closer, how much deeper, how much fuller, for all we had gone through apart!

I have gone down into that gulf of terror more than once since then. I have crept up out of it alone to the poor common earth, whilst the one I watched has risen out of it, unseen, into the higher, fuller life awaiting

us beyond. I have learned slowly, slowly, and with what anguish, that there is "a better deliverance" from sickness than recovering to this fettered life. I have learned to believe, and sometimes to feel, that the joy of that restoration to health—overwhelming, intense as it was—is but a faint picture of the joy of the rising to live the immortal life, over which death has no dominion. But to this day that joy of welcoming my brother back to us, of seeing him rise step by step to life and health, and risen enriched with treasures from the depths into which he had descended, remains to me purest type of that other joy—"incorruptible the and undefiled, and that fadeth not away," which now I embrace by faith for my beloved; and hope ere long with them to know.

How tender they all were, those cousins of ours, the servants of the house, every one, in their sympathy in our joy! How near they seemed, they who, during that time when we were watching in the darkness, had seemed as far off as creatures in another planet; how ungrateful I felt I must have been for all their help; how grateful I felt now!

Cousin Barbara had some new surprise every day from those countless, hospitable luxuries of hers which she persisted in ascetically calling "little comforts;" flowers, dainties, cushions, easy-chairs, the easiest of carriages.

I could not help feeling that the rather oppressive necessity, or rather "duty" of being rich which had occasionally weighed on me at Clapham, had its very pleasant side when one had to be convalescent in such a Castle Bountiful as Cousin Crichton's.

Yet I could never forget that there were depths into which no Castle Bountiful could pour one drop of consolation. I could never forget that in all that terrible time the only human comfort that had reached me was from the one chamber of suffering in that beautiful, bountiful home; that the only tears I had been able to shed were one night when, at the very darkest of all, I had crept into little Martha's room, and she had clasped her poor thin arms round me and sobbed—

"Cousin Bride, I do love him so dearly! But oh, indeed, God loves him better! 'Lord, he whom Thou lovest is sick.' Poor dear cousin Bride!"

CHAPTER XXIII.

ONE day we were driving together, Piers and I, in Cousin Crichton's carriage alone through the green lanes and over the commons which then stretched beyond Clapham, alone in that delightful uninterrupted solitude one feels in

a carriage, where no one can get at one, and when one has no duties to any one to summon one away.

It was one of our first drives.

"Bride," Piers said to me suddenly, "I was delicious, was I not?"

I had to admit it.

"Did I say anything?"

"You thought you were a doctor, sometimes," I said, "and seemed very pleased."

"I hope father was not there," he said.

"Oh, you dear blind boy!" I said, "hiding your wise ostrich head in the sands. Do you think we do not know what you gave up to help us all? And do you think we do not love to know it? Or that you will make us forget?"

"Was that all?" he said.

There were two other seals broken.

"Must he know?"

"He must know."

Now, which seal should I break first? I turned away my head.

"You spoke a little—a great deal—of Claire," I said.

"Was any one there?" he asked, very earnestly.

"No one but me," I said; "and I always knew."

"That will do," he said.

And then there was rather a long pause.

"Nothing else?" he said at last, with some relief.

"Yes, something else, brother," I said—"scarcely anything continually, *but* that one thing."

He looked inquiring.

I could scarcely speak of it yet. I scarcely knew if he was strong enough to bear it. Such anguish had been in his bewildered eyes, and in his clear, strong, unnatural tones when he spoke of this. At last I resolved to say—

"It was *sin*, brother. You kept saying your life had been lost, lost. You kept asking if there was forgiveness for you; for *you*. You kept on telling me to be ready; ready—as you were not. Oh, do not ask me to speak of it! while all our agony was that you *were* ready, ready to leave us and go away among the redeemed and holy, and be blessed for ever, and see God, and we see you no more on earth for ever! Do not ask me. I cannot speak of that."

"I was *not* ready, Bride," he said quietly.

"Do not say so, Piers," I replied, "you who had always lived for us all!"

"Bride," he said, "I had not lived for God."

"Surely," I said, "to live for those He has given us is to live for God."

"I used to think so," he said; "and certainly loving our neighbours as ourselves is not always so easy, Bride, especially when our neighbours are very near, and we cannot quite like them. *But there is something more.* There is the first great commandment, you know, as well as the second; before the second, the foundation of the second. I do not think I had ever even tried to keep that. To love God with all our heart and soul and mind and strength must mean something else than loving our neighbour as ourselves. Our Lord did not use vain repetitions. To love God Himself for His love to us, for Himself! Sister, I had been learning for weeks that I have never done it. I felt it by the lives around me, which had something I had not. I saw it in Mr. Wilberforce's book on Practical Christianity. And if to break the greatest commandment is sin, I have sinned; not once or twice, or seventy times seven, but always."

"But," I said, "to obey is to love, to submit is to love. And you had obeyed, and had submitted, God knows."

"To love is to obey," he said; "to love is to submit; but to love is more. You know that, Bride, well."

I did. It was useless to attempt to argue or to justify him to himself. There is no filling up chasms God has rent, with dust, or with rose-water.

There was a long pause.

At length I said—

"But you are not so sad about yourself now. What did you do?"

"I went in heart to God," he said, "and confessed to Him that he was my Father, and I had not honoured Him; that He was my Redeemer, and I had not been grateful to Him. And I pleaded with Him, because He is my Father, to forgive me; and because He is my Saviour, to save me; to give me to know and to love Him, to reveal Himself by the Holy Spirit to me. For I was sure that if I knew Him as He is, I must love Him. It must be only some crust, or veil, or cataract, in my eyes that hindered my seeing; and it could be only not seeing that hindered my loving. There was nothing to be created for me to see, only something in me to be removed that I might see. He, with His infinite love, was there. I asked Him to open my heart that I might see and love."

I could scarcely speak.

"He was sure to hear," I said.

"Quite sure," he replied. "There was but

one answer—*Christ.* He gave me to see Christ."

"You had no dream, no vision?" I said.

"What do we want of dreams and visions?" he replied. "Of old it was in divers manners. In these last days He has sent his Son. It is day, Bride, now—not night. It is revelation, not clouds and darkness. The brightness of His glory has been unveiled, the express image of His person has come, full of grace and truth; has been a little child; has taken the little children in His arms; has touched the leper and healed him; has let the sinners touch Him, and has forgiven them; has let them nail Him to the Cross, and has prayed for their forgiveness; has loved us, and given Himself for us; has borne our sins in His own body on the Cross, and has redeemed us; has done all the holy Will we have failed to do, to enable us to do it; has suffered what we could never have borne, to enable us to suffer; being for ever one with God, has made Himself for ever one with us, and is touched with the feeling of our infirmities; not pitiful only or beneficent, but *touched*; has loved me and given Himself for me; for with Him "us" means not a mass of humanity, but a *multitude* of men and women. *And I know it, sister.* Thank God, I know it, now, for myself. And now that first commandment sometimes seems as unnecessary as a command to love my father or you; as much an instinct as breathing."

We were silent a long time. Then the carriage swept up to the porch. And Piers went to his room to rest, and I to mine.

There is no filling up chasms sin has made or God has made in humanity, or in the heart or conscience of any one of us, with anything but Himself.

CHAPTER XXIV.

WE returned to Abbot's Weir through a very different land from that we had traversed on our way to Clapham at the beginning of the year. It was late in October. Once more there had been a good harvest. Everywhere arose the golden wheat-stacks of the plentiful crop just harvested. There seemed a new elasticity in the very air as we went back through the land relieved from the pressure of famine, with Piers restored to us—restored, as he felt, to more than a few added years; to life essential, spiritual, immortal.

The voices of the ploughboys as they followed their teams through the brown fields which had just yielded their abundant stores, rang clear and joyous through the crisp

autumn air. The men seemed to step with a firmer tread; the women sang to their children at their work by the cottage doors as we passed through the villages; the children ran after the coach with vigorous limbs and lungs. The hollow-cheeked groups that had hung about the inn-doors had vanished. The land was full of stir, and work, and hope. Eager groups there were, indeed, everywhere, watching what further confirmation of the new glad tidings we might bring. For all England was in an intoxication of joy at the new peace with France; the peace of Amiens. A week or two before, crowds had met in London to welcome the French Ambassador, had taken the horses out of his coach, and dragged it by Whitehall, through St. James's Park, to the park-entrance of the Admiralty, where the gallant Lord St. Vincent had soberly recommended them, "if they were bent on doing the gentleman this honour, at all events, to control their enthusiasm so far as not to upset the coach."

The French Ambassador must have received a shock to the national theory of the phlegmatic character of Englishmen.

In Bath, Mr. Wilberforce found the people "mad with joy." In many of the towns through which we passed, bells were ringing, crowds were hurraing; in some, the streets had glorified themselves with arches of greenery, and such spasmodic displays of flags and boughs as England, puritanised out of her mediæval picturesqueness, and as yet unenlightened by imitative modern æsthetics, could conjure out of her own unassisted brain.

"Peace, peace!" The glad tidings rang through the land, and the nation burst into one of those outbursts of great joy which are so pathetic when we think either to how little fruition they led, how much aspiration they expressed, or how much they symbolize.

All Europe, for the moment, was at peace. What murmurs there might be from the ashes of burnt villages in Switzerland, from cities in Italy or in Belgium plundered by armies or by tax-gatherers; what apprehensions in the hearts of emperors at St. Petersburg or Vienna, and among the people everywhere, at a propaganda of liberty and fraternity, carried on like Mahomet's—by fire and sword—did not at that moment affect us.

The forms of the republic, in France, were as yet preserved intact; indeed, they had become more classical than ever. The edifice was crowned with a First Consul. What dangers to freedom or peace could lurk under a title so modest and so democratic?

There were, it is true, a few anxious and forecasting spirits who did not hope. The king, it was said, did not hope. He thought the peace only experimental. But then the king had been wont to hope at wrong times. He had hoped obstinately to crush the opposition of the American colonies; and the American colonies had become a nation.

Mr. Pitt did not hope. But Mr. Pitt was out of office. Many military and naval men did not hope. But then military and naval men naturally liked war. And so we gave France everything she asked, except Naples and the Papal States (whether it was ours or not to give), settlements in India, and at the Cape of Good Hope, West India Islands, Italian protectorates, Rhine frontiers; and then, like a fond and indulgent parent, fell into a rapture over her at consenting to be reconciled. Having everything she could possibly want, what could the result be but that she would be satisfied and keep quiet, and never disturb the family peace again?

Meantime there was bread enough and to spare, and work for every one who would work; and our England was a very merry and contented land to travel through in that genial October sunshine which had done such good work for her harvests, and was now touching her woods and downs with every choicest and richest tint of bronze and gold.

How beautiful the dear old grey town looked in the depths of its green chalice, embossed with its crimson and golden woods, and rimmed with the warm tints of its fern-covered moors, and the soft blues and purples of its rocky "tors!" It must be confessed that its solid old monastic bridge looked a little diminutive after Westminster, and the streets a little narrow, and the houses, which had once seemed so tall, rather low, and the whole town dwarfed and unimposing to an extent that it seemed a disloyalty to admit even to oneself. But then the land around it was so large and free; the long sweep of the valley; the wide world of those well-known woods free to every one to gather endless primroses and bluebells in; the range beyond range of its wild moorland hills.

A sense of freedom came over me in more senses than one; for in more senses than one I felt as if our little human world of Abbot's Weir, like the place itself, though small in itself, opened out into a wider world than that of Clapham.

I felt it first when Amice, in herself so wide a world, stopped the postchaise we were in for a moment of welcome at the great park-gate of Court; again, when Ma-

dame des Ormes, leaning on the arm of our Claire, greeted us in her sweet French at our own old arched doorway ; when Reuben Pengelly blessed God that we were safe back again ; and most of all when I sate alone for half an hour that evening with Loveday Benbow, and looked out once more with her eyes into that wide world of which not Abbot's Weir or Clapham only, or only England, or even Christendom, were mere fragments, but this whole visible world of space, and all this transitory age of time.

Beautiful and sheltering as the woods and

forests are, the finest and freest tree cannot be the product of the forest ; it must stand apart, where it has need of a more robust strength to maintain its own unaided battles, and space to develop into a freer individuality and a larger symmetry. At Clapham, the current against the stream was in itself so broad and strong, that there was little demand on spiritual nerve and muscle in gliding along it.

Very delightful it was to come back to Loveday, and find her all I had left her and imagined her, and more than all I



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had found since. The deepest and highest life is by necessity also really the broadest ; broader by all the space of heaven and the infinity of God. If we deepen the channel enough, and connect it with the Fountain of Life, as with the ocean, we need not fear that it will be narrow.

With every one else one seemed to take up the old relationship just on a slightly different level, at least at first, with just a touch of strangeness. With Loveday one seemed to have been present all the time, simply to go on, and not begin again at all. She always

seemed a creature over whom time had no power. There she sat, as of old, dove-coloured and white, with her dove-like voice and spiritual dove's wings ; and her youth, renewed like the eagle's, as of old, to defend that great multitude of the heavy-laden which were her brood.

No ; Loveday was no dream. She was quite unchanged.

Mrs. Danescombe also was unchanged. And I felt she felt I was unchanged, and felt it with a shade of reproach and disappointment.

To have spent nine months at Clapham, in the society of my "influential cousins," and with all the superior clothing and manners of London at hand, by which to remodel my own, and to have come back just the same Bride Danescombe, unmodified, unengaged, it was difficult to understand, and not a little difficult for her to sustain; especially as every one else seemed to like it.

Reuben was not at all surprised.

"Didn't I tell thee, old woman," he said to Priscy, "she would bring back no London airs? What is London to such as she, beside old times?"

Priscy was surprised. She met me with a very elaborate courtesy, and was delightfully ruffled and taken aback when I returned it as for twenty years by a kiss.

And Madam Glanvil decreed with a nod that I was as well as could be expected, and would do, provided there were no hidden germs of Claphamic philanthropy lurking undeveloped.

"Infection does not come out at once, in some diseases," said she. "It was a dangerous experiment. But in a little while we shall see."

My dear cousin, Dick Fyford, was not a little changed; changed for one thing into a lieutenant, having been with Nelson at Copenhagen, and Nelson being a leader of the kind that leads in more ways than one to promotion; showing the way by being foremost, inspiring men to be their best, and also clearing the way by his terrible alternatives of victory or death. He had compacted into a man, having found a calling in which no amount of energy was superfluous, and no amount of daring out of place. Moreover, much of the hardness, as well as the aimless restlessness of the boy had passed from him, or fitted into the right place in him. He privately confessed to me that the wrongs of the common seamen were all but intolerable to see; say nothing of *suffering*.

"You were not so far wrong about impressment, Cousin Bride," said he, "as I thought you were, long ago, when I wished you were a boy, at Miss Felicity's; and would have fought you had you been one. There is work for your anti-slavery people nearer home than in the West Indies. Kidnapping, bad and little food, flogging, turning out to die like dogs when wounded and sick; terribly like negro slavery. Enough to make a man a Whig, or a Jacobin, or anything to set it right." (Dick's politics were never abstract.) "The mutinies at the Nore and at Spithead were put down three years ago.

And while Buonaparte keeps the old country awake, and Nelson keeps him down, all may go right. But to be fed and flogged as those poor fellows are, and to fight as they do, is more like patriotism and the old Greeks and Romans and all that," (Dick's history was never very definite), "than a deal of the work people get stars and peerages for."

Dick was not indeed changed in his "constancy in loving," nor as yet in the object of that constant love. He had fallen deeper than ever into what he believed his unconquerable passion for Amice Glanvil.

This time it was "no child's play, no changing dream, but only too serious; presumptuous, he felt; desperate, he feared; but, hopeless or not, only to be torn from his heart with life."

"You are her friend, Cousin Bride," he said tragically; "you will understand."

I wished to be sympathetic, but I could not be encouraging. They seemed to me too far apart—she with her early depth of womanhood, under all her girlish impulsiveness, he with so much of the boyish yet about him, man as he was in courage and in command, where command was called for—to be at all likely to fit each other. But the difference between them seemed to Dick exactly the hopeful symptom in the case.

"Similar in friendship, Cousin Bride, opposites in love!" he said, with the sententiousness of long experience. "You and I, you know, have always understood each other better than any one; and you are the best friend I have, and always were. Amice Glanvil and I do not understand each other, and never did. And there is the hope, feeble, I confess; but one could live on a crumb from that table."

Those early "little loves" of my cousin's often reminded me of Amice's "portrait," the crocus-bulb, sending out its long feeler into the soil to find something to root itself to. They were no dilettante fancies; they had all the humility of a genuine passion, and so, in their measure, raised him. He never fancied any one was in love with him.

I said, he knew I always liked to do what I could for him.

"He did know. I had always been as good as a mother to him."

"Not quite that!" I remonstrated. "I thought that was too much even to try to be to any one."

"Well, as good as a grandmother, at all events, Cousin Bride," he said; "as good and indulgent and ready to help as the best grandmother that ever was!"





"AGAINST THE STREAM."

He meant it as a compliment ; just as the old gentleman at Clapham, old enough to be my grandfather, had meant it as a compliment to ask me to be his wife.

It was plain I must accept the dignities of advanced age. Perhaps I should grow younger as my years increased. Meantime I would be as grandmotherly as the duties of such a generally recognised protectorate demanded.

Miss Felicity was rigidly changeless. As the tutelary Athena of Abbot's Weir, she seemed to grasp the Ægis with her firmest resolve, ready to turn it on any dragon's brood which might have sprung up in Piers or me, of presumption, or conceit, or London pride ; and to appal them instantaneously into stone. However, she was soon reassured, and the Ægis vanished, and all the militant bearing disappeared, when I ventured to give her a snuff-box full of what Cousin Crichton had called "the finest Rappee," which I had brought for the Lieutenant. It moved her much that any one should lay the smallest offering on the shrine, on which it seemed to her nothing that she should lay her life.

"You are a kind child, Bride Danescombe," she said, going back to the beginning of our friendship, to the foolscap and the stool of penance ; "you are a dear, generous child. If any one wants you to be good to them for life, they have only to begin by doing you an injustice."

And Claire, was she changed ?

She was nearly a year older. Yes, quite a year, and that is a great deal at sixteen.

She was a year older, for one thing, because her mother was a year older, too obviously.

A little more of a stoop in the dignified figure, of slowness in the step ; the fire with which she spoke of the past no longer only subdued, but fading ; the light in which she saw the present a little dimmed ; the fears with which she saw the future a little darker,—the future which was to her all embodied in her Claire, on whose face her eyes would rest so long with such a wistful solicitude.

An era of tender concealments had begun between the mother and child. When that long gaze at last would meet the quick, anxious glance of Claire,—Claire, who had been feeling it so long, and had not dared to look,—the solicitude would melt instantly out of both faces ; and on one side or the other, some tender pleasantry would dart out to veil the anxious care which lay beneath.

And so, thinking, dear souls, or trying to think, they had quite imposed on one

another, they went on. And meantime their little stratagems had imposed on Léontine.

"Ah, Mademoiselle," she remarked to me one day, soon after my return, mournfully shaking her head, and glancing from Claire (who was humming an old nursery chanson as she arranged her autumn leaves in the next room) to her mother, watching her from the couch. "That poor cherished child, she knows no more than the babe unborn what is before her !"

"Do any of us, Léontine ?" I said. "If she did know, what better could she do ?"

"But the shock, Mademoiselle Bride, the waking up, think how terrible !"

"What is to prevent what is terrible from being a shock and a waking up, Léontine ?" I said, thinking of Piers's illness. "Would fear help us ? or foreseeing ? seeing the next step ?"

"But when the next step may be a precipice ?"

"What can we do, Léontine, but look to Him who sees *beyond* the next step ? What can we wish for them more ? Besides," I added, trying to combat my own fears, "Madame is not old. She may revive. She has such a power of life."

"Alas, Madame is old," Léontine replied. "What does Revolution mean but that the whole machinery of the State has gone wrong, and the wheels spin madly round like a whirlwind instead of stealing round imperceptibly like the hands of a clock ? Madame lived a thousand revolutions of the years in one day ; one day, Mademoiselle, which she never speaks of to any unless to Miss Loveday ; one day when the best blood of France was shed between L'Abbaye and La Force. There is no turning the sun-dial backwards, Mademoiselle, over such degrees ! But to you and that angelic child there is yet sunshine ; and in the sunshine the birds must sing. Let them, poor innocents, while they can ; while they can !"

But if Claire had grown a year during those months of separation, Piers had grown and gained more.

No life, worth calling life, is to be measured by years ; and he at eighteen was a being one could rest on, who cared for us all, instead of needing to be cared for ; and if that does not mean the best part of manhood, what does ?

Claire met him, when we returned, frankly, joyously, just as of old, with that combination of French and English manners which was in her so charming, with a gracious little courtesy, and a frank shake of the hand,

and a little pleasantry about his steam-engine. But when she looked up with her happy eyes and met his, something silenced the little pleasantry, and flushed for a moment the bright face.

Was it a look in his, or only that his face was still pale and thin?

However it was, so it happened that they changed towards each other. A distance came, and a reverence, and a doubting of one another, and a comprehension of one another,—and a death of old things, and a creation of new, which made them farther from each other and nearer each other than all the world besides; yes, all the world, Piers and I, and Claire and I, included.

On one ground they still met free from self-consciousness, or that double self-consciousness of love. One sacred care united them, old and yet mournfully new, the tender thoughtful care for Claire's mother.

I could not but see how her eyes followed them both, and seemed to embrace them in one deep, motherly gaze. Sometimes I used to wonder whether, just in this one case, her old French customs would not have been better than ours.

Madame and my father could have negotiated it all so amicably, and watched as a double providence over their two children, and betrothed them quite simply, and given them sanction to love each other as much as they could, that is, as much as they did. The sweet sacredness and mystery and reverence would have remained, and the anxious questionings, the unreasonable fears, the distracting doubts would have vanished. Yet, would the one have remained? or would the other have vanished? Could any arrangement have helped them to find each other?

And, indeed, could Madame or my father have dared to initiate any such treaty? To accept it was another thing.

To attend mass and be a little *philosophe* was one thing; not to attend mass, to be definitely Protestant, and religious to the heart's core, was another. Infinitely better, I believe, Madame felt, for Piers himself. But for Claire? That Protestant world, with its endless divisions, and its thin rigid partitions, seemed to Madame such an inextricable labyrinth, such a seething chaos. It was true that France was a chaos, but then France had for the moment abandoned religion. When religion itself, the Church itself became a chaos, what hope for the world—what hope for little Claire drifting to and fro on that deep? Death might, indeed, break down those partitions, might reconcile all faithful

souls in Him who came to atone; for her these perplexities already grew thin and faint; but Claire had to live, and who would guide her through?

All this and a thousand things more were in Madame's softened eyes as she watched those two together.

Perhaps it was well for her and for them that the guiding thread could not be in her trembling hands.

Our brother Francis was not changed. We had talked very often of him, Piers and I, during his convalescence—in our drives, and in quiet moments on the journey home. I knew well it was of Francis Piers had thought when he had said in that first long conversation in Cousin Crichton's chariot, that it was "not always easy to love our neighbours as ourselves, especially when they were very near neighbours and we couldn't *like* them."

We had confessed to each other that the feeling which had grown up in our hearts to Francis was very little like love.

"Hating our brother whom we have seen" is not altogether such an impossible sin, when we see in our brother exactly the things we hate, and feel we *ought* to hate. And Francis had so many ways and qualities that we could not even *try* to like. Little selfishnesses with a disguise, little untruthfulnesses with a purpose, little unfairnesses which it seemed mean to notice, little pretensions which it seemed petty to resist, which nevertheless fretted one more than a great injustice; a general shallowness all through, which had a fussing, fretting way of making little things seem great.

"If one might believe in transmigration" I once said, "it would be a comfort as regards Francis. Then one might take him for a larva—all outside—and one might hope that inside was developing some imperceptible creature, if it was only a butterfly,—which was the real Francis; to appear in some future state of existence. As it is there is only the shell of the larva."

"There cannot be only that shell, Bride," Piers replied. "That is the point. We have to find out the creature inside. It must be there, and we must get to it. When we get home we must try."

In that distance, in that sunshiny atmosphere of Cousin Crichton's, in the joy of renewed strength, and of that new life of faith, every victory seemed so easy, every victory so sure to inaugurate a conquest!

So we came home; and we did try. It seemed as if Francis must have changed too,

and must recognise our new purpose and meet us in it.

But there he was, as smooth and impenetrable as ever, with no more idea there was anything which required change in him than the Apollo Belvedere. One misfortune was that he combined my father's genial manner with my stepmother's cold and superficial character. It seemed to me sometimes as if their natures were so unlike, that the nature which sprang from them had a kind of necessity of falseness in it, from the impossibility of any true blending of the elements.

He had taken to one habit which was new, at least new in form. In childhood he always, as I have said, continued to glide into possession of our rights, our toys, coveted places in games, in short of whatever coin was the currency of our childish treasures, whilst we had been referred to the Sermon on the Mount to satisfy our claims.

Now that he was sixteen and money—the coin of the large world—became his currency, he began to borrow money. In the easiest way. His week's allowance was not due until tomorrow, or he was just out of cash, and a marvellous bargain had offered which would be lost to-morrow; or some one had lent him a trifle, and he knew neither our father nor Piers would like the family to be in debt for such a bagatelle. And of course the morrow of payment never came.

To all our remonstrances he opposed his cool impenetrability and his genial manner.

Once indeed he was so far roused by a very earnest warning, as to say that if Piers made it so unpleasant to borrow, he would take care not to trouble him again.

But he found it more unpleasant to do without the things he wished for, forgave Piers his "rather unbrotherly" conduct, and consented to mulct our treasury again.

What ought we to do? Each successive grievance was so small, it seemed impossible to trouble our father with it, deep as his hatred of debt, and his love of us all was. And, moreover, not only our tenderness for our father, but our very fear of being hard on Francis, kept us back.

"What will be the end of it, Piers?" I said.

"Debt, hopeless debt," he said gravely. "Disgrace for us all, perhaps. Because, happily for Francis, this is not a world constructed so as to make debt in the long-run either pleasant or possible."

It was on a wintry Sunday afternoon. We were walking on the hillside behind the

garden, over the field-path, iron-bound with frost, cakes of ice in the creaks of the Leat where we used to harbour our fleets, blades of grass stiff and white with frozen dew.

From the grey Tors sharply defined against the frosty wintry-blue of the sky, came a keen air, bracing every nerve and muscle.

From the philanthropic combats of Clapham we had come back to such little pricking difficulties! And yet the whole atmosphere—moral, mental, and physical—felt to me more invigorating, more such as one's strength might develop and do its finest work in.

I, in my way had brought with me countless schemes for the transplanting of Clapham philanthropic works into the virgin soil of Abbot's Weir. Piers, in his way, had set his heart on one small good work, which he intended forthwith to begin. This was neither more nor less than a Sunday-school. We were on our way that afternoon to Reuben Pengelly, in the Foundry-yard, to consult him as to the best way of carrying out what we believed to be altogether a new idea in Abbot's Weir.

Long icicles were hanging from the stationary water-wheel. The most beautiful fairy-like fretworks were circling and fringing the cascade. The old yard was absolutely still; Reuben's porch empty.

We knocked at the door, full of our project, and then lifted the latch. Around the old man's knees were gathered three little children, to whom he was telling Bible stories.

"Here have we been making our grand schemes, Piers," I whispered, "and meanwhile Reuben has *begun*! How many things the Methodists have begun!"

"Yes," said Piers, "the Thames at Westminster is something. But the little springs that run among the hills come first."

"And they are more!" I rejoined.

"At all events," he replied, "there would have been no river without them."

CHAPTER XXV.

BUT most of all I found the change in Amice. She had changed outwardly, as no one else had. Her face was thinner, her great dark eyes seemed larger, and looked further away, and further into one, than ever. I saw it even in that minute when the postchaise stopped at the gate for her welcome to us. And the first day I spent at Court I felt it more.

She said she had missed me and my "good in everything," and had fallen deeper than ever into her "dualism." "Except," she said, "that the dualism is only on the sur-

face now, far enough down indeed, Bride; yet underneath is something else. Underneath is the Atonement, Bride, the Father and the Son, the Manger and the Cross, and man reconciled. At the very root of all is not dualism, but the incarnate crucified Christ. At the very heart of all is the light. That I never lose. But oh! the conflict between the light and darkness goes down terribly far, and goes in terribly far, and goes on terribly long!"

She looked to me like some of the old pictures I had seen in London of Roman Catholic saints; not ecstatic, though she was capable of ecstasy, but full of high resolve.

Certainly, also, there was deeper dualism in the household. Madam Glanvil's steel-grey eyes seemed absolutely to cut with their sharp suspicious glances. And she missed no effectual opportunity of using that two-edged sword which, by prerogative of age and deafness, she wielded.

Formerly, if the conflict between Amice and Madam Glanvil had perplexed me, it had amused me far more. The combat seemed all tournament work; Amice often had the best of it, and the militant old lady was more than half pleased that she had.

But now something was there which showed the conflict to be in earnest.

The air was charged with thunder. The Jupiter-nod had given place to the bolts of Jove; no mere theatrical thunder-rolls, but real lightnings ready to fall, no one could tell where or when.

Not half so many cutting things were said by Madam Glanvil, but when they came the thrusts were from no tilting-sword. They were meant to tell; and the pain to me was that they did tell. Amice did not ward them off, or even seem to evade them. Something seemed to have taken possession of her heart which compelled her to receive those stabs, and let the iron enter into her soul.

A severer legislation also prevailed with regard to Chloe and those "lazy brutes," Cato and Cæsar. "They should be made to understand their place, if other people did not understand it for them, Madam Glanvil was determined."

Poor Chloe and Cato and Cæsar were entirely prohibited from attending the Methodist meetings.

"Happy enough for them if they were allowed to enter the church, like their betters. In their own country they would probably have been knocked on the head long before this, as sacrifices to some idol or devil. In the plantation they would have

been driven to the cane-work, and might have been glad, idle creatures that they were, if they escaped Sunday without a flogging.

She was cruel in words, Amice thought, because deeds were impossible. The possibility of cruel deeds, Amice always said, would have awakened her to mercy.

It is said words do not break bones, but they break worse than bones. Altogether, the three negroes had now a cowed and humbled look, dreadful to me to see in a dog. And it was not only the cowed and anxious look with which they followed Madam Glanvil's eyes; it was the fawning and cringing on every one, that I could not bear to see. The one was merely the cowed animal, the other was the degraded and humbled man.

And Amice could do nothing, except keep Chloe as much with herself as possible, that they might bear the blows together.

Indeed, of all the household, Chloe seemed to me the only really free and happy person.

I said so to Amice.

"Yes," she replied, "Chloe went down into the depths long ago, and has picked up all the Beatitudes there. Besides, Bride," she added, "Chloe has *only* to suffer; she has not to be the cause of suffering. She has not to choose. She is free because she is a slave; for slaves they are still, practically, exiled and helpless, and ignorant, as they are. But I, on the other hand, am a slave just because I am free."

We were in the library. She was leaning against the library ladder.

"You know, Bride," she said, "I *could* leave Granny altogether; I am of age, and my fortune is my own. But just because I could, I cannot. If she kept me in within bolts and bars, or in chains, I feel sure I should break them and escape. But the terrible thing is, she keeps me in, fetters and imprisons me with love. Yes; you may look astonished—with love. Granny loved my father better than her own life; and now she loves me better than my own happiness. She has nursed me like the tenderest mother through dangerous infectious illnesses—through a fever I brought with me from the West Indies, and through small-pox. She took the small-pox. You can see the marks now in her fine stern old face. Only one or two; but there they are. And she bore it for me. She loves me in that kind of way, that if, for instance, I were in love with some one she thought it unwise for me to marry, she would let me pine away and die, rather than let me marry as she did not like. And then she would sit alone until

she died, and never take another creature to her heart, and never have a doubt that she had done the best thing for me that she could. Remember, she has never had her will crossed all her life; and she clings to her own will as a martyr to his faith. She loves me, and hates what I care most about—my poor slaves, and religion. She thinks the negroes a set of idle savages, unfortunately necessary conditions of West Indian property, who are always, by their obstinacy and folly, defrauding me of the revenue my father's plantations ought to yield. She will no more go into the question, what right we have to enslave them, than into the question, what right we have to break in horses. Of course, neither horses nor negroes like it; but, except for our convenience, there is no need for horses or negroes to live at all. They would be hunted down like wolves. They do hunt each other down like wolves in Africa, she says. Then as to religion. She declares that the Methodists, Moravians, Baptists, all of them, set the negroes on to insurrection; and of the horrors of negro insurrections she speaks with dreadful plainness. And as you know, her beliefs are not in the least degree dependent on evidence. Of course there is no moving her. Towards the negroes she is simply merciless; towards the philanthropists and missionaries she is absolutely fanatical."

"But to you, Amice!" I said; "she is changed to you. You have had some encounters, I am sure."

"Yes," she said. "I was firm about Chloe and the Wesleyan meetings. I said Chloe had lost all she loved in the world but me, and had saved me, life and soul, as Granny knew, left a motherless child in that perilous climate, in the midst of that hardening, iniquitous system. I said Chloe had only that one delight, those prayer-meetings of Reuben Pengelly's, where they prayed prayers and sang hymns she could understand, and that this Chloe must not be robbed of."

"And you did not succeed?"

"I did succeed with Granny. She was very angry. She stormed and raged at me; but she said Chloe might go, at her peril and at mine. She had been brought up in devil-worship, and it was but natural she should like it. For that the Methodists set on the slaves to deeds of devils there was not the shadow of a doubt."

"So Chloe went again?"

"No, Chloe would not go. She laughed and cried, and asked if I thought the dear

Lord could only be found at meetings. The prayers were good; but soon we should get where we were beyond praying; and the hymns were good, very good, and very comforting, and we should have plenty of them soon. Was she going to make missis and missie at war because of her getting a little bit of comfort a little bit sooner? Was that like the good Lord? And so Chloe will not go."

"And Madam Glanvil still persists that the negroes if different from brutes, are only different because they can be savages?"

"Yes, you know, she always persists. The persistence is from within; anything outside does not affect it. The trial is to love both, Bride—Granny and the slaves, and the missionaries; oppressor and oppressed; to love all, and to be able to help none."

"That will not last long," I said.

"Not always," she replied. "But it does last rather long. However I have found some comfort."

She went up the ladder, and took down a book from the shelves; a clumsy, badly bound old book, on yellow, coarse paper, in what seemed to me Black Letter. For at that time the German language formed no part of an English girl's acquirements.

It was a German narrative of the missions of the United Brethren, the *Unitas Fratrum*, called Moravians.

"At last I have found the Christians who take up the cross, the real hard, heavy, disgraceful, slave's cross," she said, "and care for people because no one else does; the Christianity that can help me, and the Christians who have helped my poor slaves."

I took the homely old books in my hand; the first German books I had ever handled. What a world of difference that implies in our English thought and education!

"They are queer, clumsy old books," said Amice. "They look as if my good Brethren had had them printed and bound in some experimental brotherly workshop, as I dare say they had."

"They look as quaint and dry and old-fashioned as some of Loveday's Quaker books," I said. "And very likely they are as living and true."

"As fresh and living as the New Testament, almost, they seemed to me," she said, kissing one of them—"a great deal fresher and younger than the Apostolic fathers, except Ignatius, and bits of that epistle to Diognetus." She had explored so many odd corners of thought in that library. "And it is such a comfort they are in German," she

added, "because Granny is not suspicious of them, as she has grown to be of some of my books. Unfortunately (no, *not* unfortunately!) she discovered the other day a copy of John Wesley's 'Thoughts upon Slavery,' and threw it into the fire. However, she had read it first. She had read it through, and the plain, strong English has sunk into her heart, or, at least, into her conscience, I know, as it did into mine; for she is continually bringing out bits of it to worry, or to throw at me, by which I know they worry her. Anti-slavery societies will never create a nobler appeal than that. I know much of it, happily, by heart, as Granny does by conscience.

"*Can human law turn darkness into light, or evil into good?* he writes. *Notwithstanding ten thousand laws, right is right, and wrong is wrong still; there must still remain an essential difference between justice and injustice, cruelty and wrong.*

"One by one, besides, it answers all Granny's favourite arguments.

"*'You say, It is necessity!'* he says, speaking of the dreadful slave-stealing and slave-ships; *'I answer, You stumble at the threshold. I deny that villany is ever necessary. A man can be under no necessity of degrading himself into a wolf. You say the blacks are stupid and wicked. It is you who have kept them stupid and wicked.'*

"*'You call your forefathers wolves,'* said Granny, in unconfessed reply to this. *'You say we made the slaves stupid and wicked. That is what, in modern days, is called filial piety!'*

"*'It is necessary to my gaining a hundred thousand pounds,'* Wesley goes on, dramatising the objector. *'I deny that your gaining a thousand is necessary to your present or eternal happiness.'*

"*'The Methodists are Anabaptists—Communists,'* says Granny. *'They would reduce every one to their own beggarly level.'*

"*'It is necessary for the wealth and glory of England,'* Mr. Wesley continues, still quoting the objector. *'Wealth is not necessary to the glory of any nation,'* he replies; *'wisdom, virtue, justice, mercy, generosity, public spirit, love of our country—these are necessary to the glory of a nation, but abundance of wealth is not.'*

"Glorious old John Wesley," I said parenthetically. "I wonder if they have read that book at Clapham?"

"Granny has read that, at all events," she replied. "I know it, because she called Mr. Wesley a traitor to his country, worse than a

Frenchman,—whethera Jacobite or a Jacobin, she is not clear—probably both in the germ. However, the book has burnt itself in. What I long to know is, if the tender appeal at the end to the *hearts* of the slaveowners, and to God for help to the helpless, has touched her. I think it must. *It is good, Bride, to have the planters appealed to as if they also had souls and hearts. Sometimes I think some of your anti-slavery friends a little forget that. It is difficult to love oppressor and oppressed as both human creatures; after all, both astray and lost, and sorely in need of help. Perhaps there is some good, after all, in having to do it, not with one's wise, philanthropical heart only, but with one's foolish, trembling, quivering, natural heart, as I cannot help doing; painful as it is.'*

Then, hugging her clumsy German books to her heart, as she might a living creature that felt being petted, she took me up-stairs into her bedroom—that delightful old room in the oldest gable of the old Elizabethan house, partly in the roof, with low mullioned windows, looking far over the woods and the river to the grey moorland hills.

On the floor were piled heaps of books on all subjects, in many languages. Amice had no fancy for dainty fittings. Her luxuries were of another kind from those of Cousin Crichton's house; poetical, rather than comfortable, or picturesque.

The sole luxuries of that room were the capacious old escritoire that had belonged to her father, with a fascinating treasury of small drawers and pigeon-holes, and a desk that drew out; and those ever-increasing heaps of books which were poor Chloe's distraction; with that low window-seat on which we had spent so many hours of talk, in winter twilights, or in the heat of summer noons.

"Now," she said, as we seated ourselves. "I will tell you the history of me and my German books. When you went away last January, and I had nothing but books left to talk out my heart to, I came, in a corner of a cupboard of the library, on some records of the Missions of 'the people called Moravians' in Greenland, and in the West Indies. And I saw that the first mission to the West Indies was begun by a man called Leonhard Dober, a Moravian potter from Herrnhut, who, on a journey to Denmark with Count Zinzendorf, met a West Indian negro slave, and was so touched with compassion for the misery of those poor helpless blacks, that he set his whole heart on going to tell them they had a Saviour. He set his heart on this so fixedly,

that being told by objectors there was no other way of teaching the slaves but by becoming a slave, *he proposed to become a slave himself*, that, driven to the daily toil with them, working in the plantations among them, and sharing their burdens, he might by any means save some of them. It seemed to me as absolutely taking up the Cross as anything in this world ever was."

"Did he do it?" I asked.

"My English book did not say. It stopped just there. But in the same cupboard I found some German books which, by the words *Unitas Fratrum* on the outside, I knew must be about these same Moravians. Of course I was determined to find out, and if one has set one's mind on finding out anything, of course one does not let a language stand in one's way. Granny seeing me one day with those books, gave a sigh, and shook her head pathetically, for her.

"'Poor foolish Aunt Prothesea!' said she. 'Yes, that comes of being wilful, and taking up with strange notions. She went to London and met a crazy foreigner who called himself a Count, as they generally do. And this Count made her as crazy as himself. Some new religion he had, not altogether Popish or Protestant. They used crucifixes, and lived in communities; not exactly monasteries, for they married; which was, of course, better than being monks and nuns—unless they married the wrong people, which poor Aunt Prothesea did. She went to some unpronounceable place in Saxony, married some one they called an Elder of the Church, not ill-born, they said, but older, at all events, than herself about half a century, I believe. And naturally he died; and unnaturally she pined for her Elder. They put her into a widows' house, as they called it, and she didn't like it; who would? To be classified like the vicar's beetles; or like adjectives and substantives in the grammar; or like all the people who are one-eyed and one-armed; classified, and penned up with a lot of women. So she came back to Court, and had a room given her; your room it was, by-the-bye. And I remember she brought back a heap of ridiculous foreign books with her, not only not in a language, but not in an alphabet any rational person can read.' You know, Granny thinks all foreign languages either an impertinence or a joke; and would consider it an intolerable affectation to attempt to pronounce them in anything but English fashion."

"But did she tell you anything more about the books?"

II. N. S.

"She said they were half in that cupboard in the library, and half in an old closet in the wall in my bedroom. And there I found all I wanted; a dictionary, German and Latin it was, and a grammar, German and French. And so, all this summer, Bride, you having deserted me, I have been living with my great Aunt Prothesea, and her United Brethren. And you cannot think how doubly delightful this old room has become to me, or what a companion and friend my great aunt has become to me. I read the hymns as if she sang them to me. They are marked and underlined, Bride; in more than one page, stained as if with tears. And I read the old 'Berlinische Reden' of Count Zinzendorf; and better still, some older books by Martin Luther; letters, table-talk, sermons, commentaries. They are so strong and daring, so quivering with life, those words of Martin Luther, so delightfully one-sided, and so gloriously many-sided; one side, at a time, I mean—unguarded, unbalanced, bold, full, free, like the Bible; and *then* a thousand other sides, like our human hearts, like the Bible, and like no other religious books that I know. Not a bit of grey in them, not a neutral tint; every colour and every tint and every shade, to meet all the countless shades and colours, the countless thirsts and hungers, and joys and sorrows of our hearts."

"But Luther was not a Moravian?" I said. How dim the name of Luther was to me! like a mere Heading in a Catalogue; and to Amice he was a living man—yes, living, then and now, once and for ever!

"No, certainly," she said; "Luther was not a Moravian. He was Luther. Nor am I a Moravian," she added, with her quick dropping of laughter. "I am Amice Glanvil, your Amice. Your Amice, who goes to church every Sunday, and has no intention of becoming an adjective, or an atom, in any community, married or unmarried, even the best in the world. Were you afraid I was in process of transformation?"

I had been a little afraid as to what those curious black letters might lead. They connected themselves in my mind in some unreasonable way with black arts and mystical ideas. There were Jacob Böhme, Swedenborg, and sundry mystical and unutterable Teutonic personages, of whom I had a vague idea that they were a kind of Protestant Simeon Stylites, or Faqueers, who, in some symbolical way, adapted to European practicabilities, lived on pillars, or stood permanently on one leg, or symbolically

stretched out one arm until it grew immovable, or contemplated "the Silent Nothing," or their own consciousness, until consciousness ceased to be conscious.

Moreover, I had some idea that Reuben Pengelly had once spoken doubtfully of the Moravians, as "Antinomians," whatever that meant, or as opponents of Mr. Wesley, which was Reuben's strongest form of Anathema.

Amice admitted that this was true. But she told me that the Wesleys had first learned the possibility of a liberating and gladdening religion from seeing the fearlessness of some Moravians in a storm, on the voyage across the Atlantic. She said that as far as she could understand the matter, Mr. Wesley and Count Zinzendorf were both kings, and that it being simply impossible that they should both reign in one kingdom, the division of the kingdom had become a necessity; but that the difference of opinion which divided them was a mere accident.

She thought they meant essentially the same on the very point on which they separated. Indeed, Mr. Wesley himself had said to the Count, at one moment, that the difference between them was only one of words.

Mr. Wesley contended for growth in holiness, and possible *perfection*, by which he seemed to mean a state in which holiness became instinctive.

Count Zinzendorf contended for holiness as being not so much a *commandment* as a *promise* to the Christian; in other words, for faith in Christ as making the desire of holiness an instinct; for sanctification, not as a constrained *work*, as the spontaneous free *fruit* of the Spirit.

Both looked on holiness as the great aim and the great promise; both looked to Christ as its source; both regarded faith as the surrender of the whole being, the dependence of the whole being on God, as the means.

If there was a difference, it was that Wesley looked on this free, glad, instinctive goodness as the attainment of the advanced saint, Zinzendorf as the right of the simplest child who lives by the new life; that Wesley dwelt on the Christian life more as a warfare—the Moravians more as a growth; Wesley more on the resisting evil, the Moravians more on the conquest of evil by good.

Amice at all events had evidently found her intellectual element in the German literature, and her especial spiritual element in that old book of German hymns. Her beautiful, white spirit-wings seemed to expand in it.

I cannot say whether there may not have been some unreasonable and exaggerated hymns among them. I have yet to find the hymn-book which I should not think enriched by omissions.

But, first through Amice's sympathetic translations, and afterwards by their own simple profound, inimitable words, those hymns have grown into a portion of my own life; so that I feel as unable to judge them critically as the voices which sang me lullabies in infancy. To her, I believe, the original attraction was the contrast of their profound peace to the war in her own heart and life; the contrast of their singleness of aim with her natural tendency to see everything in its subtlest relations, and on every side.

"Redemption, liberation, reconciliation, atonement, breathe through every line," she said. "Redemption, liberation, reconciliation in Him Who is the Redeemer, the Mediator, the Sacrifice, the Sufferer, the Conqueror, but most of all the Sufferer, with us, for us, in us; and all never for one instant to be separated, or to be conceived of, to all eternity, as separate from Him."

Their theology is Jesus:—

"Du dessen menschlich Leben,
Das unsore selig macht;
Du dessen Geist aufgeben
Den Geist uns wider bracht
Den wir verloren halten:
Du unser Fleisch und Bein;
Ach, unter deinem Schatten
Ist's gut ein Mensch zu seyn."

"Yes," she said, "under His shadow it is good, good,—good for ever, everywhere, and for every one, to be a human creature; good for me, for Chloe, for all."

"And those are the words my poor widowed Aunt Prothessea loved," she said. "I smile sometimes when I think how sorrowful and stricken they thought her, and how her heart must have sung, and been at rest here over these dear old books, in this dear old room.

"And these are the words, Bride, in which Leonard Dober taught our poor black slaves. For I found the end of that story. He went in spite of all discouragement to those poor outcasts, not exactly as a slave, but poor, despised, as one ready to be, in all things except sin, one with them. He reached those poor broken hearts. 'Sweet, too sweet,' they said, 'are the tidings you bring to us.'

'That deep abyss of blessed love
In Jesus Christ to us unsealed,'

was unsealed to hundreds of those parched and weary hearts. So easy it was to them to confess themselves to be 'nothing,' wretched, sinful! In Antigua the planters

acknowledged that Christianity as taught by the Moravians made the negroes worth twice as much as slaves. And now there are congregations of Christian negroes in many of the islands; some Moravian and some Methodist. Zinzendorf's followers and Wesley's do agree there. Ah, Bride, I often think, if we could get down low enough, we should all agree here; as when we get up high enough, we shall surely all agree there."

"But, Bride," she added, "I have a little hidden hope, that it seems almost a treachery to you to have; yet almost a treachery if I have it, to hide from you."

We were sitting on that low window-seat. The moon had come up and was shimmering in a quiet pool of the river below.

A shiver went to my heart, as she took my two hands, according to a custom of hers, and pressed them against her face.

"I cannot set my slaves free yet," she said, "whatever you or Piers may think. The fines, legal expenses, &c., for setting them free, would take more than the estate is worth, and after all, the poor enfranchised creatures would be left quite helpless, and might become the slaves of any avaricious white who chose to claim them. It is more than

mere money that I want one day to give to my slaves."

"I know, I know!" I said, "you want to give your life, yourself. You want to be a martyr. I do wish, I almost wish—your Aunt Prothesea had died before her Elder, in Germany, and all her books had been buried with her. I cannot, cannot part with you, Amice. How can I? Piers will marry—and every one else will die or change. How can I let you go, and go there? For the blacks are savages, and the planters are some of them worse."

"I shall not go, I hope, Bride," she said, smiling, "until I am sent;—and when I am sent you will have to help send me. And you will. You will help me more than any one, as you always do. And meantime if I have a taste for martyrdom, I think it may be gratified as easily, in my small way, here as in the West Indies. Only my Moravians will not hear of self-denial. 'Do you think it was self-denial to the Lord Jesus,' Count Zinzendorf said to John Wesley, 'when He came down from heaven to rescue a world?' No, Bride, it was love, and that swallows up everything; and first of all self, which it has not done yet for me."

"HONOUR ALL MEN."

WHOM shall we honour? Kings on thrones all golden,
 With crowns of orient pearls, and Tyrian robe,
 Heirs of the might of generations olden,
 Stretching their sceptre over half the globe?
Whom shall we honour? Statesmen sage and hoary,
 Wise to retain and wiser to reform,
 Stirred by no thirst but that of life's true glory,
 Bold pilots through the darkness and the storm?
Whom shall we honour? Poets chanting sweetly
 The lays of might that thrill a nation's heart,
 High souls that do their Master's bidding meetly,
 And on the mountain summits roam apart?
Nay, not these only: infants in their weakness,
 Slaves in their galleys, prisoners in their cell;
 Young girls that shrink and quail in maiden meek-
 ness,
 Sick, poor, unknowing:—honour these as well.
Calm let the voice be, kind as angel's greeting;
 Gentle the words, as one who fears to pain;
Reproach with pity, wrath with love still meeting,
 Searching how best thy brother's soul to gain.
So spake true saints of God, and won men's favour;
 So lived meek Paul, in pure and blameless guile;
Now with clear joy, and now in accents graver,
 Rousing each conscience, winning each to smile.

So, subtly truthful, courteous, calm and gentle,
 Drawing all hearts with cords of trust and love,
 His true sons guarding with a love parental,
 He moved, as bright stars through the darkness move.
So spake our Master, patient, meek, and lowly,
 To way-worn travellers, Israel's wandering sheep;
 He the All-pure, receiving men unholy,
 Sharing their joys, and weeping as they weep.
Yea, doubt it not; each soul deserves that honour;
 We may count none as common or unclean;
 She beareth still the King's true stamp upon her;
 Marred, half-effaced, His likeness still is seen.
Flushed be each word and thought of wrath and
 scorching;
 Turn not away in weariness or pride;
 When the light dawns of life's eternal morning,
 The poorest, frailest, may be at thy side.
Yes, honour all; but keep thy heart's best loving,
 For those true brothers, children of thy God,
 On the same pathway, to the same goal moving,
 The strait and narrow way our Master trod.
Love with a love that does not fail nor languish;
 Enduring, zealous, hoping, helping all;
 Quick to console all sorrow, soothe all anguish,
 Still burning brightly though the thick night fall.
 E. H. PLUMPTRE.

THE SHEPHERD OF THE STONE OF ISRAEL.

GEN. xlix. 24.

AS Jacob lay a-dying, he broke into prophetic song; the past and the future grew clear to the eyes that were closing on the familiar scenes of earth; he bade his sons farewell with blessings which foretold their future destinies. His song lingers over his first-born, the unstable Reuben; over Simeon and Levi, who had brought upon him the great shame of his later days; and over Judah the Lion, from whom the sceptre was not to depart till Shiloh came; but then presses rapidly on, briefly characterizing each of his other sons, and obscurely indicating their fate, till he reaches Joseph, his darling and his pride. At this beloved name he pauses, opens the very floodgates of his heart, and pours out upon him the fulness of his love. He multiplies benedictions upon him, and cannot cease. All that is most precious in heaven and on earth is to come upon him. His words roll and swell with the very passion of desire: one phrase grows out of another; the same word is repeated again and again with more eager emphasis, in new combinations.

It is almost impossible to read "the blessing on Joseph" and not be moved by it, so high is the strain in which it is conceived:—

"Son of a fruit-tree is Joseph;
 Son of a fruit-tree by the well,
 Whose branches run over the wall.
 Archers provoke him,
 And shoot and hate him;
 But his bow abideth in strength,
 And the arms of his hands remain supple
 From the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob,
 From thenceforth the Shepherd of the Stone of Israel,
 From the God of thy father—may He help thee!
 And from the Almighty—may He bless thee,
 With blessings from heaven above,
 Blessings of the flood that coucheth beneath,
 Blessings of the breast and of the womb!
 The blessing of thy father surpass the blessings of my fathers,
 As far as to the summit of the everlasting hills!
 Let it come on the head of Joseph,
 And on the crown of him who is illustrious among his
 brethren."

Rendered into prose, this exultant ode predicts that the descendants of Joseph are to enjoy the very blessings which the Hebrew race accounted most precious: they are to be fruitful and multiply; harassed by many foes, exercised by many wars, they are to acquire a steadfast valour which will lead them to victory; and their inheritance is to be a fertile land, enriched by brooks and streams. High as the everlasting hills rise above the earth, so high is the prosperity of Joseph's sons to rise above that of their progenitors.

The whole tone of this song is so joyful and triumphant that it can hardly fail to make an adequate impression on our minds. And

yet, probably, the very lines in it which express least to an un instructed ear are precisely those which, to a student, carry the heaviest weight of meaning. As a warrant and guarantee that so large a promise of good is to be fulfilled, the patriarch pledges Jehovah to it by a name new even to his sons. The blessing is to come—

"From the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob.
 From thenceforth the Shepherd of the Stone of Israel."

No careful reader of the Old Testament can fail to have noticed the immense significance attached to the introduction of a new Divine Name. It invariably marks a crisis in history;—the opening of a new era, or the coming in of a new and larger revelation of divine truth, or the ratification of a new covenant. Thus, for instance, Abraham and Isaac, so soon as they entered into covenant with Jehovah, were permitted to call him "the God of Abraham" and "the God of Isaac." Thus, again, when Moses was called to be "the mediator" of a covenant between God and Israel, God revealed himself by a new name, and bade him say to the captives of Egypt, "*I AM* hath sent me unto you." Thus, too, when Joshua was about to commence war against the valiant nations of Canaan, God revealed himself to him as "the Lord of Hosts." In each case the name marks a crisis, a step in advance, a larger disclosure of the Divine character, a new engagement of promise and benediction with men.

There had been such a crisis in the history of Jacob, a crisis in which the Divine Ruler of the world, hitherto known to him only as "the God of Abraham," or "the God of Isaac," became "the God," or "the Mighty One of Jacob." The story of that crisis is familiar to us all. Jacob had sinned a great sin, cheating his father, cheating his brother, defrauding Isaac of the most valuable gift he had to bestow, defrauding Esau of the blessing which would have made him "ruler of his brethren." Esau's anger was kindled against him. The smooth supplanter had to leave Beersheba, and to wander eastward through the desert to Haran. On the first night of his journey he halted at a place called Luz. As "the sun went down," he found himself on the central ridge of the mountains of Palestine. The ground was strewn, then as now, with wide sheets of bare rock, amid which there stood up here and

there, isolated fragments like the cromlechs and other Druidical remains of England. He lay down on the rocks to rest, a rock his pillow; and in the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men, he dreamed that the rough stones formed themselves into a vast staircase, reaching into the depths of the broad and open sky. On the staircase he saw angels ascending and descending on the errands of their gracious ministry, while, from its summit, there came a Divine Voice which assured the homeless wanderer that even there he had a friend and a protector; that on the bare exposed rock, as in the consecrated tent or grove, God was present, beholding the evil and the good. The Lord was in the place, though he knew it not; and because God was in it, even the bare rock was "the house of God" and "the gate of heaven."

This was "the conversion" of Jacob, and it was here and now that, for the first time, he recognised God as *his* God. Heretofore he had conceived of Him as the "Friend" of Abraham, or the "Lord" of Isaac, who might be evaded and defrauded as Isaac was: henceforth he knew Him as "the Mighty One of Jacob," from whose presence there was no escape, who was in the desert as well as in the tent where He was worshipped; from whose presence there was no motive of escape, if He could shew himself thus graciously to one who had so grievously sinned, so friendly to one whose very brother sought his life.

To mark and signalize this crisis in his experience, this new revelation of God, Jacob took the stone on which his head had rested through the night, set it up for a pillar among the other stones which lay around, "and poured oil on the top of it." Such consecrated stones are to be found in our own Druidical remains, and throughout the world: they are familiar in the East. At Delphi, for instance, before the magnificent temple was built, there were rude stones which were held in veneration by the Greeks, and anointed with oil by the pilgrims who sought this holy place. The black stone of the Arabia Caaba dates back to the remotest antiquity; and the Mahommedan pilgrims still flock to it by myriads from the remotest parts of the East every year, often breeding among them the cholera which afterwards scourges our shores.

The consecrated stone which Jacob set up at Bethel would, we may be sure, fill a large space in his memory and imagination. It was the turning-point of his career, and must have continually recurred upon him, presenting itself in many lights. And in pro-

cess of time he seems to have woven out of the materials it supplied a new name for the God who then first manifested himself to him, a name which he carried about in his heart as a secret charm, not disclosing it even to those who were nearest to him until death and love opened his lips. He could speak to his neighbours and children of the "God of Israel," or of the "Mighty One of Jacob," and thus avow his personal relation to the Almighty, and glory in it. But there was another name which was never heard from his lips till, as he lay a-dying, he blessed Joseph, his darling and pride. His name is rendered in our English version, "*the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel*;" but it is, I think, in the Hebrew an abbreviated and abrupt form of "*the Shepherd of the Stone of Israel*." And the reference of the phrase is sufficiently obvious. It embodies the memory of the night which Jacob spent amid the rocks of Luz.

A dreadful day for Jacob was that on which he fled from Beersheba! He was not bold and brave like Esau; his timid home-keeping youth had not inured him to hardship and self-reliance. And yet he was to wander forth alone, without tent, or camel, or waterskin. His father Isaac is dying, may be dead; fond, beautiful Rebecca sits weeping for him in her tent; Esau the hunter may be on his track, breathing out threatenings. With a foreboding heart, conscience making a coward of him, he wanders on, climbs the mountain, and looks round with apprehensive eyes. The sun is sinking, night falls dark and fast upon him, no shelter is at hand save that of the bare rocks. Solitary, weary, forlorn, he lies down, a stone his pillow. He weeps and dreams—but, lo, as he dreams, the darkness lifts; all heaven breaks in upon his eyes; the bare rock grows populous with ministers of grace; and God, the distant awful Inhabitant of heaven, who as yet has been only a shadow to him or a terror, bends over him with kindly looks and words of grace.

So marvellous a disclosure of the divine mercy might well surprise one who had suddenly become a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth—might well take many forms in his after-thoughts. One of these forms appears to have been this:—Like a silly wandering sheep he had broken from the home-fold—gone astray on the hills where foxes and wolves were lying in wait to devour. Helpless, and without a guide, he had wandered on and up till he came to the bleak desolate rocks, night with its dangers falling fast; and there, crouching fearfully among the rocks, he had been found by the Good Shepherd,

who, rejoicing to find the sheep which He had lost, took him in his arms, and carried him through all the dangers of the time. Is it any wonder that "from thenceforth" God was known to Jacob as "the Shepherd of the Stone," "the Shepherd of the Rock?" or that he hid this name in his heart as a talisman, a secret of hope and strength? When, at the point of death, he poured out his heart in blessings on his favourite son, what more natural than that this cherished secret should escape him? What more natural than that, to assure the faith of Joseph in prospects so large and bright, he should offer as his guarantee, not only "the Mighty One of Jacob" and "the God of thy father," but also "the Shepherd of the Stone of Israel?"*

A Name so precious to Jacob can hardly be without value for us. And indeed few of the Divine Names are more suggestive of comfort and hope. Most of us have been at times "in the place which is called Desert." Like Jacob, we have sinned against both God and man; and when the painful results of our sin have come upon us, conscience has made cowards of us; we have felt as though our guilt had isolated us from our kind and alienated us from God. Dark clouds, clouds, so at least our fears prophesied, big with punitive lightnings, have obscured our heaven and swept their cold shadows across our earth. We have stumbled among the rocks, and sunk down on the stones to court a rest that would not come. Like Jacob, we have dreamed, our fears peopling our dreams; perchance, unlike him, we have risen from our dreams un comforted by any bright vision of ministering spirits, unconscious of the divine Shepherd, who nevertheless has watched over us while we slept. Like Jacob, we do not know God for *our* God; like him, we cannot conceive of a mercy which follows us along every path in which we stray, a mercy which is never nearer to us than when we think ourselves at the farthest remove from its presence, a mercy never more open to us than when we most need its aid, a mercy which is with us even *before* we turn and seek it.

And therefore we need to know and re-

* This conception of Jacob's motive for never uttering the Divine Name so sacred to him, and of the allusion latent in that Name, seems confirmed by the previous chapter, which describes the blessing pronounced by Jacob on the two sons of Joseph. That his mind was now full of the earlier and more impressive memories of his life is indicated by the words (Gen. xlviii. 3, 4): "And Jacob said to Joseph, *God Almighty* (El-Shaddai) *appeared to me in Luz, in the land of Canaan, and blessed me, and said to me, Behold I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people, and will give this land to thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession.*" That the thought of God under the image of a good Shepherd was present to him is evident from the words (ver. 15, 16), "*the God who was my Shepherd from my birth to this day . . . bless the lads.*"

member God as "the Shepherd of the Stone of Israel." God *was* with Jacob even in the desert, far away from the sacred places in which He commonly revealed his presence. God *was* with Jacob, even though he was in the desert *for his sins*, with him to keep him and to do him good in turning him away from his sins, with him to overcome his evil with a divine goodness. And God *is* with us when we are lonely and weary, even though our weariness and loneliness be the due reward of our deeds. The Good Father does not cease to love his children, or fail to watch over them, because they are foolish and wayward, or even because they waste their substance in riotous living. He knows, knows and pities, the penury and distress to which their folly or their riot has exposed them. Nay, outdoing even the gracious father of the parable, He often *follows* them into the "far country," smitten with "famine," that He may bring them home again. The Good Shepherd, the Shepherd of the Stone of Israel, thinks more of the one sheep lost among the dark barren hills, than of the ninety and nine safe in the pasture or the fold, and will even lay down his life rather than suffer the wanderer to be devoured by the wolf. In after years Jacob knew well what it was to be a shepherd in the Syrian plains and hills. He tells us that "in the day the drought consumed" him, and "the frost" in the cold eastern night, and that "his sleep departed from him." And all his remembrances of the hardships of the pastoral life would lend new force and pathos to his conception of God as "the Shepherd of the Rock," the Shepherd who never "slumbers nor sleeps," but who, night and day, goes forth after the sheep which are lost—lost, and not lost, because, wander where they will, He is with them.

But we are ingenious in self-torment; and when we have done wrong and gone astray, our hearts are full of fears. If we so far rise toward a due conception of the infinite mercy of God as to believe that He will be with us even when we stumble among the rocks, we forthwith begin to question and doubt afresh. We say, "Yes, no doubt He will be with us despite our sins, if only we repent, if only we turn and look for Him and ask his aid. If we seek Him, He will be found of us. But, at times, so foolish are we that we do *not* seek Him, or do not seek Him in the right way. Will He be with us then?" Yes, even then: for the Divine Shepherd stands beside *every* stone on which we sleep, every rock at which we stumble and fall, and can make every desert and solitary place in which we wander blossom

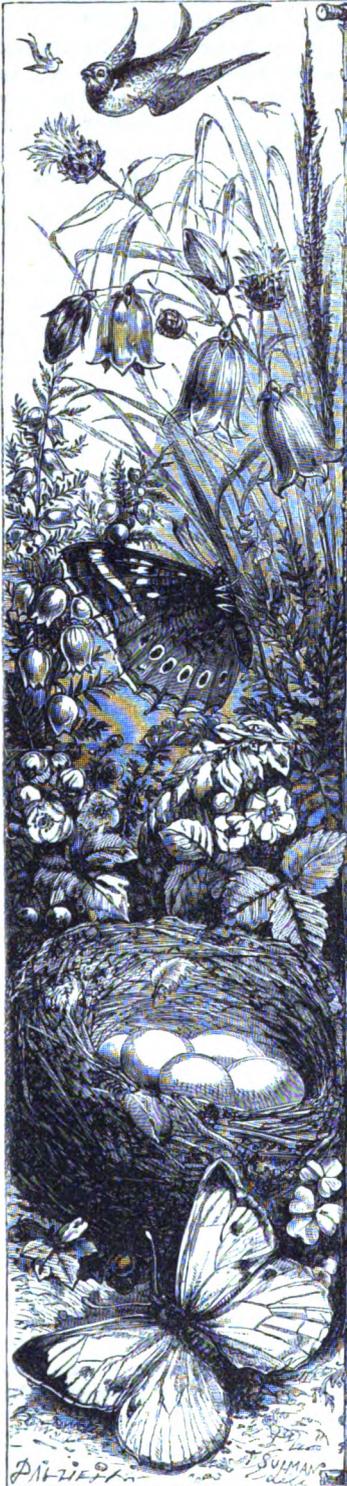
and rejoice like the rose. Jacob did not know that "God was in that place;" none the less it was "the house of God and the gate of heaven." We are not so much as told that Jacob was sorry for his sin, or even that he knew it to be a sin: God came to make him sorry, to quicken in him a repentance unto life, to kindle a fire in him which would burn out the baseness and treachery of his nature. We are left to infer that the natural terrors of the time and place excited some dread of the deed which had haunted him, homeless and forlorn, on the barren hills. The Lord who stands at the summit of the ladder utters no reproof, no threatening, but only words of comfort and promise: yet Jacob is won, by love, to a consecration to which no mere terror could have driven him. And why should we doubt that God, our Father and our Shepherd, will be good and kind to us? When we first met Him and came to know Him as our God—ours, and not simply as the God of our fathers—was He not found of them who sought Him not? Has He ever been slow to find and keep us? Have we ever received aught but grace and kindness at his hands? Has He not been most kind when He has left us for a little space to eat the fruit of our own doings, that He might return in great mercy so soon as we strove to make our ways and our doings good? If there be any good thing in us, has it not come of his goodness to us? If, then, we have sinned, and are even now banished by our sin from some place of rest and comfort in which we hoped to abide, let us not waste too much time and energy in lamenting the irrevocable past, in crying over water that has been spilt upon the ground and cannot be gathered up again; but, trusting in the constant mercy of our Father and Guide, let us rather, like Jacob, address ourselves to a future obedience, and devote ourselves anew to Him who has come to us, in the night of our darkness, to speak comfortably unto us.

Another hard cold stone on which we are apt to lay our heads when we have strayed into the bleak hills, is this:—"If we were wiser, if we knew more, and could see farther, if our conceptions of God and his truth were more accurate and large, we might take heart for the future, and hope to guide our lives more wisely. But we know so little; we are so little sure even of the little we know: mysteries so dense hover round our life and duty, that our faith cannot but be unsteadfast, and our hope flicker in the wind." How much did Jacob know, then? Were his con-

ceptions of God, and life, and duty remarkable for their accuracy and their breadth? When he laid his head upon the pillow, he did not so much as know God to be his God; to him the Lord was only "the God of my fathers;" and when he lifted his head in the morning light, his first thought—surely rather a Jewish thought—was to strike a bargain with the God whom he has just discovered to be "the mighty One of Jacob." Very much as though "the Shepherd of the Rock" were only a good-natured generous Laban, Jacob begins to make a contract, to guard himself by this stipulation and that,—“If God will keep me, and feed me, and clothe me, and bring me back in peace—then He shall be my God; I will build Him a house, and give Him back a tenth of all He gives to me.” Not a very liberal offer! not a broad or spiritual conception of the Father of an infinite majesty! Yet God accepts the offer, submits to the stipulations, seals the bargain. Will He not accept us, then, and our services, though our knowledge be imperfect and our faith unstable? All the good men who have gone before us, even Jacob himself, a man only very imperfectly good at the best, have taught us some lesson of heavenly wisdom. And if we try to use such wisdom as we have, and to live by it, we may be very sure that God will give us more.

And here we come on the only proviso which these comfortable assurances require. If God meet with us in the desert place to which our sins have conducted us, it is that we may abandon our sins, and henceforth abide with Him. He visits us where we look not for Him, and finds us when we are not seeking Him; but it is that He may teach us what as yet we know not, and constrain us by his kindness to us to consecrate ourselves to his service. In short, the Shepherd follows us to the rocks, that He may bring us back to the fold. The story of Bethel, therefore, has slight comfort for us if we refuse to learn what God reveals Himself to teach. But if we are willing and docile, then, indeed, the story is full of comfort for us. Our errors and sins will not keep God at a distance. Our ignorance of his presence will not debar us from the protection of his presence. He is the Shepherd of the Rock; and so often as we wander into the place of rocks, and sink wearied in the darkness, He will come to us, to renew his covenant with us, and to lighten our dejected spirits by visions bright with an eternal joy.

SAMUEL COX.



FULL ENJOYMENT.

"O God, Thou art my God;
My soul thirsteth for Thee."

MANY a bright and beautiful thing
Thou hast given us to enjoy;
Yet is none without a sting—
None is quite without alloy;
Nothing can full joy afford
Save the love of Christ our Lord.

For our hearts are large and wide,
Formed for Heaven, and not for earth;
They can ne'er be satisfied
With these "things of lower worth;"
Only on a love Divine
Truly can those hearts recline.

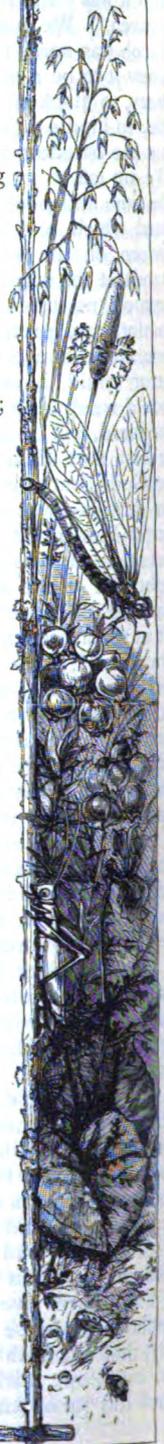
Beauty, riches, earthly love,
Talent, science, art, and might—
These are blessings from above,
Let us value them aright:
But, so valuing, still look higher,
And beyond them still aspire.

Jesus, Lord, to Whom I owe
All I have in earth or heaven,
Let me never rest below
In the gifts that Thou hast given,
But climb on from grace to grace,
Till I stand before Thy Face.

Could my fancy ever paint
Anything so fair as Thee?
Could archangel e'er, or saint,
Fill my soul's immensity?
Ah, my God!—my only Rest—
Thou alone canst fill this breast.

Make me then entirely Thine,
And, when this brief life is done,
Take me where Thy glories shine
Brighter, purer than the sun:—
And where Thou immediately
Shalt my full enjoyment be.

E. G. C. BROCK.



ASSOCIATION OF COMETS AND STAR SHOWERS.

BY THE REV. J. CRAMPTON.

"And behold a great red dragon . . . and his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven."—Rev. xii. 3.

COMETS may truly be considered as the enigma of the heavens. Suns and planets have yielded their many wonders, in some degree, to the insatiable curiosity and intelligence of the little restless Being who, stationed on his grain of sand called earth, has surveyed and scrutinized them for thousands of years. Misty nebulae, and flying meteors, and distant firmaments have surrendered at discretion and laid open their wonders and real nature, and laid down their arms before the eye and intelligence of man armed with his telescopic tube or spectroscopic weapon; all have more or less been conquered, but comets—these flaming swords of heaven, these mysterious startling apparitions, still defy research, and, though they spread themselves ostentatiously across the whole hemisphere as though to invite deliberate attention and investigation, they still continue to evade scrutiny, now awing the ignorant or superstitious, now challenging and puzzling the scientific world. Though every motion has been observed and ascertained, their orbits calculated, their inner movements watched by thousands of curious eyes and telescopes, all as yet is in vain. There shines the mysterious head with its dull vaporous light and brilliant nucleus within; there spreads the wondrous tail, now fanned, now forked, now multiplied into many tails, and spread over millions and millions of miles of the heavens; but what is actually known about comets? What is their nature and what their purpose and use in creation? To what class of bodies can they be referred?

No reply that can be depended on has as yet been given to any of these questions, and comets are still one of the mysteries of creation which remains yet to be unfolded. Many ingenious solutions of it have been suggested of more or less weight; but after all they are but guess work, and most of them as improbable as they are unproved.

Yet in these days, at least within the last five years, it has been thought a recent light has been thrown upon their nature, which may possibly lead to the resolution of at least a portion of the mystery in which they are enveloped. The recent discovery of the remarkable and exact coincidence of the orbits of two comets—that of 1862, called Tempel's, and 1866, with the orbits of the two principal systems of meteors, forming the splendid meteoric showers of August

and November, 1866—has led astronomers to the natural conclusion of the association of these systems in some way with comets, but in what way has not yet been proved. There are many other meteoric systems that have been associated with known comets; but those of the August and November meteors are the only periods that have been actually determined to be identical with the orbits of the two comets in question. This discovery, first noted by Schiaparelli, seemed at first to give some possible clue to the nature of these strange bodies, and when ascertained startled the scientific world of astronomers not a little.

An association of *some kind* of these great systems with the comets could no longer be doubted, and expectation was consequently raised that we had at last got the key to the mystery of the being of these strange visitants, and a shower of meteors was in fact but the encounter of the earth with some portion of the comet, or something attached to it and inseparable from it—possibly a portion of its tail constituting the innumerable meteorites that flashed upon us in 1866, and into the midst of which the earth plunged, and through which she passed on that memorable night. If so, comets would be but the condensed material of which the meteors are composed, leaving their tail or wake of star showers or cometary matter behind them as they rushed on their orbit.

Thus we seemed to be on the eve of a great discovery, and for aught I know we may be still; but as yet, at least, it has not advanced a single step further, and no such conclusion has been adopted positively or universally by the astronomical world of science—nor can it be proved; and though a most remarkable association between the star showers in question and the two comets referred to has been shown and acknowledged, the actual nature of the association has not been ascertained, and the mystery of the physical condition of these bodies and their use in the universe is as great as ever; indeed, remarkable as the association is, there is nothing in the appearance of a comet to warrant its relation to the meteoric showers in any way, except in the identity of its orbit with those systems. On the contrary, examination with the telescope reveals the very opposite, and nothing that would lead to such a conclusion. Any one who has ever

seen a comet with the naked eye, or with a telescope (even the most powerful), would at once and at first sight reject the idea of its substance being composed of meteorites, or the cometary matter we then behold being in any way connected with or having a resemblance to the star showers with which we are familiar, and the composition of which we are well acquainted with; in fact, there is no resemblance whatever between a star shower and a comet, from its head to its tail (*i.e.* if it has such an appendage, which all have not), such, for instance, as Enke's short-period comet, or Biela's, of which we shall afterwards speak in reference to this theory, though here, by the way, it may be questioned whether such a body should properly be classed at all with the large-tailed monsters to which we are accustomed to give that name. A nearly circular or elliptic nebulous and misty mass, with a faint bluish light, and an equally faint nucleus in it, hardly conveys the idea of its belonging to the class of such grand objects as that called Donati's comet of 1858, or other long-period and long-tailed comets, such as that of 1811 or 1843, the tail of which latter extended two hundred millions of miles, with many others that could be mentioned, such as Halley's; but not one of these convey the idea to the mind of their consisting of numberless discrete or separate bodies, or shreds of matter, such as constitute the meteoric showers. The most powerful telescopes directed to them have failed to resolve any portion of them into separate stars, or meteorites, as can be effected even in those distant nebulae, which though to the naked eye, or a low power of a telescope, seem as misty as any comet, yet resolve into firmaments of separate stars under a high power telescope; in fact, the idea formed in the mind of the best astronomers of the ordinary and, what may be termed, legitimate comet, is a gaseous-looking body, containing a bright nucleus, more or less condensed, but the entire so transparent that stars can be seen through any part of it, while both nucleus and tail are subject to the most sudden and violent changes of size, shape, and direction, wholly inconsistent with the idea of their identity with star showers. Such phenomena were witnessed in Halley's comet, among many others, in the year 1835—a comet, one of the most remarkable of all, as verifying the calculations of Halley as to the elements of its orbit, and fulfilling accurately his prediction of its returning after an absence of seventy-five years.

The close and searching examination to

which this comet was subject seems to put out of the question almost its association with star showers, or any relation whatever to them, but seems rather to indicate some powerful magnetic or electric force, specially manifested on its approach and departure from the sun. At these periods it was carefully observed and noted, and drawings were made of it in all its different phases by some of the most eminent astronomers of the time, among which were Struve, Bessel, Schwabe, Sir John Herschel, and Maclear. Some of the remarkable phenomena then displayed we may here mention.

At its first appearance in October, 1835, when the present writer saw it with the deepest interest, it appeared to have no tail, and seemed but a small round nebula. The tail, however, very soon began to be formed, and, increasing rapidly, on the 20th of October attained its greatest length, which was 20 degrees; after which it decreased as rapidly, and by the 29th of October had diminished to 2½ degrees. The circumstances accompanying this increase and decrease were remarkable, and such as in the opinion of the writer would seem to be opposed altogether to such an association of meteorites, or star showers, with comets as would imply that they were actually composed of the materials or tails of these objects.

On the 2nd of October the formation of the tail took place by a violent ejection of nebulous matter from that part of the comet that was presented toward the sun. This ejection, however, was neither uniform nor continuous, but, like the fiery matter from a volcano, it was thrown out at intervals. After this no ejection was observed till the 8th, when it recommenced more violently than before, and assumed a new form. A second tail appeared and presented a direction opposed to that of the original tail, and therefore away from the sun. This was regarded by Bessel merely as the renewed ejection of nebulous matter, which was afterwards turned back from the sun as smoke would be by a current of air blowing from the sun in the direction of the original tail. From the 8th to the 22nd the form, position, and brightness of the nebulous emanation underwent various irregular changes: the last alternately increasing and decreasing; at one time *two*, at another *three* nebulous emanations were seen to issue in different directions, something in a swallow-tailed form, like the flame from a fan gas-burner. Sometimes the entire tail oscillated violently from one side to the other of the line from the

sun through the head of the comet, as a compass needle oscillates between one and the other side of the magnetic meridian. So rapid was the oscillation that the direction of jets was visibly changed from hour to hour, the brightness of the matter being most intense at the point where it was ejected from the nucleus, and faded away as it expanded into the coma, curving backwards in the direction of the principal tail like steam or smoke before the wind.

On the 12th the comet appeared in uncommon splendour. The nucleus and flame, however, being alone visible, its appearance was most beautiful, resembling a jet streaming out from the nucleus like flame from a blowpipe, or the flame from a discharge from a mortar, attended with the white smoke driven before the wind.*

Through all these wonderful transformations the stars were distinctly seen through it without diminution of their splendour, even through the very centre of the nucleus, as was the case with Donati's comet, through which Arcturus shone with undiminished lustre. Drawings by Messrs. Maclear and Smith of the strange phases of Halley's comet illustrate this fact most beautifully.

Sir John Herschel's deductions from these phenomena as seen by him at the Cape are as follows:—

1. That the matter of the comet vaporised by the sun's heat escaped in jets, throwing the comet into irregular motion by its reaction, and thus changing its own direction of ejection.
2. That this ejection takes place principally in the part presented to the sun.
3. That thus ejected it encounters a resistance from some unknown force; probably an ethereal medium, by which it is repulsed in an opposite direction, and so forms a tail.
4. That this force acts unequally on the cometary matter which is *not all vaporised*, but a considerable portion is retained to form a nucleus.

Putting all these facts together which have been collected by the very first astronomers and observers of the age, and accepting Halley's comet as a sample of all others—for there is no reason to believe there is any difference in their materials—the question of the nature of the association of showers of meteorites with comets must be very doubtful; and the idea suggested by many, that on the night of the 13th of November, 1866, we were actually

plunged into the depths of a *portion* of a comet is more than problematical. The changes of form and shape, and violent emission of matter, the contraction and expansion of the nucleus in approaching or leaving the sun, the entire loss and subsequent recovery of their tails, and the twisting and turning of those strange appendages in every direction, or the formation of several tails simultaneously, together with the cloudy and clearly gaseous transparent appearance of the entire body from head to tail, with the bright darting scintillations, proceeding from the nucleus,* leave the impression of electric phenomena, and the explosion of an electric battery, rather than showers of material bodies, whose substance we are well acquainted with—through the spectroscope—and which, though most of them, it is true, are very light, yet are accompanied by others of the very same material, large and solid, many of which doubtless struck the earth like a cannon shot on the night in question, and which do not seem to bear the slightest relationship with those strange transparent fire-mists, called comets, through which every star beams as brightly as though there were nothing between us and them, and whose weird and phantom shapes, successively adopted, stretch themselves across the sky—now as a flaming sword, now a glowing gas fan, now as a dim, hazy, tailless mass of nebulous light, now as a three-tailed, or even six-tailed, monster—flaming every way. All this seems to imply that, be that what they may, they are of a material unlike anything of a metallic or planetary origin, and are of so light and cloudlike a nature, that they are as easily acted upon by the agencies around them as smoke by the wind, or a soap bubble by the breath.

* This was visible to the writer in a remarkable manner in a comet which appeared in August, 1853, and which he observed most closely with a ten-feet refracting telescope of six inches aperture; continued flashes like those proceeding from an aurora or electric battery, or resembling what is called sheet or summer-lightning, played in the envelope of the nucleus, lighting it up and darting down along the tail. The nucleus itself was not condensed but semi-transparent, and the whole comet appeared like a hollow gaseous object. It was while engaged in observing this comet a strange object appeared in the zenith, and stretched itself across the heavens like a serpent, occupying two-thirds of the entire hemisphere. It was of a blue light, in some degree resembling that of an aurora, but in other respects not the least like one. It remained in view steadily and with equal lustre for nearly a quarter of an hour, when it gradually faded away. There was no coruscation or movement of light perceptible in it, and its breadth and strange serpentine form winding itself across the heavens would, a century ago, have been looked upon as most alarming. What its nature was I was unable to discover. There was a sketch of it, which appeared at the time in the *Illustrated News*, and it was evidently not a local object, but one visible throughout Great Britain, if not elsewhere. As the Russian war broke out before the year was out, superstitious people would see in these twofold signs in heaven the indication of its approach.

* Lardner's "Hand-book of Art."

CUSTOMS AND CURIOSITIES OF MADAGASCAR.

PART I.

THERE are many points of interest connected with Madagascar. Its geography, geology, natural history, botany, ethnology, and language, are all full of interest to the man of science. Its martyr history, and the marvellous success which has been achieved by the Gospel in late years in this island, have attracted the attention of the whole Christian world.

The island of Madagascar is situated in the Indian Ocean, about three hundred miles east of the continent of Africa. It is the third largest island in the world, ranking after Australia and Borneo. It is nine hundred and fifty miles long, and about three hundred and fifty in its greatest breadth, narrowing towards either extremity, its average breadth being two hundred miles; and is thus considerably larger than Great Britain and Ireland together.

The physical aspects of Madagascar are striking. A narrow stripe of land runs round the sea-coast, level and sandy, which has been recently (geologically speaking) left dry by the receding ocean. This stripe on the east coast is, in many places, separated from the old sea margins by lakes, often communicating with each other, and with the sea. This wonderful series of lakes might be made the means of water communication, and afford a route for commerce for two hundred and fifty miles along the coast, were a few canals cut so as to open up a way for boats between the various lakes. The scenery all along this belt is exceedingly beautiful. The sandy soil is covered with vegetation, and in many places the level tracks gently sloping down towards these lakes, covered with short grass, and studded thickly, though not crowded, with the stately Filao (*Casuarina laterifolia*), would remind us of an English park, were it not that the margins of the streams and lakes are lined with pandanus, and other tropical trees. There are numerous small, wooded islands in some of these lakes.

Further inland, again, we come upon an undulating, knolly country. The soil is a red stiff clay, which is very general throughout the island. The rounded knolls are covered with grass, and the numerous valleys, where they are not cultivated, are clothed with palms, bamboos, and other tropical trees. This beautiful district is malarious, and, except during the cold season, is dangerous to Europeans. Along the greater

part of the east coast this belt extends inland for about fifty miles, and all this way there is a gradual ascent, amounting in all to between two and three thousand feet. We next reach an elevated range of mountains covered with forest, and at an average elevation of three thousand five hundred feet above the level of the sea. This forest range, or other ranges which represent it, seems to run almost round and round the island; the greater part of it is as yet unexplored. A few difficult tracks or footpaths pass through it at various points; but there are no proper roads upon which any vehicle, or even beast of burden, could be used. Everything has to be transported by human labour; the palanquin is the only mode of travelling, except indeed going on foot. In the rainy season, from the absence of bridges, from the deep ruts caused by the rains and the slipperiness of the steep hills, these paths become scarcely passable even for the natives accustomed to this kind of work. Madame Pfeiffer, the celebrated traveller, pathetically accords to Madagascar the unenviable distinction of possessing the worst roads in the world. The difference between the roads in Madagascar and other countries has been thus not unaptly described—"Roads in other countries are for the purpose of helping on the traveller; in Madagascar they are designed to keep him back."

This forest is from thirty to forty miles broad. The trees are no longer of the distinctly tropical kind; palms and bamboos only thrive in the warm and more sheltered valleys. The hill-tops are covered with various kinds of exogenous trees, as mahogany, ebony, quassia, and ornamented with many different kinds of orchids.

Pursuing the usual route to the capital, and having traversed the forest, we pass through a grassy plain, destitute of trees, sixteen to twenty miles across. This plain farther south seems to become a partially wooded country. It is at a somewhat lower level than the forest range, and is named from the river which winds through it, the valley of the Mangoro. Passing across this plain, we reach a new line of high lands. In many parts along the border of this line there are outstanding, solitary, conical or rounded hills rising out of the valley like sentinels, and at the back of these a steep range of hills rising up abruptly, running along and bounding the

plain like a wall. When we gain the summit of this range we meet another, but narrower line of forest, only about ten to fifteen miles broad, at an elevation of nearly five thousand feet. At this height the air is cooler and the climate healthier, and the vegetation more European in its aspect. Passing through this belt of wood, we come upon the great central table-land of Madagascar, running along, with some differences of elevation, for many hundred miles. This naked plateau is a mass of hills and knolls, separated by valleys, generally narrow ones, and united to each other by necks of land. The higher hills are usually steep, and being uncovered by trees, the heavy rains of summer have washed away the soil down to the valleys, exposing rounded boulders of granite of immense size and romantic shapes, projecting in threatening positions on the sides of the hills. Here and there, again, we meet picturesque mountain-like masses of bare granite rock towering up in solitary grandeur. A long, dry, rough, creeping grass covers the ground. In many places, however, the red soil exposed by the rains detracts from the beauty of the landscape. It is away up in this central tableau that the capital of Madagascar stands, and it is here that the governing race—the Hovahs—dwells.

We must now observe the houses and villages of the natives which we meet during this journey from the sea-coast to the capital.

We shall pass over the town of Tamatave, which, being the chief seat of trade and the residence of foreigners, cannot be looked upon as a model Malagasy town. Passing inland through the country I have been describing, we soon meet with numbers of little villages at various intervals all along the route to the capital. We are struck by the aggregation of the houses. We seldom find houses standing alone, or studded all over the country, as in England; they are collected into miserable little villages, numbering from ten to a hundred houses. In the low country the sites of the villages do not seem to have been chosen with any reference to security. The villages are simply an irregular collection of huts or houses huddled together in a disorderly manner. The larger ones have a flag-staff set up somewhere near the centre, and usually a house built by the village called "the queen's house," in which the sovereign's goods are stowed while they are being conveyed to the capital. It is simply a sort of shed, consisting of a single room without any furniture. The house of the head-man

of the village is distinguished only by its size from those of the other inhabitants.

A Malagasy house in the low country is a framework of wood; the walls being usually made of the leaves of the pandanus woven into this framework. The door is made of the same material, and is not hung upon hinges, but is separate and movable, and at night is placed in the door-way and a piece of stick put against it to keep it in position. The house is elevated on poles a few feet above the level of the ground, to allow the heavy rains to pass underneath, and this space below the floor is the favourite resort for dogs and pigs, that nightly dispute the privilege of taking up their lodgings there, giving rise to considerable disturbance to the traveller unaccustomed to this sort of lullaby.

The houses are about twenty feet long by fifteen broad, and divided into two apartments by a slight partition, often only a few feet high, which the more supple-legged natives find no difficulty in vaulting, as I have sometimes found to my annoyance, when I had fancied that I had protected myself from the untimely intrusion of visitors by blocking up the door. One of these apartments is entered by the door, the other is lighted by a small window about four feet above the ground, without either curtains or glass, but furnished with a wooden shutter. Internally the walls of the houses are hung with mats, and the floors are covered with the same. When a stranger enters a clean mat is spread at the place where he is to sit down, or at least the clean side of an old mat is turned uppermost.

This practice, by the way, of showing the clean side of the mat to strangers, curiously, but most appropriately, gives rise to the Malagasy word for hypocrisy. The word is a compound one, and literally means "the turning out the clean side of the mat."

The outer apartment, or hall, is the sitting-room of the family, the reception-room for the less distinguished visitors, kitchen, cook house, and at night the sleeping place for fowls, ducks, and in some parts of the country for sheep and pigs, or even cattle. The other room is the dining-room, drawing-room, bedroom, and dressing-room of the simple native. The furniture is scanty and primitive, there are no chairs, tables, or bedsteads. The fire-place is in the centre of the outer room, and as there is no chimney, the wood smoke fills the house, and escapes by the door and window, or when these are shut, finds slow exit by the chinks in the walls and roof.

In the central province of Imerina, the villages are built on hills, and are surrounded by

double or even triple lines of ditches or fosses. Many of the towns are enclosed by walls now ruinous, testifying to the disturbed state of the country in former times. The houses are built substantially either of wood or clay, and are in the form of a parallelogram, uniformly facing the west, and their length is thus, of course, always north and south. The common plan, as in the low country, is to have a door in one end, and a window in the other; the roof is neatly thatched with rushes, and its height and steepness formerly indicated the importance of the owner. These picturesque high-pitched roofs are, however, rapidly disappearing. To remove the weight of the roof from the wall, and give support, three posts are placed one at either end and the other in the middle of the house. In Imerina the houses are sometimes ceiled, and in that case a trap or ladder leads up to the garret, which serves as the kitchen. From this, the roof in old houses is seen hanging with soot and cobwebs, and the rafters receive a shining black polish, from continual smoking. This blackness or sootiness is looked upon as an honourable proof of antiquity, and the phrase "old sooty" is frequently applied as flattering distinction to an old and well-tried friend.

In the capital itself and the towns in its neighbourhood the state of things is very different. During the ten years that I have resided there, I have witnessed changes that may truly be called a *revolution*. Antananarivo, with its palaces and churches, schools and hospital, and private buildings, is to-day well deserving the name of a city. It contains eighty thousand inhabitants, and is built on the ridge and sloping sides of a Y-shaped hill, which displays to advantage its public buildings. It is beautiful and romantic, and all the more so in contrast with the villages by which it is reached.

No proper political division of the island has ever been made. The exact number of provinces is therefore variously estimated by different writers, some of whom by reckoning as one several of the divisions, which others look upon as distinct provinces, reduce the number to fourteen or even fewer.

The country generally is well watered and fertile, producing a considerable variety of fruits, as the banana, mango, orange, peach, and pine-apple. Rice is the chief article of food, and is carefully cultivated in the high lands by the spade, the plough being unknown. In the low country rice grows very easily, maize and potatoes are also cultivated, and wheat has been recently introduced.

The wild animals are very few; the buffalo, and wild boar, and a species of fox are the only ones worth notice: there are no lions, tigers, leopards, or elephants. Madagascar has, however, a few animals quite peculiar to itself. The most remarkable of these is the tribe of lemurs—popularly Madagascar cats. They are somewhat like the squirrel, but larger, with a fine, thick, soft fur, and bushy tails; there is a considerable number of kinds of lemur. Some of these in size and appearance have some distant resemblance to the monkey: they live in the forest among the trees, and are often to be seen swinging themselves from branch to branch, and making as rapid progress from place to place in their arboreal highways as a man running on the ground below. From these, the supposed continent, of which Madagascar, Mauritius, Bourbon, the Comoro and Seychells, and a few others form the only remaining portions, has been named Lemuria.

Another quadrumanous animal quite peculiar to the country is the aye-aye. This singular animal is somewhat like the lemur in its size and appearance. It is nocturnal in its habits, and arboreal in its *habitat*, and lives upon wood-boring larvæ, which tunnel beneath the bark of trees. It is provided with strong chisel-shaped teeth to remove the bark, and, in order to reach its food in the end of its hole, it has got a singularly long middle finger furnished with a scoop-like nail, which can readily extract the coveted morsel.

The Mammalia of Madagascar number only forty-nine species. Dr. Sclater, from a consideration of the zoology of the island, has concluded, first, that Madagascar has never been connected with Africa as it at present exists; second, that Madagascar and the Mascarene Islands must have remained for a long epoch separated from every other part of the globe; third, that some land communication must have existed in former ages between Madagascar and India.

Gold, silver, copper, lead, and iron, have been found in the island. Iron is plentiful and worked, the precious metals are forbidden to be worked under pain of death, or chains.

Now, from what has been said of the houses, villages, and want of roads, it might be concluded that the Malagasy are or were a barbarous people, and indeed some of the tribes are only a few steps removed from barbarism. But the Malagasy inhabiting the central and some of the coast provinces had a civilisation of their own, differing very much, it is true, from our nineteenth century civilisa-

tion, ages before they ever came in contact with Europeans. They had established forms of government, gradations of rank, and laws affording considerable protection to life and property, and as a part of their civilisation they had a number of interesting customs, strikingly similar in many of their features to the Jewish rites, with which we are all familiar. Another thing rendering the customs of the Malagasy more particularly interesting is this—they are undoubtedly very ancient—a fragment, as it were, of an early civilisation existing in modern times, carrying us back to Central Asia, the cradle of the race, and to the patriarchal age—the youth of the world.

Perhaps the best way of obtaining an idea of the Malagasy people and their condition, will be by considering in detail, but briefly, the race, language, government, social habits, religion, and religious customs.

The Malagasy are of middle height and well built, the features regular and good, nose prominent, generally somewhat aquiline, forehead broad and well developed, mouth pretty large, lips somewhat thick. In colour there is a considerable variety of shade, but they must all be classed amongst the yellow-skinned races. They are not black. The tribes inhabiting the sea-coast are dark compared with those occupying the higher and cooler districts of the interior. The difference in climate no doubt partially at least explains this, but it is highly probable that along the sea-coast the people are considerably mixed, not only with Arabs and natives of the East Indies, but also in some places with the natives of Africa.

There is a marked difference between the darkest of the Malagasy, and the negro. As regards hair—there are two kinds; the white-skinned tribes have long, straight, coarse, black hair, while the darker ones have short, curly hair. Still it is genuine hair, and not the tufty wool of the negro.

In the central provinces, irrespective of slaves, there are two classes, the Hovahs, or governing race, and the Andrians, or members of the royal family. The Andrians, are very numerous, and are divided into seven classes, according to the nearness of their connection with the reigning sovereign. They are not permitted to intermarry with the Hovahs, a law which is scrupulously observed by all, with the exception of the sovereign, who is above all law. There is no reason for supposing that the Andrians and Hovahs are of different origin.

While considering the question of race, we are naturally led to inquire about their lan-

guage. It is abundantly manifest that it has no affinities with African tongues. It is an important fact that only one language is spoken through the whole island. There are, of course, considerable varieties of dialect, but less than might have been anticipated, in an island of such magnitude, and with so little intercommunication. The differences are not so important as to prevent any one knowing the Hovah dialect holding intercourse with every tribe in the island: this fact alone is presumptive of the unity of the various tribes. For assuming, as some have done, that the Hovahs have a distinct origin from the others, it is impossible satisfactorily to account for the unity of language.

The Malagasy language is a member of the great Turanian "stock," and is closely allied to the Malay, or Malayo-polynesian, confirming the conclusion, which the physical characteristics of the people point to, regarding their Asiatic origin. In examining, rather hurriedly, a Malay dictionary, I found above a hundred words manifestly identical. A careful study of the two languages would, no doubt, enable us to trace many more words to a common root, their identity being obscured by changes of inflection and phonetic substitution. It is interesting to notice the class of words which remain the same in both. Leaving out of view the numerals, which are wonderfully alike in languages by no means closely related, we notice that many of the great objects and phenomena of nature have the same names in Malay and Malagasy, as the sun, moon, and stars, the earth and heaven. The words for year and month, and for day and night, for lightning and storm, are alike. Then the names for a human being, for a man and child, are the same. Many parts of the human body have the same names, as eye, mouth, tongue, hands, blood, bones, and hair. In general, the words that are alike are those of a generic or indefinite import, rather than those of a particular signification. Thus the word for bird is the same in Malagasy and Malay, but the names of particular birds are different. The word for food is identical, but the particular articles have got different names in the two languages.

The verbs that are alike are generally those expressive of simple, definite, almost universal actions, such as to cook, to eat, to dwell, to die, to weave, to paint. But, apart from the identity or similarity of individual words, we have a much more trustworthy testimony to the affinity of these languages in their general and grammatical structure. By general structure is here understood figurative

combinations, duplicative repetition of syllables, and syllabic formation of words.

As an example of the similarity of figurative combination, we may select the poetical and primitive figurative combination for sun. In both languages this luminary is called the Day's Eye. The Malay, like the Malagasy, seems to make frequent use of words formed by duplicative repetition of a simple word. This repetition is resorted to in order to modify the meaning of the primary word, as *lehibe*, big, *lehibebe*, pretty big; *manoratra*, to write, *manorasoratra*, to scribble. The syllabic structure of the Malagasy language is singularly simple, some would say babyish. The syllables are generally of two letters — consonant and vowel syllables, seldom vowel and consonant ones. This peculiarity is also observed in the Malay. As an example of this take the name of the present queen, Ra-na-va-lo-na, or of the late king, Ra-da-na, or the word signifying to pray, *mi-va, va-ka*.

Then the grammatical construction of the

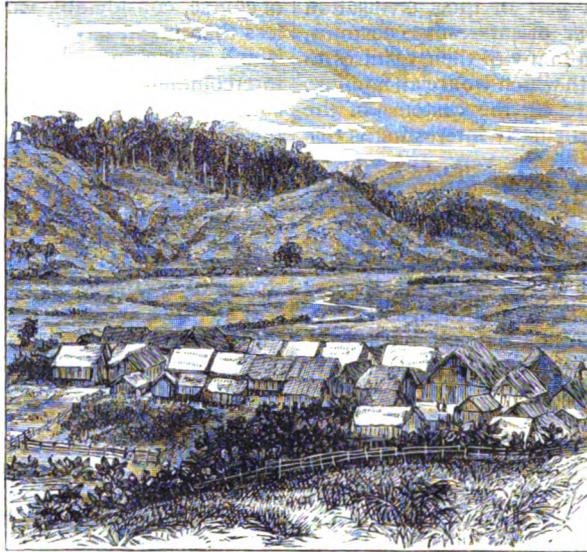
two languages is in several respects alike, and, what is of more importance, they agree in those anomalies by which they are dis-

tinguished from other languages. In neither of them is there any change of termination to indicate either gender, number, or case; and these distinctions are effected in both in much the same way. The mode of forming verbal nouns and of comparing adjectives is very similar. From a comparison of the two I should conclude that the Malagasy is the more primitive of the two; and the differences in the conjugating of verbs — the use of auxiliary verbs, especially of the verb "to be," by the Malays — demonstrate that a very long time has elapsed since the two nations spoke the same tongue.

The pronunciation of the Malagasy is soft and pleasant, its construction regular, and, one might say,

philosophic. It is one of the mysteries of the human mind, how a race so rude could have elaborated a language so beautiful.

ANDREW DAVIDSON.



A Malagasy Village, near the Great Forest.



The Martyrs' Rock, near Antananarivo.

THE EDITOR'S ROOM.

I.—HOME NOTES.

WINTER *versus* SUMMER.

WE have been having the usual struggle, at this season, of cold and heat; and the usual analogy between what goes on in the natural and in the moral world. Spring has had fully more trouble than usual in dispossessing winter; and winter, finding the conflict with spring useless, has been returning with sallies of more than ordinary bitterness, to hinder the advent of summer. Again and again, in the early months, a bright sky and a balmy atmosphere have been flattering us with the idea that the winter was past, and the rains over and gone; when, lo! we find we were mistaken. Winter, reinforced with east winds, chilling fogs, and occasional showers of hail, is again in possession of the field, and holds it so pertinaciously that we begin to despair. On goes the conflict between the two forces, with apparently doubtful issue, from week to week, and from month to month; until—happy omen!—the Arctic ruler finally disappears, and summer, without fear of a rival, greets us with her innumerable smiles.

Turn we to the moral world, it is much the same. Truth and error, good and evil, order and tumult, contending on every side for mastery. Sometimes we have been congratulating ourselves that the good and the true were fairly and for ever in the ascendant. From this pleasant but baseless dream we have been rudely awakened by a vehement irruption of the wintry forces of error and evil. The Reformation, we have been saying, can never be disturbed in England. In comes a rush of tractarianism and ritualism to dispel our dreams. Unbelief, we have been flattering ourselves, has been defeated at every point. What a glorious battle we fought for the faith in the days of French atheism, and what a noble chain of forts we erected, under the auspices of Butler, and Paley, and Watson, and Jones, and Lardner, and Leslie, and Campbell, and Littleton! No foe can ever break through these! We rub our eyes, and we see the *Westminster Review*, and Francis Newman, and Greg, and Colenso, and the "Essays and Reviews," and Strauss, and Renan, revelling like the boar from the forest in our choicest enclosures. But surely temperance has made a great advance of late years. What have we now corresponding to the wild orgies of the past, when a man was voted a muff and a milksop that appeared sober after dinner in the drawing room, and bacchanalian riot was the order of the day? Out of this reverie, too, we are shaken roughly by the inevitable and irrevocable statistics of the revenue returns, that show, as some one has said, how expertly we can drink ourselves out of the Alabama claims, paying off a bill of three or four millions by the mere duty on the extra drinking of a couple of years. No doubt all this in a sense is very discouraging, and yet it is only the fulfilment of the analogy that season after season makes

us so familiar with in the world of nature. Happily, the analogy points to a happy issue; summer prevails at last, even though the wit described it as "setting in with its usual severity!" The final issue of the contest with light and darkness, good and evil, is no more doubtful than the issue of the contest between winter and summer; "In the evening time it shall be light;" "He that is for us is more than all that can be against us;" "Let us not," therefore, "be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

THIRD SESSION OF THE IRISH SYNOD.

In dealing with the very important and difficult question of revision of the Liturgy, the disestablished Church of Ireland has made considerable progress in its third session. Alterations have been made giving a more distinctly Protestant sense to the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, though not so much as some desired; and in regard to Baptism, while the word regenerate has been omitted at one place, the voice of the laity was in favour of a more decided stand against baptismal regeneration than the votes of the clergy could allow. To show our readers the views taken by the different parties in England of the nature of the changes effected, we may quote first from a correspondent of the *Record*:—"We thankfully recognise the good hand of God in the result which was finally reached—[as to the Real Presence]—a result which, even if it be not all that could be wished, yet affords, in our opinion, ground for sincere satisfaction."

"The general tone of the discussion," says the *Guardian*, "allowing for a few incorrigible exceptions, to whom reverence and consideration for others appear to be things unknown, has been sober, thoughtful, and reverent. But it is unfortunate at any time, and in these days especially unfortunate, that the Church of Ireland should have thought [it necessary to lay down any definitions narrower and more precise than those which have so long proved to be sufficient for the whole Anglican communion. . . . The discussion of the baptismal service is not yet complete . . . but so far as it has gone, the attacks made on the enunciation of the doctrine of Regeneration in Baptism have failed. The Synod has declined to strike out the celebrated words, 'Seeing now, dearly beloved, that this child is regenerate;' although we observe with regret that there was a majority of lay votes and lay speeches for their excision. . . . Comparing the whole discussion now with what it would probably have been twenty years ago, we consider that it marks a considerable growth of Sacramental doctrine, in what has always been supposed to be a strongly Protestant body. . . . The great struggle, however, was on the proposed addition to the 'Black Rubric,' of a declaration to the effect, that 'whereas it hath been

taught by some that by virtue of consecration there is in, or under the form of the elements a presence of Christ, or of Christ's flesh and blood, *unto which adoration may be or ought to be done*, it is hereby declared that such teaching is not permitted by the Church of Ireland." [It is explained that the effect of this is to exclude the idea of a presence for adoration, though not expressly for reception.] "It aims distinctly at shutting a door which in the Church of England is purposely left open; it pronounces a declaration from which we do not know what effect may follow in Ireland, and which would certainly cause serious division and perhaps disruption among ourselves. In that light it is that we consider it so serious and dangerous a step. . . . The resolution was approved of by very considerable majorities of both orders—by 120 against 52 clerical votes, by 185 against 36 lay votes; and the effect is to place the Synod in direct opposition to the all but unanimous voice of the Episcopal Bench."

OPINIONS ON THE BILL FOR FACILITIES OF PUBLIC WORSHIP.

A very important question, in its practical bearings at least, is involved in the Bill introduced into Parliament by Mr. Salt, which proposes to give a right of meeting for public worship, according to the forms of the Church of England, when twenty-five persons in a parish desire it, apart altogether from the parish church and the wishes of the incumbent. A very large number of objectors have appeared to this measure in the ranks of the Evangelical party; while Mr. Ryle has raised his voice very energetically in its favour. He admits that it gives a shock to the parochial system, and that it is liable to other objections; but he holds that it proposes the best remedy that has yet been suggested for a glaring evil. This evil is, that in all parishes where the incumbent is either careless on the one hand, or heretical on the other, nothing can be done to give the people sounder instruction or better guidance. Every species of sectarian teachers may establish themselves in the place and propagate their views, but the Church of England, as the law now stands, can do absolutely nothing. Mr. Ryle likes the bill of Mr. Salt, because it would enable earnest and godly laymen to bring preachers of the proper stamp into the parishes that most require them. The *Record* and many of its correspondents take the opposite view. They hold that, instead of tending to introduce truth where error prevails, it will give facilities for introducing error where the truth is taught; that very few persons will take advantage of it for the one purpose, but very many will do so for the other. This view is strongly urged by men like Dean Close, and Mr. Fox of Durham. But on the other side are some who maintain that, granting that equal facilities would be afforded for truth and error, it is better to have both in every parish than to shut out truth from some, and leave them to unmitigated error. It is held, likewise, that inherently the power of truth is greater than that of error, and that, if we believe that God's help is ever given to advance the one, there is

no reason why we should be so eager to keep the door closed in order to prevent the entrance of the other. The case of Scotland has been appealed to as showing the inexpediency of the proposed change; a great many private chapels having recently started up in the Scottish Episcopal Church, in most of which a high ritualism prevails, much more fully developed than in the ordinary episcopalian chapels.

II.—THE MAY MEETINGS.

The first impression one has on looking over the Reports and meetings of the religious societies is that of bewilderment, pure and simple. It is as if the whole contents of the Post Office were to be tumbled into one's apartment, with an order to sort, read, and answer without delay. Bible Societies, Missionary Societies, School, Colonial, Home, Foreign, Continental, Jewish; and many of them multiplied by the number of Christian denominations, and some of them by the sections of these denominations, till the bare list of the more important fills a whole column of a newspaper. It is a grand result, if it were only simpler. No doubt it is the British way of it, and in this imperfect world and imperfect state of the church it seems inevitable that if work is to be done it must be done in such a way as to have a special interest for every section of Christians into which unhappily the church is divided. But whatever amount of wood, hay, and stubble the operations of these societies may contain,—however much there may be below the surface, of what is little, personal, and worldly,—the whole is a noble testimony to the disinterested spirit of Christianity, its interest in the souls of men, its readiness to spend its treasure and trouble in spreading its blessings. What other religion has such a force or such a faith? Men may exalt Buddhism and other religions as they please, but how small their heart compared to the great heart of Christianity!

GENERAL FEATURES.

For the most part the reports show an increase of revenue, not large, not much larger than to wipe out adverse balances, and make accounts somewhat square. Nothing like so large as the proportion of increase derived by the public revenue from the one item of excise. This is not very encouraging. We seem never to get far beyond the day of small things; we have yet to look forward to the time when moved by uncontrollable love, men shall bring their possessions and bring themselves as they brought them to the Apostles on the day of Pentecost. The same character for the most part distinguishes the reports of work. Good done and good doing here and there, but not yet any turning again of the captivity of Zion; not yet the signal given for sounding the trumpet of jubilee; the workers still sowing in tears, and scarcely ever coming again with rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them. But no abatement of faith and expectation; no dread that it is a mistake to suppose that one day the cry shall go forth, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our God and

of his Christ." A kind of heavy feeling, all the same, that there is more hard work to be done than we used to anticipate; that the bulwarks of the enemy are much stronger than we fancied, and that the walls of Jericho are not to fall, as perhaps we half expected, the first time the ark is carried round them—not till we have completed the seventh circuit of the seventh day. But meanwhile, the world greatly needs the gospel, and no hint of a retreat is breathed from any corps of the advancing army. We are always disposed to give the prominent place to the

BIBLE SOCIETY,

though under this head we would include all the societies, English, Scotch, and Irish, that are engaged in sending abroad the wonderful Book which is ever renewing its youth and beginning its career. And here our factor for multiplication is no less than two hundred, that being the number of versions in which the Bible now exists. But we do not care to dwell much on statistics, whether of money received, books circulated, or branches and agents established. What we like to find is instances of the book showing itself to be the revealed Word of God, and the instrument by which He ever advances the welfare alike of individuals and communities. We have noted some incidental instances of this kind, not from the proceedings of the society, worthy of a word of record. At the Church Missionary meeting, a missionary from Tinnevely speaks of having gone to say good-bye to a native neighbour's family, and seen a Bible, and of being told by the man, "My wife never likes to close her eyes without reading a few verses of God's word." Visiting another house, he saw a little girl reading a Bible to her mother and two sisters. Next week, in another street, he found a family who had been bereaved of a son. The father was reading the 84th Psalm, and struck by the expression, "the sparrow hath found an house," was comforting himself with the assurance that his son's soul was not worse off than the sparrow.

THE HISTORY OF £100.

At the anniversary, a gentleman on the platform presented a donation of £100, on behalf of a person in Devonshire,—a memorial of a jubilee. Fifty years ago, the donor had attended a Bible society meeting, and his heart had been touched. Now he wished to commemorate half a century of the Lord's goodness by a donation to the society. And what had led him to think of this was the address of the Prime Minister—Mr. Gladstone—in Liverpool, on the grounds of our common faith. That address had stimulated the donor to hold fast by the truth; a new spirit and life had been breathed into his soul, of which this donation was the fruit.

HOME SOCIETIES.

The growth of our large cities has given, is giving, and will continue to give, a constantly increasing importance to our Home Mission efforts. We all know something of the power of sympathy in touching the

masses. We all know that no man is more conspicuous for this sympathy than the Earl of Shaftesbury, who has spent a long life in Christian service for the good of the people. Possibly, however, we were not quite prepared for the announcement that his lordship had enrolled himself in one special branch of the working mass, making

LORD SHAFTESBURY A COSTERMONGER.

Here, however, are his lordship's own words at the meeting of the Working Men's Lord's Day Rest Association:—

"I am glad that you have begun to move among the working people of Somer's Town. I don't know any part of London where your operations are more necessary than in that district. I am glad to see an allusion in the report to Somer's Town, because it affords me an opportunity of speaking in praise of my brother costermongers in Golden Lane. I am a costermonger. I belong to the fraternity, and I have got a barrow. I saw my barrow a fortnight ago, with my name upon it; and I have lent it to a worthy costermonger who has no barrow of his own, but on this condition—that it shall not go out on Sundays; and I want to say that my brother costermongers have observed the law of the Sabbath most minutely, and that I don't believe that in the whole district of Golden Lane, St. Luke's, you would see on Sunday a single barrow in the streets, though you would see a number of small shops with their windows open."

We have been interested in going over Dr. Cumming's speech, at the City Missions, to read of the work done by him and others among some of the

PERFORMERS IN THE THEATRES.

"The church in which I have long officiated," he said, "is in the centre of eleven theatres; I might pitch a stone from my pulpit into Drury Lane on my right hand, and into Covent Garden on my left. I have a little service on Friday evenings, and actors, actresses, and scene-shifters come in occasionally and take a mouthful of living bread and go away." He then told how Madame Grisi had attended for three months, and got much good. Once a number of boys and girls had been picked out of his schools to help at the pantomimes. He called on the parents, and, placing the case before them, said, "Your children go at eight o'clock at night, and do not get home till twelve or half-past; they are hung up with wires, and fly through the theatre as angels with wings; then they put on their dirty clothes and go home. Do you think this is for their good?" The answer was—"No; but we are starving, and get a shilling a night, and we can't afford to give it up." Once he had been preaching against the theatre, and got a remonstrance from an actress, who was sure, if he would come and see *Manfred* acted, he would alter his opinion. He declined to go, but said he would read it carefully, and comment on it next Sunday. He had a great crowd of actors, actresses, and scene-shifters. He told them that in the play there was one suicide, one murder, two or three lies, and two or three equivocal proceedings, and that he

was quite disgusted with it. "I have been all round the neighbourhood of the theatres," he continued, "sometimes between ten and eleven o'clock at night, and you can have no idea, unless you have been there, of the scenes that take place in the gin-shops, and on the streets, and of the language uttered by persons who seem to be respectable. There is a tremendous moral degradation there, and it does strike me that the theatres have some portion of the responsibility of that degradation to bear."

FOREIGN MISSIONS.

In this field we observe the same results as before; very considerable success in outlying stations, islands, and primitive tribes; very hard work, indeed, among the adherents of the old faith in India and elsewhere. We observe that more than one missionary from India attests the feebleness of the half-and-half movement of the liberal Brahmo-Somaj. In several instances, the adherents have returned to their idols; proving that rationalism is not strong enough to effect a thorough separation even from the superstition which, viewed intellectually, excites its greatest contempt.

LORD NAPIER AND ETRICK'S TESTIMONY.

The late Governor of Madras, while bearing a very friendly testimony to India missions, has hitherto viewed them somewhat as a philosopher, and has interested himself chiefly in their tendency to improve civilisation and kindred interests. In this point of view his testimony has been of much value, and his being chosen to preside at the Wesleyan Missionary Anniversary was a graceful and well-deserved tribute. But evidently his lordship had no idea of the extent to which Christian hearts have been laid hold of by a sense of missionary obligations.

"The rev. gentleman (he said) who opened these proceedings with prayer, remarked that he hoped the heart of the chairman would be gratified and kindled by the glorious spectacle of Christian zeal manifested in this assembly. Indeed, gentlemen, I now for the first time feel, when I look around me, how intense and enthusiastic is the missionary spirit in the souls of the English people. It matters indeed little that my spirit should be animated in a cause in which I have so small, so transitory a part; but what must be the consolation of those labourers in the missionary field who stand behind and around me in the presence of such a demonstration of affectionate sympathy!"

CANON LIGHTFOOT ON THE SUCCESS OF MISSIONS.

At the meeting of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, this distinguished scholar read a paper which has an important bearing on the common allegation that Christian missions are a failure. The object of the paper was to show, by historical proof, that recent allegations of the failure of missions were "as unreasonable as they were faithless." Comparing the position of Christianity in the middle of the third century with its position now, he contended, upon the basis of various statistics, that whereas in the middle of the third century the proportion of professed Christians to the population of the earth was

about one in one hundred and fifty, the proportion now was about one in five. He drew certain other comparisons and analogies between modern and ancient missionary work, and concluded a powerful address by pointing out that the special peril against which this society had to be on its guard, was the peril of conventionality. We must be prepared to give up the idea of transplanting every detail of our home methods to a foreign soil; "we must become as Indians to the Indians, if we would gain the Indians." In the proceedings of the same society notice was taken by the Bishop of Newfoundland of an interesting

RESULT OF THE RECENT DAY OF INTERCESSION.

"A young officer of the Royal Engineers, of great wealth and ability, who had long cordially aided mission work in British America, had lately come to him and avowed his determination to consecrate himself, as well as his property, to missionary work—only stipulating that he should be sent to the hardest, poorest, and most unpromising part of the field. Upon being asked what had led him to make this offer, he said that his final decision had been brought about by the perusal of the accounts of the day of intercession."

III.—GLANCES ABROAD.

THE GERMAN WAR WITH THE PAPACY.

Dr. Falk's four Bills have now passed the upper house, and become the law of Germany. The state has now control at so many points over the education of the Romish clergy, and over the administration of all church affairs, that the Church can feel that she has but a shadow of authority. What is to come next? "These trenchant measures," says a correspondent of the *Guardian*, "were put forward only as preliminaries; they were adopted as unusual precautions against unusual dangers, and more of the same class were to follow. Perhaps we must not expect any new regulations immediately: time will be given to let the present enactments root themselves, and to accustom the people to their object; for we may trust the Chancellor fully to estimate the dangerous nature of the stuff with which he is working. He knows better than most people how far he can tutor the commonalty without risking the exercise of the enormous power wielded over it by the priesthood. There is, at least, this element of hope to be drawn from the quiet reception which Dr. Falk's measures have met with, that the people are not so frantically bound to the priests and bishops as we believed, and that there is a deeper hold of the 'Old Catholic' spirit in the body hitherto called 'Roman Catholic' than appears publicly."

In the last number of the *Edinburgh Review* there is an elaborate article on the German Church question, in which the writer maintains that there are certain indigenous elements in the German Catholic Church disposing them to resist the extreme claims of the Papal party. Between the political move-

ment of Count Bismarck, and the moral movement of Döllinger and his friends, the force that has been called into operation antagonistic to Rome is one of no ordinary magnitude.

ASIA—THE SITE OF BABYLON.

A recent number of the *Church Missionary Intelligence* contains some interesting particulars on the site of Ancient Babylon by a missionary, the Rev. G. M. Gordon. It is true, he says, in a sense, that there is nothing to be seen there, but that very nothing shows the striking fulfilment of prophecy. "Her cities are a desolation—a dry land and a wilderness—a land wherein no man dwelleth, neither doth any son of man pass thereby." It is difficult to realise the hanging gardens, the miles of streets, and the lofty walls that were formerly there. Proceeding to the town of Hillah, he rode to Birs Nimrod, which was supposed to represent the Ancient Tower of Babel. A high mound is surmounted by a ruined tower of brick, the summit of which is 235 feet above the plain. The cuneiform inscriptions Mr. Gordon was quite unable to decipher, but his Arab guides brought him to some letters which were far more easily read, and which to his great amusement he saw to be the names of Timothy Snooks, 1856, John Thomas, 1862, &c. Notwithstanding Mr. Gordon's impression, fortified by the opinion of Mr. Rich, we have to remark that the inscriptions, as interpreted by Sir Henry Rawlinson, do not bear out the popular idea that Birs Nimrod was the Tower of Babel. Its name was the Stages of the Seven Spheres, and it was dedicated to Nebo, repaired by Nebuchadnezzar, whose name appears on the bricks, but built by a former king. It is believed, however, that the Tower of Babel may have been on a similar plan, the Seven Stages representing the stars, the worship of which was one of the earliest forms of idolatry.

UNITED STATES.—A NEGRO CAMPAIGN FOR TWENTY THOUSAND DOLLARS.

Our readers must not be startled by the secularity of this heading; we are going to tell them of a most disinterested mission. Many of them know how eagerly, since the emancipation of the slaves, many friends of the negro have devoted themselves to the cause of Christian education. Some may call to mind an account given in this magazine of the Howard University at Washington—an institution for the education of the negro, set on foot by General O. O. Howard, a distinguished soldier and a very devoted Christian. In other parts of the country similar institutions have been organized. One of these is Fisk University, which is situated at Nashville, in the State of Tennessee. It is a very young university—only six years old. And probably any persons in this country, becoming familiar with its somewhat elementary arrangements, and remembering the kind of institutions to which we are accustomed to give the name of university in this country, might be tempted to smile at the Fisk University. But in America names are given to denote, not the attainments, but

the aims of the promoters. And the pretentious name which is borne by this negro school seems to say, "Shan't we make it a university some day? Shan't we see young men aspiring to its honours with an enthusiasm that knows no bounds?"

But no university can be set up without the sinews of war. And the war in the south having absorbed most of the sinews, and desolated the country, unusual devices had to be resorted to, in order to replenish the treasury of the new negro university. And one of these was the device of a travelling singing campaign. It was found that among the negro students, male and female, at Fisk, some had a rare musical power. The idea occurred of forming a choir of them, and going from place to place, singing on behalf of the University. The idea was carried out under the superintendence of Professor White, who set out with his troupe on the 6th October, 1871, and returned on the 1st of May following, bringing 20,000 dollars as the financial result of this venture.

We learn these and many other particulars from a volume entitled, "The Jubilee Singers and their Campaign for 20,000 Dollars, by G. D. Pike," published at Boston during the present year. We have here both portraits and biographical sketches of the singers, and a narrative of their campaign. We could have wished that it had been found practicable to give an account of the band of singers without taking so much notice of each, for while singing in public is in itself rather trying to modesty, it must be still more so to have one's visage and history published, and one's merit as a singer specially enlarged on. At the same time it is touching to read the family history of these poor children, born in slavery; to be told at how many pieces of silver they were valued in the days of their bondage; or of their mothers or sisters being ordered to the slave-mart to be sold, and of the bitter separations, worse than death, which these transactions entailed. When brought under instruction they showed a great capacity for musical training—not merely for singing the simple hymns and songs of the slaves, but for rendering with great exactness and propriety difficult and elaborate pieces of music.

In reality, however, it was the negro hymns and songs that first established their popularity as they went along. It is to be observed that this movement is wholly of a religious nature, and that the proceedings were begun and carried on in the spirit of prayer. At first it seemed as if the enterprise was to be an utter failure. An audience could be got when there was no charge, but when a ticket had to be paid for, they sung to almost empty benches. In some cases the troupe had difficulty in getting lodging, their colour excluding them from some of the hotels. Nothing but faith and prayer could have carried them through their difficulties. At last the tide turned; prosperity began to attend them, and large audiences came to listen to their singing. After seven months, as we have said, they returned home with 20,000 dollars to build Jubilee Hall. The whole narrative is an interesting testimony to the

capacity of the negro race, while it gives all a hint of a new way of keeping a talent from the napkin, and laying it out to usury in the Master's cause. We do not know how it may be in other parts of the country; but in our own neighbourhood, one single device is all that Christian ingenuity has yet devised for supplementing the method of direct contributions to good objects—we refer to Bazaars of Ladies' Work. Might not a leaf be taken from the book of the Jubilee Singers of Fisk University?

IV.—OUR LIBRARY TABLE.

A GROUP OF BIOGRAPHIES.

The Memorials of a Quiet Life, by Augustus J. C. Hare, have excited so wide an interest on every side that it is almost superfluous to be telling our readers at this time of day of the appearance of this very charming and instructive book. But as these notes were originally addressed "to readers out of the way," it may not be out of place to say that in these two substantial volumes we have the correspondence and journals of a lady of singular accomplishment, grace, and goodness—the wife for five years, and the widow for upwards of thirty, of the late Augustus Hare, Rector of Alton. Mrs. Hare was sprung from a very old family, the Leycesters of Toft; her elder sister was married to Edward Stanley, Rector of Alderley, afterwards Bishop of Norwich; her own husband was descended from the Hares of Hurstmonceaux; and her brother-in-law, Julius Charles Hare, rector of that parish, was the well-known Archdeacon Hare, brother-in-law of Professor Maurice, and author of the "Mission of the Comforter." At first, Maria Leycester appears as a girl of a strong but simple and affectionate nature, clinging to her friends with passionate attachment; by-and-by the love of Christ fills her heart, and the stream of her affections, now flowing both to God and man, is richer and stronger than ever. Her attachment to her husband is of the deepest and most solid kind, always growing with further intercourse and acquaintance; and the picture of their married life in a humble rectory among a few most simple and primitive people, is one that fiction could hardly surpass. Her terrible bereavement is borne with the calmness springing from the assurance that it was "well with him," and that her heavenly Father had work for her to do in this world in the way of helping, guiding, and comforting those who lay within her sphere. Having no child of her own, she adopted a son of one of her brothers-in-law, bringing up her little Augustus from infancy, and so binding him to her that no attachment between veritable mother and son could have surpassed in completeness and tenderness that between the subject and the editor of these volumes. Though of delicate frame, she survived to the age of seventy-two, very much benefited from time to time by visits to Italy, but frequently suffering in a very strange way, remaining for days in a state of syncope, without breathing or action of the heart. So like death did this appear, that when in Italy her

friends had to lock the doors of the house, in case the people should insist on burying her. At length the silver cord was loosed, and the golden bowl was broken; the spirit that had lived so much in the sunshine of God's countenance went to its native element, realising one of the last wishes it had uttered, "Nearer, my God, to thee."

What this life exemplifies most is the human side of Christianity,—the heart pouring out its wealth of affection on its fellow-creatures, and the life cheerfully devoted to their highest good. Yet there is abundant evidence that this affection is not a mere natural product of the heart, but is fed from a glorious fountain—the love of Christ intensely apprehended and continually felt. The union of natural amiableness, rich English culture, and divine grace, gives rise to one of the finest products in the form of character with which one can meet. Warmly attached to her own Church, and finding in its services much nourishment for her soul, she was essentially of catholic spirit, and found herself at home wherever her Saviour was loved and honoured. In fact, she moved more freely through the world, and sat more loose to forms of doctrine, than most devout people can do with safety. But she seems to have been kept right by the intensity of her love. Persons with less love for the Lord, cannot dispense with the guiding lines of Christian doctrine, and the rules by which Christians generally find it necessary to regulate their intercourse with the world. Love has a wonderful compensating power; keeps the instincts wonderfully sound, finds the way to heaven by an unseen guidance like that by which some of the inferior animals find their way home; and recognises its kindred, not by the shibboleths of human speech, but by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned.

We can hardly fancy a more complete contrast in the more outstanding features of Christian character and life, than that which is presented to Mrs. Hare in the subject of a volume entitled *She Spoke of Him; being Recollections of the loving Labours and early Death of the late Mrs. Henry Dening*. By her Friend, Mrs. Gratian Guinness. A bright, handsome, happy girl, moving in the upper circles of Bath, Geraldine Hooper (a lineal descendant, by the way, of the martyr-bishop), dipping freely into whatsoever amusements came in her way, is led to think solemnly about her soul, and under the impression of the text, "This man receiveth sinners," commits herself to the Saviour, and determines to use her life in some way of Christian usefulness. At first she is the district visitor, and while moving on her ministry of mercy, seeks in the ordinary way to benefit those with whom she comes into contact. By-and-by her labours take more exclusively an evangelistic turn, and her supreme and overwhelming concern is for the welfare of their souls. Under the influence of revival movements, she is led to address considerable numbers of persons gathered together in anxiety for their spiritual welfare, and almost accidentally she discovers that she has a talent for preaching. The

way is opened up for a large and very wonderful exercise of this gift, and not only in a hall erected for the purpose in Bath, but at various towns, chiefly in the south-west of England, she earnestly addresses audiences that often numbered three thousand.

Her career was short. Before her marriage as Miss Hooper, and afterwards as Mrs. Denning, she laboured for a few years in her evangelistic work, closing her life in 1872, under an attack of erysipelas, at the early age of thirty-one. The memoir of her life is introduced by the Rev. S. A. Walker, Rector of St. Mary-le-Port, Bristol, who bears the most earnest testimony to the wonderful attractiveness of her natural character, and the marvellous power and effects of her public labours.

We remember a remark in one of the letters of John Foster to the effect that, often when he sat in his study, he felt a very intense desire to speak to men on their highest interests, and that it seemed to him then as if he could go and pour out upon them a whole stream of persuasive considerations, but that when he faced the actual world, all his earnestness seemed to forsake him and his heart as if turned to stone. Geraldine Denning was quite the opposite. This was just what she was enabled to do. Her soul could let itself out in the most free and natural manner to the audiences that she addressed. Her voice, her face, her hands, everything about her, lent themselves without effort of hers, to express what was in her soul. And as her soul glowed with a white heat, the whole process of speaking was aglow with the same. Instinctively, too, she seized upon that style of speaking which is most attractive to the popular mind. Her teaching, and her appeals to the soul and conscience were nearly all done through analogy. Her expositions of Scripture—of the story of Ruth, for example—were spiritualisings, finding in the incidents analogies to the truths of the Christian life. By changing the source or class of her illustrations, she would instinctively adapt herself to various classes. To children she would allegorize the rapacious animals of Scripture—the wolf, the bear, and the lion. To the frequenters of taverns, she would take up the names of the public-houses in the streets—"The Fountain," "The Shamrock," "The Lamb," "The Oddfellows' Arms," "The Lord Nelson," "The Garibaldi"—making each an excellent and striking text. Her labours were attended with a very large amount of blessing. One of her friends, for example, could not get a cabman to take any fare from him, because he had been with the lady when her words went to the heart of his "prodigal son," and brought him home. Doubtless she was a little hard on those who did not "speak for Jesus," at least on such as might be like the girl spoken of by Dr. Chalmers, that "could die for Him, but could not speak for Him." The whole force of her character lay in her directness, earnestness, openness. Real, womanly traits were not wanting. She was fond of fun. She wore a handsome dress, and lived in a handsome house.

She approved of the maid-servant who, being asked how she knew that she was converted, answered, "Because I sweep under the mats now"—a place she slurred over in her unconscious days. She attracted hearts with a wonderful power. Of course, she raised the question on every side, whether it was right for a woman to preach? To her mind, the power which she had received for the work, and the encouragement with which it was attended, were the conclusive answer to the question.

The Life and Times of the Rev. R. Burns, D.D., Toronto, is a narrative, partly autobiographical and partly supplemental, of one who might be said to be endowed with the *perfervidissimum* (one superlative is not enough) *ingenium Scotorum*. He was a member of a family of which one brother became the father of William and Islay Burns, and another the father-in-law of Dr. Guthrie. Energy—energy in act, and most emphatically in speech, directed to the maintenance of the doctrine, discipline, and godliness of the Scotch Church, according to its highest traditions, was the characteristic of the brother who, first at Paisley in Scotland, and afterwards at Toronto, made his power felt and his name respected. The biography confines itself pretty much to the details of a professional life, and may not, therefore, to a corresponding degree, awaken the interest of the general public. It is to be remarked that, with all his intensely Evangelical zeal, Dr. Burns was much impressed with the necessity of elevating the people, both socially and politically; and identified himself with movements for their good at a time when it involved some risk of reputation to do so. He wrote largely and elaborately on the Poor Law, and he was strongly in favour of pure water and savings-banks. He edited an edition of Wodrow's "History of the Church of Scotland;" and on one occasion, having obtained permission to present a copy to King William IV., he did so at a personal interview, of which he gives a graphic account. The good-humoured king introduced sundry topics of general conversation; and the ready divine, armed, as it were, with a royal text, started off into fluent and emphatic dissertations on each of them. He used to say that he had no difficulty in getting into the king's presence, but his difficulty was in getting out of it, as he had to walk backwards, and being very near-sighted, could not find the door. The excellent man lived to the patriarchal age of eighty-one, retaining his vigour to the last, having spent his life with a weapon in one hand and a building implement in the other, an unwearied champion of the Calvinistic faith, and a hearty builder up of the kingdom of God.

The Life of the Rev. William Anderson, LL.D., Glasgow, by George Gilfillan, introduces us to another minister of the West of Scotland, who left on the minds of his own brethren, and of the community where he laboured, an impression of remarkable originality and power. Expert as Mr. Gilfillan is in the more discursive walks of literature, we are not aware that he has formerly tried his hand at biography; neither can we say that he has been remarkably

successful. He rather tells us what Dr. Anderson was held to be, than causes Dr. Anderson to show us what he was. It is rather a history of the man than a picture. Dr. Anderson was eminently a *character*. He was singularly fearless in the expression of all his beliefs and sympathies. When he came out a preacher of the Relief branch of Scottish Nonconformity, the use of manuscripts in the pulpit was detested in that communion. Mr. Anderson read notwithstanding, and read himself into great and overwhelming popularity. It comes with a surprise on us when we learn that one of such a rugged nature, and so much of the stern child of nature, was an ardent millennialist. And his millennialism was no mere theory; it worked deep into his nature, and guided his hopes for the world and for himself. He thought that the ordinary view would keep the world in darkness and misery an awfully long time, and he clung to the hope of its speedy redemption. He was a strong politician, preached in favour of the abolition of the corn laws, and other popular measures that he believed to have in them an ethical and Christian element. For thirty years he fought against slavery and everything that belonged to it. He was a keen voluntary, and no great friend of union; shrinking at first from the union of the Relief and the Secession, and shrinking also in his late years from the proposed union of the Free and the United Presbyterian churches. Towards Popery he had a very vehement aversion, and some of his chief energies were employed in opposing it. He had a kindly feeling towards the Morrisonians, as the party were called who opposed the Calvinistic view of the atonement. His love of independence generally threw his sympathies into the scale of men who were struggling against the stream. For fifty years he continued to minister in the same church, though in his later years the burden of work was borne chiefly by a colleague. Last year, he passed away; leaving to those who knew him a memory which is cherished along with that of all fearless defenders of the truth. His written works were chiefly sermons, or the product of sermons, and included, among others, a work on Regeneration, and a later one on the Filial Honour of God.

The Life, Journal, and Letters of Henry Alford, D.D., Dean of Canterbury, is a work of more varied interest than either of the preceding. Not only was the life spent in contact with interests of a more varied kind, but the materials are more abundant for studying the development of character, and gathering up the lessons of a life. But we do not enlarge on Dean Alford's life at present; but for unwonted pressure on our space, a paper by one well qualified to point out its chief features of interest and instruc-

tion would have appeared in the present number of the Magazine; in the number for next month our readers will become better acquainted with this excellent and ever-active minister of Christ.

The Life and Missionary Travels of by the Rev. J. Furniss Ogle narrates the remarkable career of a man, from his youth up, of singular devotedness to duties and to Christ, who finding himself unable to remain in the active duties of the ministry of the Church of England, became a sort of free lance in the mission field. First he spent some time in the Patagonian Mission, being attracted to South America by the thought that that vast continent had not then a single missionary. His subsequent sphere was in Algeria, where he worked for some years with rare self-denial and Christian zeal. In returning to Algeria after a visit to England in 1865, the vessel in which he sailed was lost in the night, and Mr. Ogle was one of forty who were drowned. Mr. Ogle's career is one of not a few that are fitted to refute the charge that the spirit of Christian chivalry is extinct. He was a knight of the cross of sterling spirit, one well disciplined in the art of denying himself and taking up the cross and following his Master.

V.—OUR MEMORIAL RECORD.

REV. W. PENNEFATHER.

The name of this clergyman is very well known from the conspicuous place he occupied in the revival section of the English Church, and in connection with the Mildmay Conference, and the Mildmay Hall, which owed their origin to him. He was a son of the late Baron Pennefather, and was brought up in Dublin, taking his degree at Trinity College. For several years he laboured at Christchurch, Barnet, and for the last nine he was incumbent of St. Jude's, Islington. Besides enlarging the church, he built the Conference Hall and school-rooms, and rendered valuable aid to the Deaconesses Home, the nursing homes, orphan homes, and various missions throughout London. His attractive disposition and earnest zeal brought him many friends, the number of whom was greatly enlarged by the annual conferences which he brought together for conference and united worship. The plan of these conferences has spread from place to place, and many Christians of both sexes look forward to them with eager expectation for pleasant intercourse with Christian friends, much personal quickening, and much stimulation in the work of the Lord. The next Mildmay Conference had been fixed by Mr. Pennefather to be held this month (June), and it is expected that it will assemble at the time proposed.



CROOKED PLACES:

A Story of Struggles and Hopes.

By EDWARD GARRETT, AUTHOR OF "OCCUPATIONS OF A RETIRED LIFE," ETC.

PART III.—MILLICENT'S ROMANCE, AND WHAT IT WAS MADE OF.

CHAPTER XVII.—THE DAY OF RECKONING.



H E N
Fergus
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family
w e r e
seated
in the
dining-
room, he was

shown into the little drawing-room, the same apartment, not much changed in character or detail, which had been "the parlour" of his first call years and years ago—the room which he had yearned to make the home of his heart. Nowadays, the value of one of Robina's brooches could have purchased the money-worth of nearly all its simple decorations. But Fergus was still conscious of the old charm, albeit he now saw it with a qualification. "If there was only a Turkey carpet on the floor, and a little oak carving, and a few bits of rare china, I should wish nothing better than this." And then it flashed into his mind that, after all, he might stay in London, and might even come to live here. There could be a very feasible excuse for such a descent from the magnificence of Acre Hall, in "that Millicent was the last daughter at home, and wished to keep her mother with her, and Mrs. Harvey could not be induced to leave her old quiet way of life." It was not ignorance of the world that made Fergus ready to believe that people would accept this subterfuge,—it was only an egotism which made him feel that if he himself could "make believe" to believe it, other people

II. N.S.

might surely do the same! Sitting in the quiet, shadowy room, as the fever of misery cooled down in poor Fergus's heart, the miserable old vanity and ambition rose again—no brave determination to face the worst, and make the best of it, but a cowardly resolve not to look at the worst, not to believe in it, nay, to stoutly deny it. So there have been commanders who have thought to turn defeat into victory by calling it such. Probably they have won very few real victories afterwards.

Millicent did not keep him waiting long. Nay, the moment she heard his voice in the hall, she rose from the table where she was drawing. Yet she lingered in the dining-room to allow the servant to retire to the kitchen, before she crossed the hall. Nor did she go straight into the dining-room, but paused at the little hall window, and looked up at the darkening sky where the stars were just coming out. Her heart was leaping within her. Think not that it leaped with any sweet, wild fancies. She knew what he was come about, and why he wished to speak with her alone. But this friendship had been the very soul of her life, and the merest stirring among its drooped leaves was more to her than the budding of any other flower. Millicent was not a woman to magnify trifles and flutter over small interests. But what is a trifle? Some faces that would not brighten at news of a fortune, would quiver and break into mingled smiles and tears over a found letter in a dead hand's writing. Some hearts that would bear with equanimity the smashing of old China, or the loss of gems and gold, would burn and break at the accidental destruction of some worn baby's shoe or old faded book. Ah, the veriest rag is priceless if a life is wrought into it! There was no thought of wooing between herself and Fergus Laurie, and Millicent never dreamed that the old friendship could ever again be more than a friendly way of doing business together. But in that very doing business, in curtest note, or driest transaction, would be concentrated the essence, not of what there was, or ever had been, but of that mighty "might have been" which lies around most lives as vaguely and as grandly as astronomical possibilities surround our little *terra firma*.

Then she went into the drawing-room, and the two sat down opposite each other. And Fergus asked after Mrs. Harvey and each member of the family, remarked on the weather, and commented on the public news, till Milly began to feel restless, and to say within herself that they need not sit there, *tête-à-tête*, to say things which might have been shouted through a speaking-trumpet in the street. At last, with her old frankness, she herself led up to the subject in hand, by asking directly—

"Did you get a letter from me this afternoon, Mr. Laurie?"

"Yes, I did," Fergus answered quickly, and gave her one swift glance, and let his eyes drop on the carpet. There was only a moment's pause, then he spoke again.

"As to the matter it mentioned, I cannot accept the loan you offer. You see the sum is but small, and it would involve our firm in as much responsibility and obligation as if it was ever so large. You might want it back at junctures when it might be inconvenient to return it promptly. You would feel harassed and nervous when you heard of the fluctuations of business. Altogether, there are a hundred reasons, some not easy to put into words, why it would not be right or wise of me to accept the loan of a sum which, while very important to you, is too small for commercial uses."

"Be it as you please. I had no wish that it should be a trouble to you." Millicent's voice was cold, and it was not every ear that could detect its repressed pain.

"And so you manage all your affairs yourself," Fergus went on feverishly. "I think that is too much, for however small one's affairs may be, they are still one's affairs, and a great burden and responsibility. I wonder your brother does not insist upon relieving you."

"He knows me too well; he knows it would not matter if he did," said Millicent. "He has his own wife and boy to look after, and mother too would come upon him altogether in some events. I don't approve of single women hanging like millstones about their men-folk, and what I don't approve, I try not to do, Mr. Laurie."

There was no malice in her words. Only strong pride. She had no thought of Robina; nay, in such a case, she would have freely granted that a sister who was fulfilling some of a wife's duties had a just claim to some of a wife's rights.

"But the more you speak thus, and the more I think of your life, and feel how noble

you are, the more I think how much better and happier it would be for you if there was some one whose right to love and care for you, you would not even wish to gainsay."

Millicent writhed too much under the implied pity of these words, to reflect on any other possible meaning. She felt the colour rush to her cheek, in no womanly flush, but in a hot spot on each cheek. But she had her ready answer.

"Almost every fact in life has its better. But it has also its worse; and the two chances often lie very near together."

"But the strong heart in all its strength craves love and care as much as the weakest," said Fergus Laurie, "and it values them far more, because it gets them so seldom. It values themselves. The weaker value them for what they get. I know many a woman who think she loves a man because she loves the ease and shelter he gives her."

Millicent sat silent. She heard his words, but she scarcely connected them with him who spoke. They were like an echo, mocking through her emptied heart. Ah, so true! But she could love, Love. Ay, though it took from her such leisure and luxury as she had earned for herself, and made her a moiled, driven woman like this one or that one, whose prematurely old faces and bent grey heads rose before her mind's eye. But there remained a secret about this which Millicent did not know yet, and could not guess, or her eyes might have been as content, and her heart as full and satisfied, as are the eyes and heart of many a lonely woman.

Oh, Fergus,—poor Fergus, there is another chance in life for you yet! Young reader, fearful lest there be no bright possibilities in your own path, take this fact from one who has seen much. For one life that is dwarfed for want of "a chance," a thousand are ruined by the waste of scores of chances. Shakspeare himself tells us of the tide in the affairs of men, and of the disastrous consequence of losing it. Is it presumption for me to add that the tide seldom fails to return again and again, only that the loss of it is likely to be repeated? If pride, or indolence, or anger, kept us prisoner ashore when the last flood of fortune came in, we may lament its ebb how we like, but unless we set about building our harbour, we shall be no better off next tide.

Few of us poor shortsighted creatures ever really blame ourselves. We sigh over our past: the domineering parent regrets his undutiful childhood, the lazy matron censures

her gadding girlhood, the money-making man blames his money-spending youth. But the old tree of wilful selfishness is left still growing, be it in blossom or in fruit. We might all of us be very wise and good if the old events happened again. But they never do. In moral as in intellectual schools, the habits are worth more than the lessons.

An over-weening vanity, an egotism that could be cold and cruel in its own assumed interest, had been the bane of Fergus Laurie's life. Looking back as he had looked back in the early part of this very evening, he had detected the wrong turns his career had taken. But the man who had put himself first in everything, who would be king before he had fought, and master before he had served, had not put himself in a way to be favoured with a grand self-revelation which should show him that "before honour goeth humility."

He wanted Millicent to love him and to help him: to be friend and counsellor: to give his downfall a glory which his prosperity had never had: he wanted her to give him courage: to bear him up on the strong pinions of her independent spirit. It may not sound very noble or heroic. But it was human. And it was the plain truth. And it has an appeal to the chivalry of womanhood. Many "a ladye" has tended her knight through sufferings not encountered in her cause, and then walked contentedly by his limping steps afterwards. But Fergus Laurie shrank from this truth as he had shrank from many truths. There is a species of cowardice which hides itself in haunted chambers.

"Millicent," he said, using her unprefix name almost for the first time during all these years, "I don't want you to go on working for me as you have done—I don't want you to continue burdening yourself with money matters. I want you to have no more work and no more care but the happy work and cares of a sheltered wife. I want you to be my own wife, Millicent. Won't you trust me to take care of you?"

For Millicent had sprung up, and crossed the room away from him. Perhaps he had tried to take her hand. Perhaps he had not. She did not know, and she never knew. Only her heart was ablaze with what seemed to her the bitterest insult she could undergo. Had she been left free, through her bright youth, to be asked in marriage out of pity, in the mellow days of maturity? Was it to this that her honest desire of friendly independence had brought her? Could he only con-

strue her offer of business-like service as a forlorn feeler of a life craving his munificent support and protection? Was it possible that he could even imagine that she had made it as a sort of appeal? Robina might have suggested this to him. Robina was just the woman to do so. Was she not always imagining that every lady was angling for the glory of being the great manufacturer's wife, and hankering after the splendours of Acre Hall? But never mind that! The bitterness, after all, lay between their two selves, Fergus and Millicent. It was quite impossible for him to regard her as anything but a mere lay figure on which to drape his bounties! And suddenly in that moment of silence it flashed upon her that this man was a vain and paltry man,—a mere gilt image which only her own imagination had set up and hall-marked. Perhaps in her pain she was scarcely just to him, and became too bitterly sceptical of all the possibilities of a nature that had so grievously disappointed her. We are all apt to rush to this extreme. The strongest faith in physiognomy can scarcely credit that all absconding parties are as ugly as they are described, else it must have been only fools who ever trusted them!

The end had come to Millicent's dream. It had held but half sway over her for a long time. She had been, as it were, in the hour between darkness and dawn, that state when we wonder which is true, our dream or our awakening. But now her eyes were quite open. And she knew that though the man Fergus Laurie was still alive, and that his life was nearer hers than it had ever been before, still her hero was lost and gone, sunk for ever in that dark silent sea of bitter waters which never gives up its dead.

Then she remembered that he sat gazing at her, and awaiting her answer.

"Mr. Laurie," she said, slowly and quietly, "I have no doubt you mean to be very kind. But as you are so candid in your kindness, you will let me be candid in return. I have tried the work and the care, and the struggle for which you pity me. And I know by experience that at their best, they may be very happy, and at their worst, they are very bearable. The only real sting I have ever had came from none of these things. It came from a professed kindness. There are kindnesses which are like a couch of nettles, whoever has once rested on such will rather sit upright for the rest of his days than risk more of such repose! Do not mention marriage to me again, Mr. Laurie," she added, her manner softening a little. "For-

get that you have ever mentioned it. As for our relations to each other, I have long felt that I was not giving you satisfaction, or at least, that something was wrong. I am sorry you did not say so plainly to me, I am sure I could have borne it, and it would have relieved you and myself from a great deal of uneasiness. Your silence did not prevent me from feeling that I was burdensome, and though it may be ungracious for me to say this now, it was only a desire to be in some little way useful and business-like, which prompted my unfortunate offer of my money. For I do not yet trouble myself much about the income from my savings. So long as I have something stored against a rainy day, I hope to earn—in one way if not another—all I need for many years yet to come. Your old firm renewed their many offers of work, oddly enough, this morning. I have not answered their note yet. I shall answer it favourably now. It will be best for both of us, Mr. Laurie," and she smiled sadly. "You see, there is a prosaic time when an offer of work is more acceptable than an offer of marriage."

"Ah, you will find it a very different thing to work for them," said Fergus drearily.

"Shall I?" asked Millicent, with the chill returning to her voice. "On the contrary, had I been working for them for the last ten years, at the terms they offered me then, and which they renew and improve now, I might have had savings better worth your investing in your business,—sixteen hundred pounds instead of eight hundred."

Fergus sprang up and walked hastily towards the door.

"I do not want to say these things," cried poor Milly. "I want to be friends—as much as we can!" (pathetic qualification). "I like to be grateful. It was awfully bitter when I began to doubt and wonder why I was so. Why should you want to set up your own self-respect on the ruins of other people's, Mr. Laurie? You have a great commercial name, and Acre Hall, and a grand circle of friends; will not all these content you without saying that even my wage is the dole of your charity?"

Fergus stood still. He wondered mistily how it would be, if he threw himself at her feet, and owned that his prosperity had been but a gigantic sham, and that he was really a homeless, friendless, ruined man,—far poorer than she herself was, not only in habit and courage, but even in purse,—thrown upon her pitiful woman's heart for forgiveness and comfort and upholding. He might have

done thus an hour ago. But he said to himself that he could not do this now. It was too late.

Too late! And he turned and looked at Milly—one look, which she never forgot, though she did not understand it till afterwards. And without a word, without a good night, he went away.

Millicent went back to the family room for a moment, and excused herself on the score of a headache, and crept away to her own chamber. She lay down in the darkness, but she did not think. People never do think when their hearts are bruised by the fall of an idol, or broken up by the digging of a grave. Only picture after picture arose before her mind.

The first picture that rose was that sunny road where she had walked with David Maxwell that morning when he found she was something nearer to Fergus than he was himself. But memory repeated that picture as copies are made—somehow the faces were turned the other way.

Then she saw the great chestnut trees that overhung the walls of Acre Hall, and she seemed to look through the great gates and see the cool green lawn, and the fresh hyacinths and primulas planted out in the flower-beds. But it did not seem to rise before her as Fergus Laurie's home—as a house where she had been a familiar guest. Rather it was invested with the sleepy, scented mystery that it had for her in the days when she first came to Hackney, when it was inhabited by two old maiden ladies, whose peacocks she used to feed through the railings on Saturday afternoons.

Then her brother's figure came. But not as the well-to-do author, with a beautiful wife and a tall son of his own. The successful books and the wife and the son, all floated dimly round, like the phantasmagoria of a half-developed dream. The reality seemed those old, old days, when they all had to plan so cleverly to make him look nice for his evening parties, and when they watched so sharply for reviews and were so indignant over the naughty ones! Ah me, ah me, while we sleep we blend real sounds with the music of our dreams, and when we awake, all seem alike unreal.

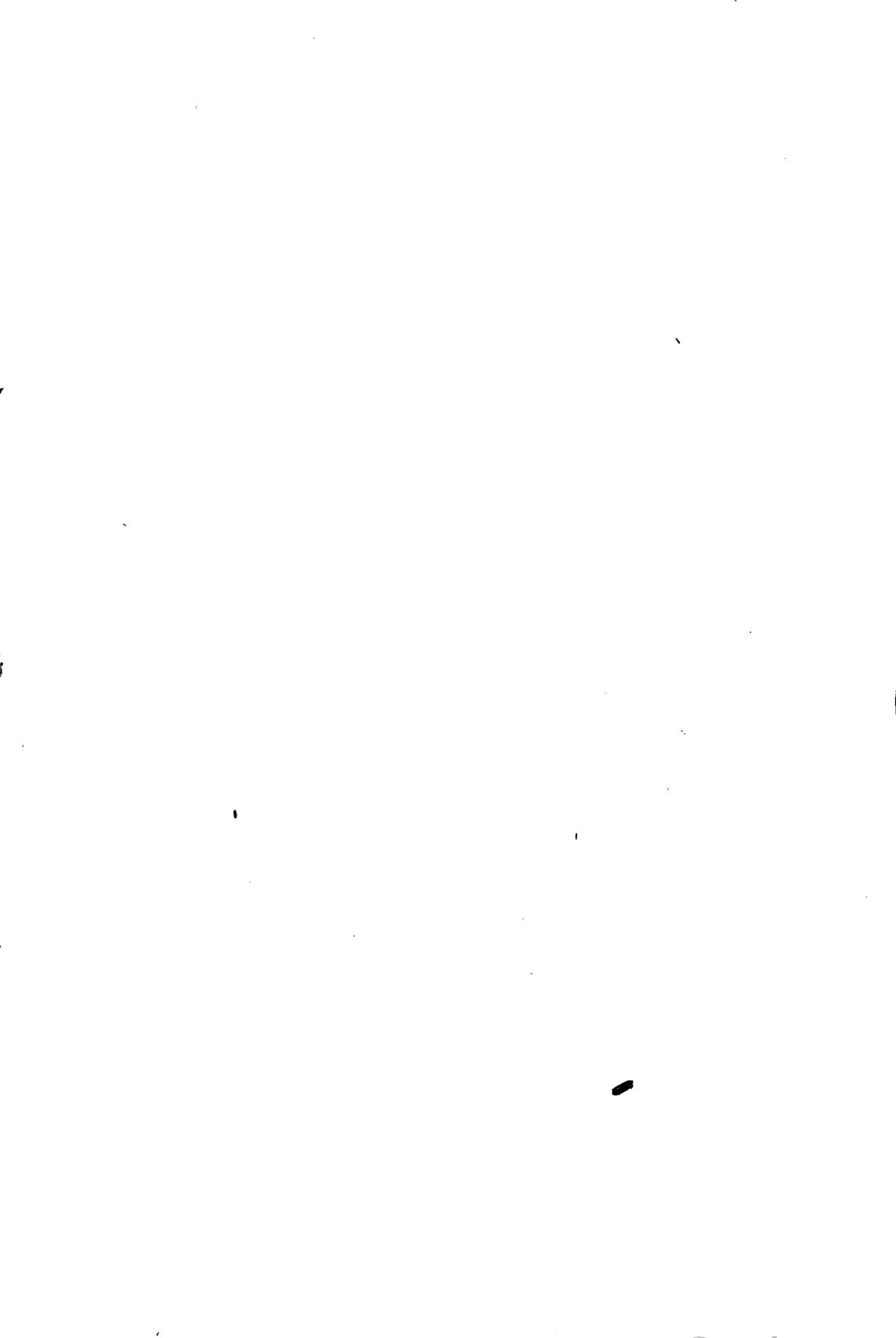
And through each of the strange disjointed pictures, there seemed to walk a shadowy, nameless figure, whose face she never saw.

The mind has its fevers apart from the body.

Millicent did not pray that night. Unless there was a prayer in the words, which she caught herself repeating, half-aloud, again and again—



"CROOKED PLACES."



"God knows—but I could not help it—
God knows!"

CHAPTER XVIII.—THE DAY OF REVEALING.

THE common daylight brought back the simple prose of life. Millicent had to take her accustomed place at the breakfast-table, to profess enjoyment of the omelet which was their little servant's latest and highest work of culinary art, and to feign interest in the royal marriage of which the newspaper was full. Nay, heedless and indifferent in her self-absorption, she had often done these things less carefully than she did them to-day. We all of us forget and fail in our duties sometimes, but it is at bottom a sound heart which remembers them in the day of its calamity, and takes the broken spars of its wrecked hope to build up the household fire.

Only Millicent could not settle to any work. She went away to her studio, and toyed with paper and pencils. She wrote a note in answer of the old firm's offer, saying that she would call at their office in a few days and enter into negotiations. Then she sat down in what she called her "resting chair," and folded her hands and wondered, "Was it all over, or was it not? And what would come next? Was it really true?" She hardly believed anything yet. She would scarcely have wondered if she had woke up and found it was all only a dream; that she was a girl still, and Fergus a poor clerk as he used to be. It was like the first day after a death.

A knock at the street door roused her. It was a knock she knew, and yet it was strange. With haste and earnestness, she went to the stair-head, and listened to the voices in the hall.

It was she who was wanted again, asked for almost in the same words that had been used the night before. "Is Miss Harvey within? Can I speak to her alone? Tell her I will not detain her long, but my business is very urgent."

This time it was David Maxwell's voice, and Millicent having heard his request, made no pretence of awaiting a summons, but went straight down-stairs, and followed David into the drawing-room. She did not give herself time to wonder what had brought him. Looking back afterwards upon the stunned bewilderment of that morning, she compared it to the pause between the first rumble of an earthquake, and the final crash.

She held out her hand to Mr. Maxwell, and he took it, but instead of the usual commonplace words of greeting, he said eagerly—

"Has Fergus Laurie been here?"

"Yes," said Millicent, amazed; "he was here last evening."

"Ah, last evening, according to the arrangement he made before he left the counting-house. About what time was he here, Miss Milly?"

"He was not here more than half an hour. It must have been nearly nine when he went away," answered the bewildered Millicent, with that judicial precision which is natural to all of us when replying to questions whose drift we do not understand. "But why? what is the matter?"

"He has not been home all night; he has not come to the office this morning," David explained. "His visit to you is the last trace we have of him, unless indeed you can give us a clue."

Millicent was silent. And her womanly heart stood still. Had there been real love masked in Fergus's fantastic vanity, and had she wounded it to the quick by her sharp, stern words? A woman does not hate a man whose honest suit she has refused. Nay, often after her fiat has gone forth, there comes a spell of relenting and self-distrust, when a renewed appeal would be very dangerous to her firmness. And even when this could not be the case, when there stands between them a something which cannot be set aside, there will always be a latent tenderness in even her bitterest censure.

"No doubt he felt very deeply the necessity for speaking to you on such a subject," said David. "But he was quite calm when he talked it over with me. Did he show any excitement to you?"

Millicent looked up blankly into David's face. What could it all mean? Had he actually confided to his coadjutor that he was going to make her an offer of marriage to console her for the loss of the work he considered she was no longer fit for? Or had he only consulted about the loan she had proffered? Perhaps it was David who had advised him not to accept it. But there could be no particular cause for excitement over anything relating to that.

David thought he understood her silence. That she did not know how far Fergus had spoken to her in confidence, and was anxious to keep his counsel.

"I only ask you what his manner was, and whether he gave any hint as to where he was going?" he asked gently. "I will not ask what he said about his affairs. I know all that is urgent on that point. But these other questions I must press for his sake. They

concern his well-being—perhaps his very life!"

"His life!" Millicent echoed, and sat down on the nearest chair.

"Will you not tell me what he said to you?" pleaded David.

"No, I cannot," she answered. "It would not be right for me to do so. But you can tell me what you expected he would say, and I will tell you if you are wrong."

"Yesterday afternoon," said David, "we agreed that he was to call upon you, and tell you that in the present precarious condition of the firm, it would be to your advantage to seek an engagement elsewhere, and that you should be immediately paid up the sum that is owing to you. The firm cannot be carried on any longer under its present management. You should not have had such a sudden notice, but that Fergus has struggled on and hoped against hope. But he felt it would be all taken out of his hands by his creditors, after one of them had gone so far as to put in a man in possession of Acre Hall. But Fergus seemed at once to take it calmly, and I thought he would find it rather a comfort than otherwise to talk it over to a tried old friend like you."

Millicent's face had grown grey while he spoke. "He spoke to me as a prosperous man," she cried, "and I answered him as such. I thought no other. Fergus Laurie is a dishonourable man!"

David sat silent for a few minutes, and then he asked softly, "Did he say nothing to you of what I have related? Nothing about the money?"

"Only that he would not take it. He said it was not worth while," said Millicent.

"Would not take it—not worth while!" David repeated, astonished in his turn.

"What money is this?"

"The eight hundred pounds I offered to lend him yesterday," Millicent answered helplessly. She did not feel like a middle-aged responsible woman—a woman who had done piles of work, who had saved money. She felt like a girl again, in the pitiful sense of the phrase, with a girlish sense of outsideness, a girlish belief that men must be different after all, and nearer to each other, much as she had fancied on that old day, that if she, a nobody, knew something, David, friend and fellow-man, must know so much more.

"I knew nothing of that," David said gravely. "The only money mentioned between us was the sum the firm owes you. As you did not call for it this morning, I

have brought it with me now," and he laid upon the table, not a cheque, but notes for the full amount.

"He said nothing of that," Millicent replied. "He spoke of my not doing any more work. I thought nothing of the debt, I knew it would be paid sooner or later. And then the subject was changed, and not a word was said about anything you have mentioned to-day. Only it was quite settled I was not to work for him any more."

"Did you press the loan of your money?" David asked.

"No; he said it was too small a sum to be troubled with. I had thought that perhaps it might be serviceable using money, for I knew the firm must have great expenses, though I never dreamed it was not splendidly prosperous. I never did! If I had, I should not have chosen this time to speak as I did. But Fergus Laurie is a dishonourable man!"

David Maxwell sat before her with a secret and sorrowful guess as to what else his friend had said to her, and as to how she had answered. He thought of her patient laborious life—of her many brave responsibilities, but though he thought within himself that he was glad she had not offered her money till it was too late for Fergus to hope anything by grasping it, what he said was—

"I am glad at least that he did not accept your loan."

"Do you think I care so much for that?" she cried scornfully. "I would freely give all that I have that this should never have happened."

"God forgive him, and keep all of us," said David sadly. "Think what his sin is costing him. Poor Fergus! How different he might have been!"

"I doubt it," she laughed bitterly.

But at that moment there rose before her that first evening with the Lauries, and her outburst of girlish heat, and Fergus's quiet remark, "I can believe you would." And she covered her face with her hands, and two hot tears came, hard, as if drawn heavily up from the depths of her whole nature.

"Does anybody else know anything of last evening's interview?" David pleaded again. "I must ask, for we must find him."

"Nobody knows anything," she said drearily. "I supposed he was going straight home. He was quite cool. But I thought he looked at me strangely, and now I remember he did not say good night."

"Then, in fact, the simplest truth does not require that I should alter anything that I have already told Miss Robina, namely, that

I believed her brother had arranged to come here on business,—in fact, to tell you that your connection with his firm had better cease.”

Millicent's face coloured hotly. “That is all that is to be told,” she said. “If you like, you can add that I spoke rather sharply—about business!”

David drew a long breath, and rose from his seat.

“What are you going to do?” Millicent asked, rising also. “What does Robina think? What does his mother say?”

“They are both excited,” David answered. “And they speak so. It is hard for them now, with this terror and suspense added to the misery of the man in possession, and the ruin of everything.”

“They have brought most of it upon themselves,” said Millicent sharply.

“Does not that add to the agony?” asked David gently. “Ay, whether they own it to themselves or no. Isn't that all the difference between the crown of martyrdom and the blot of capital punishment? As for your inquiry, what am I going to do, I scarcely know. Every moment may bring us some clue that we cannot dream of now. We must deal as gently with him as we can, we must leave him hope that there is a way up again even yet, poor fellow.”

Softer tears were gathering in Milly's eyes. She did not dream that it was the patient face and holy words of the man before her, that were touching the sweeter springs of her nature. She had not yet had leisure so utterly to abolish her old idol worship; she only thought the gentler mood came from old tender memories, even from a little remorse for the righteous judgment that she had dealt out at so unsuitable a time.

“I spoke to him last night as I should never have spoken to a ~~failed~~ and chagrined man,” she said. “If I can do anything to help you, I am ready. Do you think it would be any comfort to the Lauries to see me, as I was the last person who saw him?”

She asked it humbly, for Milly was a magnanimous woman, who would humiliate herself an ell for every inch that she sinned, and who wanted to do this so much, that she would even do it at the peril of laying herself open to the old sore accusation of coming to spy out the barrenness of the land. Perhaps she was more magnanimous than wise. If one does chance to tread on a serpent, that is no reason why one should take it up and warm it in one's bosom.

David stood thoughtful. He knew that Mrs. and Miss Laurie had been ready to say

hard things of Millicent during his interview with them that morning. But he thought that was because they believed her cold and calculating in this their day of adversity. He thought of his own hard time of anguish, long years ago now, and how Christian's note of invitation had come to him like a burst of sunshine. He forgot that he rose from his knees to see that burst of sunshine. He thought that it would do those two poor desolate women good, to see a familiar face that had some share of its own in their trouble. It would surely soften them and save them from that spirit of hard defiance which is the deadly mortification of sorrow. They might writhe and cry out, and be petulant and reproachful, he could fancy that, but he could trust Millicent's patience now: it would never be fallen pride that she would humble, it would not be stung hands that she would smite. He had rather she had gone without asking his advice, but as this was done, he would give what seemed to him right for her and for them. If, as he half feared, Fergus already lay a dead man somewhere among the rushes by the river-side, it would be a comfort for her to know that she had laid the bitterness in her heart, and forgiven him and his before she knew it. Therefore he said—

“I think you could be a great comfort to them. I cannot quite understand them. They are much excited in one way, but in another they are strangely cool. That is often one feature in great excitement. Of course, they will know that you know, and you will speak with them as knowing all. I can understand their wishing to keep everything as quiet as possible, but they are making such efforts to set forth that everything is quite right. I suppose the very servants imagine that their master has gone away about business. Miss Robina went with the cook to market this morning, and I heard her tell the parlour-maid which flower they will have for their table decoration to-day. It is like setting up one's will to keep out the coming ocean-tide. It must be a terrible state of mind. But a little friendly sympathy will bring about a more natural feeling. I tell you all this, only that you may be prepared. If you will get ready now, I will take you with me as I go back.”

Millicent made no delay. She went into the parlour and told her mother and Miss Brook that there was great trouble at Acre Hall, adding frankly that she was not at liberty to tell them any more than, and that they need not mention even this meagre fact

to anybody else. The two old ladies asked questions in a breath.

"Is anybody ill?" inquired Mrs. Harvey. "Because, if so, I ought to go instead of you. You are not strong enough for nursing or sitting up, and you will not lay by when you are done, but will go straight back to your work."

"Is he in difficulties at last?" asked Miss Brook. "I always knew you'd gain a loss by him some day, but he need not have failed when he was owing you so much, as I feel certain he does just now."

"Nobody is ill," said Millicent, "and as for any money due to me, it is sent to me in full this morning, and as I am not to do any more work for the firm, your evil prophecies are not true, Miss Brook."

"Then you've come off better than some folk will," were the parting words which Miss Brook threw behind her as Millicent left the room. But her mother followed her up-stairs and sat down opposite her as she hastily put on her bonnet and wraps.

"I wish you could say something else to me, Milly," she pleaded wistfully.



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Millicent put her arms round her mother's neck. She had not done so for years and years. "Oh, mother, mother!" she wailed, "don't you remember you didn't love your mother less when you couldn't tell her everything?"

"God be with you, my darling!" said Mrs. Harvey. "There's many a meaning to the text, 'When father and mother forsake, then the Lord taketh us up.'" And she let her go.

David and Millicent did not speak much to each other as they walked to Acre Hall.

David opened the gates himself, and as they went up to the walk he said to Millicent—

"I will send in word that you are here, and then Miss Laurie can choose which room she will receive you in, as she prefers to keep all out of hearing of the servants."

The parlour-maid admitted them—a smart, saucy girl, who had caught the habit of the house, and had one manner for grand strange visitors, and another for familiar connected comers, especially such as Miss Harvey, whose dresses did not cost so much as her own Sunday best.

Millicent sat down wearily while the girl scornfully took in their message. The great, fair house, with its rich scents and its soft colouring, seemed so like a haunted palace—ay, haunted for her, not yet with disembodied ghosts astray from their spiritual homes, however soon that, too, was to be—but with wailing ghosts that had never found bodies, and had no abiding place above earth, or below it.

She was so shocked and stunned that she did not notice how long the girl was away, till she heard her mincing steps returning along the corridor. She had a conscious simper on her face.

"Please, ma'am, but Miss Laurie is very sorry that, as it is not yet visiting hours, she happens to be engaged and unprepared to receive visitors, and so cannot have the pleasure of seeing you to-day, as she could not think of asking you to wait. But if Mr. Maxwell will step into the library, she says she will see him in a few minutes, as she knows he is on business, and that mustn't be trifled with."

"Very well, I will return presently," responded David, offering his arm to Millicent, who said not one word, but rose up, white and stony, and followed him.

The servant shut the door behind them, and went back to the kitchen, where she put her own version on the incident.

"I shouldn't wonder but master is keeping that Miss Harvey out of her money, as well as other people, and that missis knows it. Lawks, but here's the new damask drawing-room curtains been put down in damp, and all stained. Well, how can anybody think of everything with a strange man about, and such a deal of changing and worry? I'm a doing my best, an' as for character, I reckon I'll have to go back on my old school certificate, and my aunt's good word, for a character from this house won't be worth much, I'm thinking."

Whether or not David believed that Robina, behind all her subterfuge, was anxiously waiting for news of her brother—he did not return to her till he had seen Millicent safe back in her own home.

He spoke to her as they went along—

"Never mind," he said, "you don't need any pity. She does, poor thing, most of all for this."

"What is the use of forgiving, if the for-

giveness is rejected?" cried Millicent; "why need we make a missile to be flung back at ourselves?"

"Hush, hush," he pleaded. "The forgiveness is our part, the other is not. If people will not have our loving-kindness, I think God takes care of it. He looks after all wasted things."

"Why doesn't He look after them before they are wasted?" said Millicent hardy. "Is not a full heart and life better worthy Him than empty ones?"

"Not always," David answered quietly. "For perhaps there is something in them which will not let Him wholly in, and He empties them that He may fill them better."

"But can affection,—can friendship keep out God?" asked Millicent. "Are not all good things of Him?"

"Yes," said David. "All good things. But nothing ever takes those away. We can no more be separated from them than we can from the love of God itself."

"Was not your love for Fergus a good thing?" she asked. "And have you got it still?" she added bitterly.

David drew a long sigh. "Yes, I think I have," he said. "A great deal of something has gone away from it. God can't endure mistakes or falsities of any kind. They must go; they are not the love."

"Can anybody love a creature from whom they can expect nothing that is good?" Millicent asked again.

"Thank God, yes! God does. Christ knew the evil that was in human nature, and yet loved it well enough to die for it. And He did not say, 'I am willing to die for men, but not by their hands.' We could all of us make sacrifices in our own way—the burnt-offerings that God does not delight in, but we have to make them in God's way, even though they be but our own troubled spirit and broken heart."

Millicent walked silent till she came to her own door, and then she turned to him and said—

"If you think again that I can be of any use anyhow, do not fail to let me know. I will be ready. I can but try, and I will."

"I know it," he answered. "Do not imagine for a moment that I doubt it."

And she disappeared in her mother's cottage, and he went back to Acre Hall.

THE FUTURE OF THE WORKING CLASSES.

V.—LABOUR WITHOUT SORROW.

IT is only after the term of threescore years and ten, according to the Psalm, that labour and sorrow must be regarded as inseparable companions. We do not say companions, but inseparable companions; in actual life the partnership is too often contracted far sooner; in some very shameful cases even before infancy has had its happy dream. The sight of the poor little match-makers of Spitalfields is a scandal to humanity, and no bitterer tears have been shed by Charity in our day than over these poor toiling infants; or over weary children in agricultural gangs; or over boys whose gristle had not hardened into bone, that used to be compelled to squeeze themselves through flues and chimneys, or to drag trucks of coal along passages that brought on them the curse of the serpent—"On thy belly shalt thou go." In the case of children, we all see instinctively that the alliance of labour and sorrow is unnatural and repulsive, and we struggle hard to secure, within reasonable limits, that it shall not take place. The same feeling is animating the great mass of labouring men. Labour and sorrow, they feel, have been too constantly together; they are striving to set them apart. It is indeed a laudable and Christian effort, and capable of being followed by a large measure of success. Provided always we do not commit the error of seeking the living among the dead; but proceed under the shadow of the proverb, "The blessing of the Lord it maketh rich; and he addeth no sorrow with it."

In our last paper on the future of the working classes, we could not but remark how the efforts made to get quit of one sorrow were bringing another in its room. The sorrow of excessive work and inadequate wages, so far as it has been removed, has been succeeded by the sorrow of a state of war, or at least a state of suspicion, between masters and men. It seems one of our hardest problems to get the two classes to work comfortably and happily together. How is work to be freed in the future from this most distressing element of sorrow? We spoke in our last paper of the blessing that would come if the breath of divine love should warm the hearts alike of employers and employed. But even that would not put everything to rights at once. It would have to be followed by righteous conditions satisfactory on both sides, and by modes of conducting work in which there

would be little or no danger of collision. For even if the best conceivable spirit were to come down, there could be little hope of its continuance if the temptations to collision were to be for ever at work.

One source of hope for the future is, that both employers and employed will come to understand better their respective positions, interests, and duties. Whatever clouds of dust may be raised in the course of angry discussions, after a time the dust commonly clears away, and silently and unconsciously, perhaps, the parties find themselves in possession of a better knowledge of one another. At the close of such lengthened battles as the present generation has witnessed between masters and men, the two bodies of combatants can hardly fail to know one another better. The working class will have come to see more clearly what their employers can or cannot reasonably afford, and the employer to understand better what the workmen may or may not reasonably look for. By anticipating reasonable expectations the masters may ward off many a collision; by making none but reasonable demands the men may do the same. If some of those who lead on the workmen of the day are mere selfish demagogues (we make the supposition only of some), their true character will be revealed by time, and the body of workmen will see the necessity of not allowing their order to lie at the mercy of such men. Time will thus have its healing effect. On both sides good sense and good feeling will assert their claims, so that even if the present system of work—by masters and men—should continue, it will not be accompanied in the future by such innumerable collisions.

We may surely expect, too, that boards of arbitration and councils of conciliation will have some good effect. It is often, indeed, difficult to show, in reference to particular disputes, that they are capable of being ended by arbitration or kindred means. Experience, however, will gradually make it plain what kinds of disputes may be thus dealt with, and will smooth the way for the peaceful decisions of such tribunals. Precedents will be established constituting a kind of common law applicable to such cases. Whatever difficulties may attend boards of arbitration and councils of conciliation, it cannot be doubted that they help greatly

to carry out the Christian precept, "As much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men," and are therefore eminently worthy of the support both of Christian ministers and of all Christian men.

For similar reasons we deem the experiment of co-operation an interesting one, though we can hardly say more. We do not refer here to co-operation in the purchase or sale of goods as it is carried out in the co-operative stores of Lancashire and Yorkshire; but to co-operation in production and mercantile business as it has been attempted in some few cases. It must strike every one acquainted with the fact as singular that more has not been done in this latter way. If workmen think that capital oppresses labour, why do they not become capitalists and labourers in one? It cannot be said that the working classes of this country, who during the last twenty years have spent millions in dwelling-houses, and a far larger sum in strong drink, and who by small weekly payments have brought up the accumulated funds of their societies to tens of thousands of pounds, could not have contributed capital for at least some large undertakings. The real difficulty does not lie in finding the capital. It lies in surmounting the difficulties of management. It is found to be most difficult to combine faculties so unlike as that of working with the hands and that of guiding a great business with the brains. Do what we may, things gravitate towards that division of labour which gives the work to the many and the management to the few. No doubt as workmen rise in education they will rise in the power of management. But we doubt whether any progress in education will counteract what seems to be the plan of nature—simplicity in the management coupled with multiplicity in the productive force. Strongly though we are disposed in favour of the plan of co-operation, we cannot see that it is so likely as some deem it to settle the great problem of labour. The form in which it seems most practicable is, when the workmen, in addition to their wages, are allowed a percentage of the profits of any concern, the management remaining practically in the hands of a very few proprietors. We wish very earnestly that the attention of masters were turned more in this direction. We have personal knowledge of a few cases in which such an arrangement has been carried out, and in all cases with the best effects. It tends greatly to the satisfaction of the workmen; it gives them a direct interest in the prosperity of the concern, in the excellence

of the work, and in the economical management of all the details; and, more than any other plan that we know of, it sweetens the breath of the establishment, and genders affection and regard between employers and employed. It is in this direction chiefly that, so far as co-operation goes, we think there is ground of hope for the future.

There are other ways, however, in which labour and sorrow have been far too closely connected in the past, and in which it is desirable, if it be possible, to separate them for the future. There are some forms of labour towards which the progress of knowledge cannot but create a more repulsive feeling, by showing more clearly their destructive effects. Occupations that are directly destructive of health, such as the steel-grinder's, the stone-cutter's, or the coal-hewer's, cannot fail to become more repulsive as a knowledge spreads of physiology, and of the direct effect of such employment on the lungs and other vital organs of the body. And it is certain, too, that if men advance in education and refinement, they will have more dislike than is felt now to occupations that are dirty and disagreeable, such as that of the scavenger, the miner, or the chimney-sweeper. Is it possible to separate sorrow from these forms of labour, so that the workmen of the future shall continue to perform them cheerfully, and not feel them to be a bondage from which they would give anything to escape?

Now, in regard to work which is repulsive from being dangerous, if no direct method can be discovered of remedying the danger, the way to deal with it must be to pay for it at a higher rate, so that those engaged in it shall either have to work for a shorter time daily, or shall be enabled to leave the occupation at an earlier period of life than in other and healthier occupations. No doubt, this looks very Utopian, considering the habits and feelings that are commonly prevalent now; but with the progress of education, and especially with the progress of provident habits, and habits of self-control, there would be nothing Utopian about it. It is an unnatural thing for men to engage in work of a kind that is sure to kill them long before they have reached the age of three-score and ten. As a rule, it is the duty of men to endeavour to live to the end of their days. Under peculiar circumstances, it is sometimes their duty to take the risk both of disease and death, as in the case of the sailor or the soldier; or, we may add, the physician, who

in a dreadful time of epidemic breathes the atmosphere of death ; or the missionary who goes among cannibals ; or the traveller who explores regions of the earth formerly untrodden by the foot of man. But in these cases the duty arises from the existence of evils or dangers that cannot be met except at the risk, and even the sacrifice, of some men's lives. If there be any feasible way of obviating the dangers connected with certain occupations, the sacrifice of life in them is inexcusable. The natural remedy is to limit the time spent in them, diminish the period of exposure, and increase the power of resisting the hurtful influence, by increasing the general vitality of the workman's system. In present circumstances, the misery is, that increase of pay is so often abused, and instead of being employed to improve his vital energies, goes to sap and mine them in the most lamentable way.

In regard to occupations that are simply disagreeable, or that involve a loss of dignity, we believe it will be a long time before education and refinement become so general that there will be any great difficulty in finding persons willing to undertake such labours.

But even if it should be otherwise, may we not expect that in a more intelligent, and certainly in a more Christian age, the idea of useful service of whatever kind will be associated, not with disgrace, but with honour? It is very interesting to observe how certain berths and employments that are sufficiently repulsive to natural feelings, become ennobled simply by the introduction of the idea, or rather of the spirit, of Christian service. What can be nobler than the late Miss Agnes Jones's service in the Liverpool Poor House? What drudgery, what horrid, repulsive drudgery, must such a life as hers have been, had it been spent apart from the ennobling spirit of Christian service! Or let us take Miss Nightingale's work in the Crimea Hospitals, or the work of many an obscure matron, or keeper, or attendant in lunatic asylums, jails, and penitentiaries. It is one of the cheering aspects of the times that a great improvement has taken place of late years in this class of functionaries. This improvement has arisen from the fact that, in many cases, the mere hireling has been superseded by the loving Christian worker. The thought of serving the Lord Jesus in their spheres of labour, has not only imparted a new impulse to the labourers, but a new dignity to their labour. And there has been elevation enough of public sentiment to appreciate the self-denying labours

of such men and women. Their names rank among the best heritages of the nation.

Now, in a state of society, not merely more intelligent—for that alone is not sufficient—but more truly Christian, may we not expect that the respect due to useful service will gain ground, and that other things besides nursing and watching will be undertaken, or at least cheerfully performed, through the force of Christian devotedness? We have not yet come to see the full significance of our blessed Lord's beautiful act, when He washed the feet of his disciples. Applications of that divine example, of which we wot not as yet, may hereafter be brought home to the Christian conscience. And it is a great comfort to have this thought to lean on. The truth is, that the prospect of a community advancing throughout its whole strata in intelligence and refinement merely, would not in itself be at all reassuring. The airs that people would give themselves would be intolerable. Some persons at the present day have a foresight of this, and would fain keep down and keep back the education of the people. But the real safeguard, the true antidote, is the lowly spirit of our blessed Master. "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity buildeth up." Diffuse the spirit of intelligence alone, and high life below stairs becomes the order of the day. Servant girls become princesses, wielding sceptres in the kitchen and in the scullery. But let the true spirit of Christ be diffused—the spirit of loving service,—it will counteract the evil effects of mere knowledge. It will supply oxygen to the moral atmosphere, preserving its vitality and its sweetness ; and it will give to the lowliest members of the social body the real kingly dignity, the servant of all being the greatest of all, and the largest heart commanding the highest honour.

Not a little of the prevalent feeling against manual labour as being inconsistent with a cultivated mind and refined taste, is due to mere prejudice and fashion. Have we not the old story of Cincinnatus called from the plough to be Dictator, and the not less instructive fact of St. Paul following the craft of a tent-maker? On a wider scale, it is notorious that many members of the upper and middle classes, when they emigrate to our colonies, set themselves with great spirit, and without any sense of degradation, to the work of the farm, or the house, or the dairy. It is thought nothing of—every one does it. And strange though it seems to their friends at home, they do their work, when bodily health and strength allow, not only without

the feeling of martyrdom, but with no small measure of zest and enjoyment. We have known young ladies deliberately preferring to rough it in the colonies, after having had pretty full experience of what that means, because they could not bring their minds to the insipidity of a drawing-room life. Probably one of the most wholesome changes in public sentiment in the old country would be rooting up the notion, that for an educated person, any of the harder kinds of manual labour is discreditable. Of course, it is not to be expected or desired that those who are peculiarly qualified for mental labour are to devote their energies to ploughing and digging. All that we contend for is, that the notion of ploughing and digging being, in all circumstances, unworthy of men of educated and cultivated minds is largely founded on prejudice and fashion, and that there is no reason, when the working classes shall be better educated, why they should seek to make their escape from such employments. The gardener need not be ashamed of his implements because he has become a botanist, and can enter with great zest and eagerness into the many fascinating questions connected with the structure and physiology of plants; or because he has learnt to admire the wonderful beauty of nature, and to comprehend something of the language in which she speaks to him in her ever-changing forms and aspects of beauty. The farmer need not take less interest in his farm because he knows something of chemistry, or the farm labourer either; or because they can enter intelligently into experiments with manures, and plants, and breeds, and find new interest in watching whether the results correspond to their expectations, and in trying to find out the reason if they do not. The old cathedrals of England and other countries—such marvellous products of taste and genius—are believed by many to have been built under the direction of men who developed the design as they executed the work. It seems to have been in the actual use of the chisel and mallet that they devised many of those exquisite pieces of work, on which the eye of generation after generation is never weary of gazing. The pencil alone would probably have been insufficient to bring out the beauties which the union of taste and mechanical skill enabled them to produce. And who knows but through the cultivation of taste our practical builders in the future may

light upon new forms of beauty that will rival the old cathedrals themselves?

It is hardly necessary to remark how much a life of labour may be lightened and brightened by moral and spiritual qualities. The spirit of industry, carefully and habitually exercised, has a wonderful effect in making toil pleasant. We have only to make up our minds to a labour, and it is comparatively easy. But let us be continually dwelling on the hardship of the thing, we prepare a bitter draught for ourselves as often as we return to the toil. Or let us be for ever interrupting the regular course of things, going off, it may be, into a fit of drinking, and returning to labour only when the supplies fail, life becomes a scene of irregular painful jerking, and is filled with misery. Need we add how much a good conscience toward God and toward man lightens labour and sweetens life? And if a man be provident in youth, and make hay while the sun shines, he will have an additional source of contentment. But most of all, the burden of hard labour will be wonderfully relieved, if he has been attracted by the invitation, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." What can be compared to the feeling that God is our Father, wisely and kindly controlling our lot, and providing for us many blessed compensations when the natural sources of enjoyment run dry? Life then becomes an unbroken Sabbath—a time of fellowship with the kind Father, whose face, when we come near, and see it reflected in Christ, is so full of love, and so wonderfully fitted to kindle the spirit of trust.

Not that the compensations of religion ought to draw off working men from reasonable efforts to better their earthly lot. No class of people ever drew more solace from the compensations of religion than the Uncle Toms and other devout slaves of America; but no one would say that for that reason they ought to have been content with slavery. To rectify injustice, to remedy wrong, to lighten burdens that crush and kill, are duties to which the very instincts of our nature impel us. But when injustice, wrong, and heavy burdens cannot be got rid of, or wholly got rid of, there is still a resource for God's children—faith assures them that their Father's love never changes, and gives them bright glimpses of the Eternal Home.

W. G. BLAIKIE.

CUSTOMS AND CURIOSITIES OF MADAGASCAR.

PART II.

THE form of government in Madagascar was, and we may say is, patriarchal. The unit, or simple element, is the family; and just as the father is the ruler of his children and dependants, so in a village the head man, along with the elders or old men, exercised the duties of magistrates. The king, again, was the great father of his subjects; and to the present day the sovereign is addressed as the father and mother of the people; and he in turn, reversing the compliment, speaks of the people as his father and mother. Thus, when the present Queen of Madagascar was crowned, addressing the people, she said, "O ye under heaven here assembled, I have father and mother, having you; therefore may you live, and may God bless you." Then, referring to the judges and officers, and explaining their relation to the people, she said, "I have made them fathers of the people, and leaders to teach them wisdom." The Malagasy are firm believers in the doctrine of divine right. The sovereign is, in their eyes, in very truth God's vicegerent. Indeed, until within the few past years, it was customary to salute him as God; or God seen by the eye. The late Queen Rasoahery was the first who forbade these blasphemous appellations. The very belongings of the sovereign are treated with respect. It is no uncommon thing, while being carried about the streets, for your bearers suddenly to run off to some side path to be out of the way. On looking for the cause of this, it will be found that a small procession is passing along, consisting of a forerunner with a spear, who duly shouts out to the passengers to "Clear the way!" Behind are two or four men, it may be, carrying water-pots filled with water for royal use, and followed again by an officer armed with a spear. The summons to get out of the way is obeyed by a rush to the side of the road, and the passers-by stand uncovered until the procession has passed. This is to prevent the water, or whatever else it may be, being bewitched. The queen, and some of the higher members of the royal family who have principalities in distant parts of the country, in addition to a good many other feudal rights, which I have got no time to mention, are entitled to the rump of every bullock that is killed in the island. The *actual rump* is conveyed to officers appointed to receive it. This is a custom curious to all,

and is deeply interesting to the student of antiquities. Why, the very name anatomists give this part is suggestive. It is called the *sacrum*, or sacred part,—the part devoted to the gods in Greece and Rome. But tracing this up to a higher source, we find that in the Levitical law, this part was specially directed to be offered up to the Lord. Thus we read in the third chapter of Leviticus:—"And if his offering for a sacrifice of peace offering unto the Lord be of the flock, male or female, he shall offer it without blemish. If he offer a lamb for his offering, then shall he offer it before the Lord. And he shall lay his hand upon the head of his offering, and kill it before the tabernacle of the congregation: and Aaron's sons shall sprinkle the blood thereof round about upon the altar. And he shall offer of the sacrifice of the peace offering, an offering made by fire unto the Lord; the fat thereof, and the whole rump, it shall be taken off hard by the backbone; and the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards. . . . And the priest shall burn it upon the altar: it is the food of the offering made by fire unto the Lord" (ver. 6—11).

We may just mention, also, that the same part of the fowl is usually given by children or servants to their father, or superiors.

When the queen goes abroad she is attended by above a thousand soldiers and a great number of camp attendants. She is carried in a palanquin, as the roads are too bad to allow carriages to be employed. When a carriage which had been presented to Radama I. was carried up to the capital, he seated himself in it; and instead of being drawn in it by his faithful subjects, they lifted it, wheels and all, and he had the satisfaction of enjoying a carriage drive after a fashion altogether novel. The palanquin is preceded by attendants dancing, shouting, and singing, with music.

At coronations and other great occasions the leading people testify their allegiance in three ways. One of these is doubtless of great antiquity. As a sign of submission, they present to the sovereign a piece of money or silver, called *hasina*, or holy money. This practice of making submission by presenting of silver is referred to in Psalm lxxviii. 30:—"Rebuke the company of spearmen, the multitude of the bulls, with the calves of the people, *till every one submit*."

himself with pieces of silver: scatter thou the people that delight in war."

Another mode of testifying allegiance is by a ceremony which they call *milèfon' omby*, i.e. "the spearing the bullock." A calf is killed, and its head, tail, and legs are cut off and are placed in the reverse position in reference to the trunk, to that which they held naturally. The person taking the oath stands with a spear in his hand, while a judge administers the oath containing imprecations that he may become mangled like this bullock if he should prove unfaithful to his oath. The oath is ratified by the person being sworn plunging the spear into the carcass of the animal. This is regarded as the most solemn of all ways of professing allegiance.

The other mode is styled *mièly ràno*, or striking water. After having thrown in various worthless substances into water, whether a lake or river, or water taken from these, and placed in a canoe on land, an oath is repeated, and the water is then struck by a spear. I have seen these various ceremonies at the coronation of their sovereigns, and so far as I know they are peculiar to the Malagasy.

The Malagasy were not without a correct although faint knowledge of the true God,—a knowledge they had doubtless brought with them when they came to the island, and which had probably been becoming more and more shadowy, and had been gradually losing its power over the life of the people. The supreme being they called *Andriamànitra*—a word of somewhat doubtful etymology, probably to be translated "the king of heaven," or as frequently he is called *Andrianàhary*, or creating king, or *Zanahary*, possibly the son-creator. Could this be a faint ray of light from some early revelation of a truth which natural theology never taught, that the Son is the creator? "By whom also He made the worlds." I merely throw it out as a question which has often pressed itself upon my mind. That they had some conception of God's power, omniscience, and justice is manifest from the proverbs and traditional sayings handed down by their ancestors. I am afraid that these truths were not, however, so much preserved as fossilized in these proverbs. Take for example such proverbs as these: "Think not of the secluded valley, but of God overhead," breathing the sentiment of the biblical statement, "Thou God seest me." Then again the folly of the would-be atheist is taught thus: "He who says in his heart that there is no God, is like a man who leaps blindfolded," which is just to the same import as the state-

ment, "The fool hath said in his heart that there is no God." Then we find the fear of God urged as a motive to avoid evil actions: "Cheat not the simple (or foolish), for God is to be feared." Again God's sovereignty is wonderfully recognised in another proverb which says, "The wilfulness of man is overruled by the Creator, for God alone is the disposer." God's forbearance with evil is spoken of, again, as follows: "Nothing is unknown to God, but He wills to overlook evil." Another proverb says, "Better be guilty in the sight of men than be guilty before God." This seems to suggest the idea of future rewards and punishments. That they had some glimmering of this truth, however faint, seems confirmed by one of their fables. "There was a man, it is said, named *Andrian-anarand-raini-sy-reniny*, that is, the man taught by his father and mother, whose wife's name was *Ratsihitanandro*, that is, 'the not seeing day'—both of them evidently allegorical names. This man being sick, he sent to inquire of the dead who lay in a row of tombs somewhere near, concerning the state of the departed, whether it was happy or the reverse. There were five tombs placed side by side, and beginning at the newest, the one situated to the south, the messenger puts the question to the inmates. The dead replied, with true Malagasy caution, 'Go and ask those in the next tomb to the north, for they have lain there two years, and we have been dead but one.' The messenger then went to the second tomb, by whom he was in the same manner referred to the third, who in turn begged them to call on the fourth, who sent them to the fifth for the desired information. The dead in this tomb replied in these words: 'Difficult indeed is the going out of life; but when the life is departed the good doers shall see good, and the evil-doers shall see evil.'" These proverbs, containing fragments of real truth, had become to the Malagasy nothing more than sayings of their ancestors, a sort of shadowy tradition—faith in these things had almost died out. And these truths had ultimately become petrified, as I have said, in their proverbs; but even these petrified remains of early traditions are to us deeply interesting, as casting light upon the religious condition of man in remote antiquity. Human sacrifices, widow-burning, self-torture, or destruction were no parts of their religion. They had idols, it is true, but these were not unlike the *Teraphim* that we read of in the time of the patriarchs—such as Rachel stole with her from Laban her father. The worst

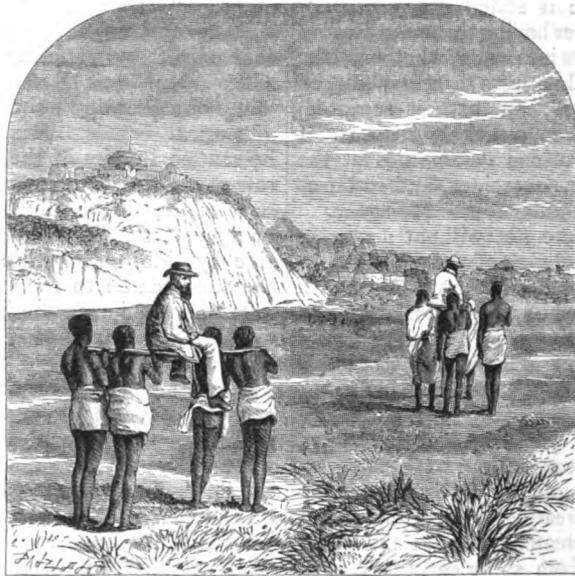
feature of the Malagasy religion was a belief in witchcraft, lucky and unlucky days, and divination. To discover whether any one had been guilty of witchcraft, trial by ordeal was used. A poisonous nut called the *tangèna* was administered; if the patients recovered they were looked upon as clear of the crime. The belief in lucky and unlucky seasons was very strong, and is so still. Children born during one of their months were exposed on the road, and a herd of bullocks driven over the place. If (as frequently enough happened) the infant was killed, then this was proof that it had been a bewitched, dangerous thing, whose destruction was to be regarded as a blessing; if (as also occasionally was the case) the bullocks avoided it, and it survived the trial unhurt, it was looked upon as a sacred child, whose good omens were beyond all question. I remember a case in point that occurred only a few years ago, in the time of the late Queen. One of the princesses gave birth to a child just a few hours before the expiration of the unlucky month. When the event

was announced next day to her Majesty she was indignant that the affair had not been postponed for so short a time, and soundly rated some of the hospital attendants for professional incompetence or negligence. They appeased their offended sovereign by promising better behaviour in future. The Malagasy placed great faith in divination, and the diviners were consulted upon every important question. The evil results of such superstitions may readily be imagined, and were never better illustrated than in the history of Madagascar.

Connected with the religious beliefs of the Malagasy, there is one other custom deserving notice, as particularly in-

teresting both to the student of biblical antiquities and to the ethnologist. This is called the *fàditra*. A *fàditra* is anything ordered by the diviner to be cast away or destroyed in order to avert evil, as sickness or death. The *fàditra* might be a fowl, a sheep, or even a bullock. Over this *fàditra*, a certain form of service was said, of which this is a part—"And the thanksgiving being finished, this on the right side is exchanged for the life of the sick man, is exchanged that it may be exchanged, is substituted that it may be substituted. This is devoted a hundred times, a thousand times, to avert all the evil from the sick person." This animal

is then carried or driven to a distant desert place, in the hope that it may go bearing away the evil from the person for whom it is the substitute. This is strikingly analogous in several respects to the Jewish ceremony of the scapegoat. Messrs. Freeman and Jones, in their interesting work on the persecutions, relate a remarkable instance of the observance of this or a similar custom. Andriamihaja, the prime minister



Palanquin Bearers.

of Ranavalona I., having fallen into disgrace, and anticipating death, applied to a diviner and inquired what would be his fate. The diviner told him he would die a violent death—blood would be shed. He asked how he might avert the doom. The diviner gave him little reason to expect that anything could avert it, but directed him to mount a bullock, carrying on his head a vessel full of blood, and as the animal moved along he was to spill the blood on his head, and then send it away into the wilderness.

Leaving their distinctly religious beliefs and ceremonies, we shall now describe some of their social customs, several of which have so much of the religious element in them.

that they might appropriately enough have been considered in that connection. The way in which the Malagasy observe their New Year is altogether worthy of notice. The year is a lunar one, that is, twelve moons, so that it does not correspond to our year. The New Year is celebrated by a feast called the *fandroana*, or washing.

On the last day of the year, the people visit their relations; children, dependants, and slaves, visit their parents or superiors. The visitor brings a small piece of money, which he presents to the head of the house. The master of the house takes water, and sprinkles a little on the heads of his family, saying, "Blessed be ye of the Lord; may we live to see a thousand New Years, and may our family never be broken up."

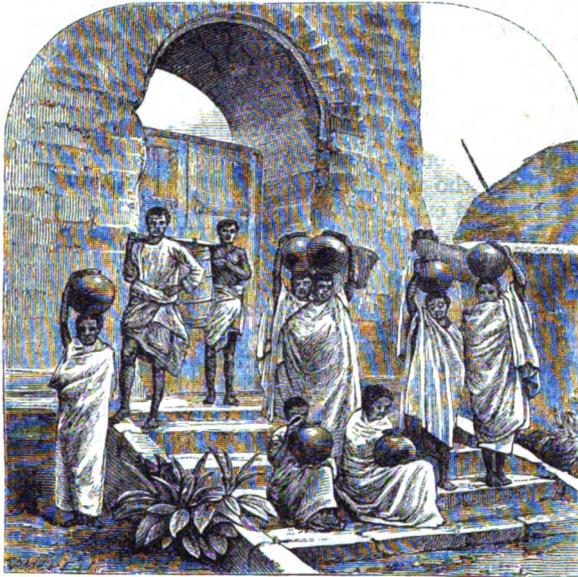
In a similar way the chiefs and officers visit the Queen in the evening, to be present at the ceremony of bathing. I may just relate what I witnessed myself on one of these occasions on which I was present.

The ceremony took place in the hall of the great palace, a room of about eighty by seventy feet. When I entered I found that it was already filled. The Queen sat on a couch at the north end of the room, surrounded by some of her family and her chief officers. A portable hearth, made by filling a wooden frame with clay, had been placed not far from where she sat, and a good fire of wood was being kept up by some of her attendants. Upon the fire were several earthen pots, some filled with water for the bath, others with rice for supper. The water having been heated, the Queen accompanied by some of her maids retired behind an improvised screen, of scarlet cloth, held up by several of her attendants. The bath is said to be of silver, but I don't know whether it be so

II. N.S.

or not. After a short time the firing of twenty-one cannons announced to the city that she had come out of her bath. She then appeared from behind the screen, dressed in her robes, and carrying a rude sort of calabash, went through the hall sprinkling the people, and saying, "May God bless you, and may we all see a thousand New Years." She then returned to her couch, and rice and honey were distributed, and pieces of banana leaves were supplied to us instead of spoons. After supper the chiefs and officers arose in turn, and presented *hasina* (money in token of allegiance), assuring her of their loyalty and wishing her long life. The Englishmen

present did the same. Several hymns were sung, and the company then broke up. The same evening just after sunset, the children tie bunches of dried grass to a stick and setting them on fire, run about singing and waving these torches. The sight is beautiful as the whole country is instantaneously illuminated by this primitive kind of fireworks. This has been supposed to be a relic of the fire-worship of the east, just



Malagasy Water-carriers.

as the bonfires still lit up in some parts of England on Midsummer Eve, is traced to the same source.

The next morning a number of bullocks, free from blemish, with symmetrical markings, and properly twisted horns, are taken into the palace-yard to be blessed and sprinkled by the Queen. These are then given away to the chiefs, to be killed. The people generally throughout the country kill their bullocks, and it was formerly the custom to take reeds and, dipping them in the blood, place them at the door-posts of their houses. No one can fail to be reminded by this of the Jewish passover. The bullocks, having been cut up, are distributed amongst friends.

ANDREW DAVIDSON.

THE GUIDING OF GOD'S PROVIDENCE.

BY THE DEAN OF CHESTER.

"In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths."—Prov. iii. 6.

THE truth of God comprehends many parts, and one part is impressed more vividly on one mind, and another on another. This is an inevitable consequence of variety of temperament, and of variety in the experience of life.

It happens in my case—partly for reasons which I cannot explain, partly for reasons which I could explain, if this were the proper opportunity—that the doctrine of a Special Providence has been impressed upon me as a very sure and a very comforting truth. And no one will deny that the consideration of this subject is very suitable for our thoughts on Sunday. A writer, too, who desires to help such Sunday Meditations, gains this advantage in choosing a topic on which he himself feels strongly—that he may expect to speak warmly, even through the letters on the printed page, to the hearts of those who read.

It is essential that I should explain at the outset what I mean by the doctrine of a Special Providence. I mean much more than this, which no one but an Atheist will dispute, namely, that the general affairs of the world are governed by a wise, almighty, and benevolent Creator. I mean that God's guiding and controlling hand is over every step of every man; I mean that each of us is as much under that guidance and control, as if he were the solitary object of God's care upon the earth; I mean, in fact, the truth which is so often expressed in the Book of Proverbs—that, however carelessly we may live, however much we may deem ourselves the creatures of accident, "the lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord"—*—that, however much men may trust to their own wisdom and discretion, after all it comes to this, that "a man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps"†—and that, if we live piously and religiously, the promise of the proverb is fulfilled along with its precept, "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths."

It is, of course, this pious and religious view of the doctrine—this happy, cheerful, contented, practical view—to which I wish to invite attention. I am far from saying that there are no difficulties in the subject. But, on the whole, the difficulties are theoretical.

Difficulties indeed there are. You might,

for instance, ask how it is that a Being so great as the Everlasting God should take an interest in the concerns of a creature so insignificant as any child of man. But such a question indicates a misconception of the true greatness of God, which consists in embracing the minutest, as well as the grandest, objects of creation. Go and look at the hedgerows in the spring season of the year, and you will discover that the same bright sunshine which is preparing the harvest and the orchard, is giving beauty to the meaneast flower.

Again, it might be asked (and with more reason), "How is the superintendence of my individual concerns to be reconciled with the direction of the great movements of human society?" There is certainly more in this question than we are able thoroughly to answer. But perplexities of the same kind exist in reference to the contrivances of man himself. When an uninstructed person pays his first visit to one of our great manufactories, one of the first questions he is likely to ask is this: "How is it that the various motions, the apparently conflicting motions, of all those separate parts are in harmony with the grand movement of the whole, and safely conduce to its general result?" We must not be surprised, if the machinery of God's Providence is as intricate as the machinery invented by man.

But a further and more difficult question might be asked. What are we to say when the *sinful* actions of men are the links in the chain of God's Providence? Is God the author of sin? and if not, how can sin be the instrument for fulfilling His purposes? Here, indeed, is a problem which defies complete solution in our present state of knowledge.

This dilemma may be stated in two very different tempers of mind. It may be propounded as a mere intellectual puzzle by those who cavil at the difficulties of religion. With such persons it is, perhaps, best not to argue at all, but to concede the whole case at once. To them we might speak thus: It is indeed true that Jesus Christ was crucified for your salvation, "delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God," and it is true also that Judas was responsible for his sin, that he "fell by transgression," and went "to his own place."† Thus we hold up the difficulty in the most startling form in which

* Prov. xvi. 33.

† Prov. xvi. 9.

* Acts ii. 23.

† Acts i. 25.

it was ever presented, and leave the matter where we find it, with all its invitations of mercy, and all its admonitions of judgment.

But the same difficulty presses sometimes, in a very practical shape, upon persons of a totally different character. It may be asked in a sincerely anxious, desponding, tender spirit, "How can I look up with any confidence to the hand of God's Providence over me, when I am deeply conscious of the false steps which I have taken, when I know that my sins have brought me *out of the path*, which God Himself marked for me?" In reply to a question asked in this spirit, something, I hope, will be suggested in the course of the general consideration of the subject, to which I now proceed. Meanwhile, this may be said with confidence, that though Divine Providence does point out the path of human duty, yet man does not necessarily lose the blessing of that guidance, even when he has deviated from that path. God does not, indeed, make Himself responsible for our sins; but He does make Himself responsible, if we place ourselves on His side, for bringing ultimate good out of our worst evil. It is His own word, that "ALL things shall work together for good to them that love Him."*

Now the subject of a Special Providence may be conveniently considered in three points of view: first, in reference to the future; next, in reference to the present; and thirdly, in reference to the past.

1. I begin with *the future*; and on this aspect of the subject I shall dwell at greatest length. I address myself in the first instance, and chiefly, to the young, who are always in the habit of looking forward; and, on the whole, we would not wish it to be otherwise. The habit of looking backward, when the journey is just beginning, is hardly natural. And I am sure that the last thing I would wish is, to damp any innocent expectations of happiness. But remember, you who are so full of sanguine hopes, that after all it is God who will direct your steps. The accomplishment of your purposes depend on Him. Let those purposes, then, be such as He approves. If your hearts are set on mere earthly aggrandisement—still more, if they are set on what you know to be sin—it is in vain to speak to you now of the guiding of a Special Providence. You do not feel the need of any such guiding. Before you can welcome this doctrine, you must experience some of the sudden checks of life, you must suffer some bitter sorrow. And possibly God has some such discipline in store for you.

* Rom. viii. 28.

Or, perhaps, if you persevere in going where you are going now, a still shorter path is before you, with a still more abrupt termination. Remember the death of Ahab. He went disguised into the battle, and none of the whole Syrian army knew which was the king of Israel. But God's Providence was controlling that battle. "A certain man drew a bow at a venture."* He knew no more than the arrow which he shot whose life would be taken, if any life at all. But God guided that Syrian's hand, and directed the flight of that arrow, so that it struck and fastened itself in the joints of Ahab's harness. "So the king died" in the midst of his sinful career. There are many such cases in our own day, though, for the present, not recorded in any books of Kings or Chronicles.

But I would rather suppose that your desires are, on the whole, for what is good. I will suppose you to be prompt and obedient, amiable and cheerful, such, in fact, as Joseph was when his father sent him to visit his brethren and their flocks. Yet, even so, I cannot too earnestly entreat you to foster the sense of God's presence and the faith in His superintending care. You do not know how soon you may need this truth to support you. You do not know whether some small incident may not turn the whole current of your life. Watch the steps of Joseph as he goes from the vale of Hebron over the hills to Shechem. When arrived there he could not find his brethren; a man told him that they were gone with their flocks to Dothan: "and Joseph went after his brethren, and found them in Dothan."†

Now it was this little circumstance, viz., the moving of a few Arab shepherds (for so we may truly call them) from one pasture ground to another which decided all the future course of Joseph's life, and, indeed, determined the character of the first momentous passages of Jewish history; for in leaving Shechem and going to Dothan they came across the line which the Ishmaelite caravans took on the way from Gilead to Egypt. It happened that some Ishmaelite traders were passing that way with their camels, when Judah and Reuben and the rest were debating what they should do with their brother. You know the rest. You know what sufferings Joseph went through at that time and afterwards. It is true he became a great man in the end—more eminent, more justly respected, more widely useful, than the most ambitious and sanguine amongst you can ever hope to be. And this is one of the reasons why his

* 1 Kings xxii. 34.

† Gen. xxxvii. 17.

example is so instructive in regard to the point in question. Joseph desired to serve God, and he did serve Him; but he was led by a path which he could not possibly have predicted or imagined. So will it be, more or less, with you who are looking forward. May you feel in your own heart and experience the power of that truth which was expressed, again and again, in reference to Jacob's son, "the Lord was with Joseph!"

But this looking forward is not always attended with sanguine feelings. Sometimes the heart sinks when we think of the future. Few trials are more distressing than those which may be experienced by a conscientious and scrupulous mind at those times of life when new and active duties of some kind must be entered on, and yet various paths are open. I am not supposing the alternative of two modes of self-gratification. I am not supposing you to be at a turn of the road where Ambition points one way and Avarice another. These are the Devil's sign-posts, which it is better quietly to pass by. They lead to nothing but disappointment. I am assuming an honest desire to do right. I am imagining a man to be looking on two paths which lie before him, with strong reasons in favour of each, and feeling that the course of his whole life will be differently determined as he takes the one or the other. He asks himself, "Which is the better of these courses?" Various considerations must be taken into account before this can be decided. "Which am I most fit for?" This is sometimes a difficult question to decide for oneself. He asks the advice of friends; but he finds that, with all their kind intentions, they do not exactly understand the nature of his perplexities. He analyzes his motives. Here he is more baffled than ever. It is a great trial, the wretchedness of which is known only to those who have felt it.

Of course each case has its own special circumstances. Here I can speak only in general terms. One rule which is sometimes given for such occasions is that you should follow the course which involves the most self-denial. This rule is often a safe one, but it is by no means infallible. I believe no principle is so important at such a time as a firm faith in God's superintending, guiding, special Providence. If due consideration is given to all peculiar circumstances, due deference paid to the advice of really wise friends, due caution exercised with regard to preponderating temptations, I believe no rule will be found so applicable as that which is contained in the words—"In all thy ways acknow-

ledge Him." Look to Him in prayer; expect His guidance; desire to follow it. Then there may indeed be perplexity for a time; but you will find, when you reconsider this passage of your life, that in some mysterious way God *has* indeed "directed your steps."

2. If now we turn to contemplate this doctrine of a Special Providence in reference to *the present*, it is evident that, when it is thoroughly believed, it must act as a strong cordial and a soothing medicine in many of the trials to which we are all exposed. A very few words will be sufficient for the consideration both of this and of the last part of our subject.

One temptation, to which most of us are liable, is a certain impatience of our present position if we think it is below what we deserve, and a sensitive irritation of mind if we do not receive from others the consideration which we regard as our due. How great a relief under such temptation is provided by the doctrine of Providence! "Here God has placed me. This then is the best place. Here let me remain till He calls me away. The pillar of the cloud and the pillar of the fire are for the present standing still. When they move I must move; but not till then. Let me do my duty cheerfully, and meet my trials manfully here where I am." How much of that restless ambition which makes men miserable is put to rest! How many mortifications are avoided, when men can thus "commune with their own hearts and be still!"

This state of mind leads to the conclusion that a lowly condition is usually the best. Many of those who read this must remember what is said of the Valley of Humiliation in the second part of the "Pilgrim's Progress." "It is the best and most useful piece of ground in all these parts," says the author. "I have also known," he continues, "many labouring men that have got good estates in this Valley of Humiliation, for God resisteth the proud, but gives more grace to the humble. Indeed it is a very fruitful soil and doth bring forth by handfuls. Some also have wished that the next way to their father's house was here, that they might be troubled no more with either hills or mountains to go over; but the way is the way, and there is an end." And then follows that happy song of the shepherd-boy, which there is a strong temptation to quote; but the reader may be tempted to refer to the passage. No man who is wise will be very anxious to rise from a lowly to an eminent position. David was troubled with few cares while he led a shepherd's life; but there was a sad emphasis

in his prayer, when he had worn the crown, "Lord, remember David and *all his trouble!*"*

And if a firm belief in Providence is a safeguard against ambition and discontent, it is a true solace in the dark day of affliction: and the dark day will surely come. At such a time, it is an indescribable comfort to have faith in a Special Providence, and to be able to say, "This is God's hand. He is guiding me still, and proving me, and preparing me for better days to come." And even when affliction takes its worst form; when self-accusations rise up within the breast; when we know that *sin* has paved the road which led us into misery; even then the penitent heart may be assured of the best and closest providential guidance, and, acknowledging God even now, may receive of the promise, "He shall direct thee." Nay, He hath been directing thee even to the point of thy present suffering and discipline. Thy case can hardly be worse than that of Joseph's brethren. Never spake conscience more truly than when they said one to another, "We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us." But never did words more truly express, both the forgiveness of brotherly love, and the certainty of God's mysterious Providence, than the words of Joseph himself, "Be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life. . . . So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God."†

3. Most true it is, that sin leads us into misery; but it is equally true that, wherever we are, God's Providence has brought us thither. To solve the difficulty theoretically is impossible. But the truly penitent and disciplined heart accepts both truths, and finds in one the motive for humiliation, as it finds in the other ground of holy confidence. As life goes on, and the religious principle works deeper, and experience is increased, the sense of Providence is more intimately realised. Great comfort is derived from the retrospect of circumstances which were formerly perplexing. What was gloomy in the future, and oppressively dark in the present, becomes clear, when viewed in *the past*.

When our younger days are over, the times of retrospect come frequently. We look back on some of the places where two roads met, and when we were forced to take one or the other. And again we ask, "Did I take the right one?" Then perhaps many

things come to view, which we did not see before. We see that the path which we did *not* take would have led us very far astray. And sins also come in view in reference to the path which we *did* take—false motives not distinctly realised at the time—selfishness, worldliness, vanity, ambition, even when on the whole we wished to do right. But as our sins become more evident, the guiding of Providence becomes more evident too. The shame is ours, the glory is His. I seem to come back again and again to this point. A good illustration of it was once brought before my notice; and I believe I shall be pardoned for adducing it.

On a voyage in a sailing vessel across the Bay of Biscay, from the north-west of Spain to the western part of France, which is a notoriously dangerous coast, every precaution was taken according to the ordinary methods, and even peculiar care was exercised, to keep the ship well to the westward. The result, however, was, that when the first flash from a lighthouse on the coast was seen in a dark and stormy night, we found that we were close in with the shore, with the wind and the current urging us on the rocks. It was an anxious night. But by God's blessing on skillful management, the sailors worked out slowly and safely to windward, and we were in the open sea before daybreak. And why had we been in danger at all? It was ascertained afterwards that some iron guns were in such a position on board that they drew aside the needle of the compass, and prevented it from pointing quite truly. It is well known to scientific men that the question of compasses in ships which contain iron is a difficult subject. And a similar difficulty exists in reference to man's spiritual voyage. Even when there is, on the whole, the steady desire to do right, some disturbance may arise from the power of a prevailing motive. Conscience itself, the moral compass, even while we obey it, may be under an influence which causes it to deviate. And yet God leads those safely through spiritual trial whose desire is to serve Him, notwithstanding their infirmities, and exercises His gracious care to keep their souls from fatal harm. Such is oft the Christian's experience as he passes through life.

And then comes the last retrospect of all. Moses prepares in the plains of Moab for his predicted departure, and looks back on the long forty years.* Joshua gathers the tribes in Shechem, and resumes the history from the call of Abraham to the end of the cam-

* Ps. cxxxii. 1.

† Gen. xlii. 21; xlv. 5, 8.

* Deut. i. 5.

paigns which fulfilled the promise.* Never have two lives been more varied in incident, more full of downright hard work, more entangled with cases of difficulty and perplexity, than were the lives of Moses and Joshua. We all know how they spoke at the last of God's providential care. Perhaps one of the delights of the saved and glorified soul will be to look back on the path which it has travelled, from the first dawning of its human life till the arrival at its heavenly home, and to note how every step has been protected, guided, and blest. Even as an earthly traveller would feel delight, after a long and intricate journey, if his whole path could be set before him, and he could review with his eyes every scene and every incident—all the unexpected turns, the places where he sank with fatigue, the places where he rested or met with companions who lightened the toil, the bare mountain-side where all traces of roadway appeared to be lost, the dark wood which was full of dangers, the stepping-stones where he crossed the brook, the "green pastures" by "still waters," which came just when refreshment was most needed.†

But I must not detain the reader longer. The general truth which I have been endeavouring to illustrate is this,—that God guides all our steps. This is true of every man. The careless, ungodly man does not

know this, or, at least, does not think about it, and therefore does not perceive it. But the godly man believes it, and finds comfort and strength in the belief. God's hand is hidden from those who will not see it, but "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him."* The Almighty's presence is with us all; but the *tokens* of it are visible in exact proportion to our watchfulness and prayer. If we are bent on following our own way, or what we fondly deem our own way, then the pillar of fire grows dim, and the cloud is lost in the general haze of the desert through which we are passing. But if we live close to God, He will make His Providence felt. The cloud in the day will move before us, and will kindle into a fire to guide us through the darkest night.

So it must of necessity be. Our *sense* of Divine Providence must be in proportion to our capacity for receiving it, to our sense of spiritual need, to our sense of God's goodness in Christ. Live, then, pray that you may ever live, within what has been well called "the inner circle of God's Providence."† So will you look forward with confidence to the future: so will you have peace in the present: so will you be thankful for the past.

J. S. HOWSON.

* Ps. xxv. 14.

† See a letter in Alexander Knox's "Remains," vol. 2, p. 256.

* Josh. xxiv. 1-14.

† Ps. xxiii. 2.

THE SILENT HOUR.

WHO has not felt the awful power
Of darkness and the silent hour?
Unseen the objects ranged around,
Unheard the very breathing's sound,
The body's sense of being gone,
The spirit lives, alone—alone!

Yet not alone; for on my bed,
More deeply for that silence dread,
I feel Thy presence, Lord, and prove
That 'tis in Thee I live and move;
And in the darkness I can sing:
'Tis but the shadow from Thy wing.

O ye, who say there is no God,
Have ye no silence in your road?
Are there no watches in your night,
Wherein ye quail, and yearn for light?
Ah! tell us truly, can ye dare
The silence, or the darkness bear?

Confess!—with you 'tis oft, I ween,
As erst with some in woodland scene,

When lo! because we missed our way,
While sank the beams of parting day,
"Where no fear was," they were afraid,
Yea, trembled, and were sore dismayed!

And though ye say, we shall not see
That fabled Judge, yet strong is He
To abase "the pride of evil men;"
Too late to give Him glory then!
Therefore, ere come those moments dim,
('Tis His own bidding) trust in Him!

O God our Maker, in the night
Thou givest songs, Thou sendest light:
By sorrow's smart our joys increase;
The blood of sprinkling speaketh peace:
Awake the harp! awake the voice!
We trust Thee, Saviour, and rejoice!

HENRY DOWNTON.

* The allusion is to a chance excursion made in company with certain distinguished and enthusiastic disciples of Auguste Comte, some twelve years ago, on a lovely summer evening, in the neighbourhood of the Lake of Geneva. The effect on them of sudden nightfall where there was no possible danger, is not exaggerated.

DEAN ALFORD.

DEAN ALFORD'S life is one of the chosen few that will bear the strictest scrutiny, and reward the labour. The more carefully we study it, the more clearly we see that his greatness lay close to his goodness. From those early student days, when he so honestly mourned over his "inconstancy," down to the period of full maturity, when he set himself to the great works which gained him a world-wide reputation, we find that the chief source of his strength lay in a strict sense of duty, sweetened by an unaffected desire to gratify those he loved. If some self-consciousness mingled itself with the finer traits in a character that owed little to suitable childish companionship, we need not wonder much. Alford tells us how he fortified himself against this result, and made up for the sad lack of the much-craved brothers' and sisters' society, by correspondence with his cousins. How the quick, ardent boy, disinclined to set study and full of vagrant tastes and curiosities that sought manifold outlets, formed himself into the systematic worker, is well worthy of study. Never perhaps was there a man who had in this respect more to contend against, or who contended more successfully. Facile within its own range, and apt at throwing off trifles, his mind was prone to repose in first results, and to eschew ordered labour and the pain of frequent reference and revision. Yet his great works were precisely such as show these results in fullest measure. Had he been the son of a wealthy gentleman, with abundant means for travel, and no incentive to hard study or steady labour, it is perhaps not too much to say that he might have subsided into the self-satisfied dilettante. But he had to work his way, and his early upbringing—simple, orderly, devout, subdued by a sad sense of loss, yet brightened always by Christian hope and example—supplied him with the best impulses. Astronomers tell us that we still see the light of stars that have ceased to exist. Who can doubt that the young Alford thrown into circumstances that so soon tended to draw a veil of gravity over the natural buoyancy of his temperament, became a medium through which the light of his dead mother's character might the more directly reach us? For the finest elements of Dean Alford's nature were after all interpretive. He took on fine impressions readily. And if culture had done much for him in this respect, grace

had done yet more. He caught the note of spiritual and moral excellence as though by instinct. This instinct it was that enabled him to be such a powerful conciliating influence. The more closely that we contemplate him—the more we try to see him in the varied aspects of his character—the more do we discover how little of the mere ecclesiastic he was, and how, by reason of his wide catholicity and his consistent illustration of Christian manliness, he claims the regard of earnest men of every church. It is with a view of promoting this end that we proceed to outline the main facts of his life, as presented, with the tact of wifely love, in the biography recently issued.*

Henry Alford was born in London in 1810. His father was a special pleader—a man of frank and cheerful temper and noticeable decision of character, which is attested by the circumstance that, on the death of his wife, about four months after the little Henry's birth, he abandoned the profession in which he had just begun to have promise of success, and entered the Church. He was ordained deacon in 1813, at Quebec Chapel, London, with which his son's name was in after years to be so closely associated. That the early death of his wife made a deep and permanent impression on him, is proved by a remark in a short autobiography by Henry: "I knew very little of my mother, as my father seldom or never mentioned her to me, unwilling, doubtless, to tear open afresh a wound which time may have begun to heal,"—which passage is significantly followed by the touch, "*They say I am very like her.*"

Whilst his father was yet unsettled, the boy resided for some time at Tamworth, under the care of his grandmother and aunts, who, womanlike, may have done something to encourage the precocity which he soon began to show. When not more than five years old, he wrote little histories, and entertained himself with selecting and copying out texts of Scripture—a suggestive forecast of his future determinations. When between eight and nine his father began to teach him Latin, in which he speedily made marked progress. During the few years that his father was curate, first at Steeple-Ashton, and then at Wraxall, great care seems to have been devoted to the boy's training. But the father's health failing, he was compelled to go to the

* "Life, Journals, and Letters of Henry Alford, D.D., late Dean of Canterbury." Edited by his Widow. Rivingtons.

Continent, and Henry was sent to school at Charmouth, where he was latterly taught by the congregational minister, Mr. Jeanes, to whom he made reference when, so late as the appearance of "Felix Holt," he took occasion to protest against the style of talk put into the mouth of Mr. Lyons, as a typical dissenter. The coast between Charmouth and Lyme Regis is very fine, and made such an impression on young Alford's mind, that many years afterwards he wrote of it with an eloquent enthusiasm. Evidences are abundant of his early love for all natural things—especially flowers—and of a keen, quiet sense of beauty that could dwell long on a loved object. For a time he was at school in Hammersmith; and in 1824 he went to Ilminster Grammar School, which had the advantage of being at no great distance from his father's house at Curry, where he now acted as curate of Drayton. Here the lad's character began to form. Mrs. Allen, the head-master's wife, speaks of him as a "delicate, gentle boy, whose wondrous memory was shown at a standing-up (a Winchester exercise); for he was able to repeat an immense number of lines in Greek, Latin, and English." And she remembered, "among his peculiar amusements, a practice of cutting out shades to represent the head of the blessed Saviour, and other objects; his arrangement of fragments of glass to imitate peals of bells, and his habit of writing verses. She remembered, too, as the cause of the only habitual complaint against him, his inclination, which many impositions failed to correct, *to write in forbidden hours of and to the members of his home circle.*"

He confesses that he needs the aid of affectionate intercourse, saying that he must have some one to whom he may write fully and freely, and begging his cousins not to deny him this pleasure. Already he had begun the habit of constant self-review, sedulously watching his tendencies that he might correct his faults, which he very ingenuously acknowledges. "My two greatest failings, among many thousand others," he says, "are idleness and inconstancy; when I undertake a thing I set about it eagerly, and I have no doubt if I continued it all the way through, should not make a bad job of it (as we say in the country); but my ardour is like a storm, it soon abates, and leaves behind it a sort of lethargy." To aid him in his good resolutions, he began the keeping of a diary, to which habit he adhered through a long life. On his fifteenth birthday he sent to his father an address in verse, which drew

forth a warning not to indulge in poets' dreams, but to bring his mind to view things through a more sober medium, and so lower his expectations of happiness from earthly objects. He seems, however, to have made acquaintance with several of our poets without detriment to his regular work—adding to his list of studies drawing and music. He writes to his cousin, Mary Alford: "Tis plod, plod, plod, step by step, dull work; but I have to console myself, while labouring up the hill, on the fine prospect and fresh breeze I shall enjoy at the top, should I ever arrive there. Diligence, my dear Mary, is the only way of acquitting yourself honourably in any station of life: it is what you owe to yourself and to Him who gave you your talents."

In August, 1827, he became a private pupil with the Rev. John Bickersteth at Acton, in Suffolk, where he took a great interest in Sunday-school teaching, and began the study of astronomy. He went up to Cambridge in October, 1828; and, as he had met Mr. Wilberforce at the house of Lord Calthorpe, and had been captivated by the "dear old man," we are not surprised to find him soon after deep in the study of "The Practical View," and delighted with the sermons of the venerable Mr. Simeon. He was frequently at Lord Calthorpe's, and derived great benefit from the people he met there, and was occasionally of service to them. This gives a characteristic glimpse: "To prevent the consequences of Mr. Wilberforce's earnestness in conversation, which constantly impelled him to advance nearer and nearer to the edge of his chair, Lord Calthorpe employed young Henry Alford to watch and take suitable opportunities of pushing the chair forward by degrees, so that it might keep pace with the advance of the speaker's person."

If the entries in young Henry's journal sometimes savour a little of self-analysis, they show an honest self-severity and a real desire for progress. "Excess of feeling is rather a failing of mine; when I hear it urged against a man who intends well, that he is too apt to let his feelings overbalance his judgment, I always hope well of that man." And certainly his habit of prayerful self-review deepened his earnestness, and wonderfully strengthened him for work. "He was known on one occasion, as he closed his books after a hard day's reading, to stand up as at the end of a meal, and thank God for what he had received."

As for Cambridge, he had gone thither with no great hope of distinguishing himself; for he felt he had little faculty for mathe-

metics; but, nevertheless, through sheer assiduity, he ran (Bishop) Wordsworth pretty hard in the contest for the Craven Scholarship, and he won the Bell Scholarship shortly afterwards. He was fortunate, too, in finding congenial companions. E. T. Vaughan, Blakesley, Tennant, Heath, Hallam, Merivale, and the Tennysons, were those whose friendship he most desired to cultivate.

With Arthur Hallam he sits up till four in the morning, talking of poetry and kindred matters. And it is very interesting to hear of Alfred Tennyson reading to his companions some exquisite poetry of his—"Anacaona," and "The Hesperides"—now so well known. As was almost to be expected from his meditative character, Alford soon became an earnest admirer of Wordsworth's poetry, on



which he read a paper at the Union—the interesting supplement to which was a meeting with the poet himself at Spedding's rooms, which showed how quiet and efficient was the influence which the poet exercised privately, as well as by his writings. Alford was quite the type of character long to cherish such an interview. But he felt that he needed to guard himself from "the insidious undermining which study and literary habits carry

on against the work of God in the soul; it is the springing up of those seeds of pride which an enemy hath sown in my heart, and which are working slowly, but I fear surely, towards maturity, the pride of intellectual, philosophical, and classical acquirements; it is these I have to dread!" The revolution in France and the disorganizations of society in England,—for this was the time of bread-riots and threatened insurrections,—gave him

much to think of. He saw students armed to defend Cambridge in case of 'an expected attack; and no doubt these things led him to reflect on the great gaps that existed between the various classes in our country—an evil which he was ever earnest and active afterwards to remedy.

After a widowhood of twenty years, his father was now married again to a Miss Barber, for whom Henry had already learned to entertain a deep respect and affection. He now spent occasional delightful holidays at Ampton, where his father had got the living, and of these he thus makes record:—

“There are many joys and sorrows which skim lightly over, and leave no mark, but some that leave their footprints as they go. I have never known domestic comfort or enjoyment in the bosom of a family; and though my life has been an unbroken series of mercies, and I have everybody to thank for everything; yet I have always felt, in this one respect, lonely and disheartened. I had never known the care and love of a mother. You may therefore conceive the change to me, I cannot describe it; and certainly the thanks which I owe for it are beyond all measure. It has been in my case a very special answer to prayer; and God has done it all so gently and tenderly for me, like a kind friend, who, in preparing for you, has anticipated a thousand little wishes which you would have thought of after your arrival.”

Speaking of the examination, he says with very characteristic meaning, “Our college examination has been a very tough and fatiguing one, being for five days eight hours a day. *I did not feel in the least anxious, for I knew I had done all I could, and I was only anxious to know what that was.*”

In 1831 he came out as thirty-fourth wrangler and eighth in the first class of the classical tripos; and for a year he read for a fellowship and took pupils, anxiously awaiting the entrance on his twenty-third year, when he could take orders. He had proposed to his cousin Fanny and been accepted; he wrote some of his best short poems at this time, and began to develop the scheme of “The School of the Heart.”

In the beginning of 1833 he published a small volume of his poems, and was full of plans of authorship; but having been ordained, his conscientiousness and his determination to be in no whit behind his own ideal of requirements for the holy office, led him for a time to abandon these, that he might enter on a systematic study of divinity. “My best plan will be to study the Scriptures. At present going on with the Epistles in the early part of the morning, next Hebrew, and after that ecclesiastical history, Mosheim for the present. My sermons in the morning, and what time I can spare from

that for classics and metaphysics, in which department Butler must be the first book.”

Immediately after ordination he went to Ampton, to act as curate to his father; and Mr. E. T. Vaughan tells us how he “threw all his heart and mind into his new ministerial duties, his sermons, and his pastoral intercourse with the simple villagers, in which already he seemed to find a happiness more congenial to his true taste than the restless intellectual activity of the circle in which he had lived in Cambridge, though he was as diligent in study as ever.”

He obtains his fellowship in 1834, but, having got it, says decidedly, “I shall now proceed to divest myself of it, as soon as possible.” In 1835 he was presented to the parish of Wymeswold in Nottinghamshire, to which, without delay, he carried his cousin Fanny as his bride, and settled down to the daily duties of a parish clergyman, eking out his income by taking pupils, one of them being Charles Buxton, who seems to have deeply attached himself to the Alford. Wymeswold was very quiet and secluded, with only twelve hundred inhabitants and an income of £110. The country around it, however, was very fine; Charnwood Forest hills being within an easy drive. “The School of the Heart” was now speedily published, and won high praise from Wordsworth, to whom its quiet meditateness and true feeling for nature must have warmly commended it. But literary work was in large degree suspended for more sober cares. He methodically studied his sermons, addressed himself to the complete reorganization of the parish, built a vicarage and schoolrooms, projected a restoration of the church, which had fallen into sad disrepair, and was always delighted to give help to the brethren near him. A neighbouring rector thus bears witness to his willingness to aid:—

“The advantage of your husband’s proximity to my parish I frequently found in his ready willingness to ‘come over and help us,’ when we wanted an address to a working men’s institute, or a lecture to a literary society, or a penny reading, or any subject which his varied accomplishments embraced. His readiness of speech and good humour made him a most valuable coadjutor on such occasions; and he used to say, ‘If I can get a laugh out of them I shall do.’ This he did effectually even in dry subjects such as acoustics, when, I remember, after maintaining that every substance in nature was capable of emitting a musical sound, he added with gravity, ‘To be sure, you can’t get much of a note out of a blanket.’”

His incessant labours told on his health, and he had to make a tour abroad, saw Mont Blanc, and enjoyed the Alpine scenery. On his return, much strengthened, he set

himself to the fulfilment of his parochial duties more eagerly than ever. One of the best testimonies is that, before he had finished his twenty-eighth year, his own bishop offered him the new bishopric of New Zealand,—to which the venerated Selwyn was afterwards appointed. Not being yet the canonical age, Alford's decision was rendered the easier. But this fact suffices to prove that he must have impressed those he met with unusual sagacity and prudence. And yet there must have been something youthful in his appearance, if we may judge from an incident which occurred a short time afterwards, when he was appointed Examiner to the University of London. He writes :—

“There are four candidates at Somerset House. On my entering the room one of them said, ‘A fellow aspirant, I presume?’ on which I replied, with all disposable dignity, ‘No, sir, the examiner.’ The unfortunate individual has been apologizing ever since, and looks firmly convinced that I shall pluck him for contumacy.”

At first he rather felt the want of intelligent society at Wymeswold; but he soon found lasting friends among his neighbours, and his connection with *Dearden's Miscellany*, which for a time he edited, supplied him with a range of healthy interests. He not only wrote for it lively reminiscences of travel, critical essays, and passages of biography, but he discussed graver topics, such as national education and biblical revision, in a very thoughtful manner. On this last, his sentiments uttered thus early definitively foreshadow some of his later positions.

Whilst busy with his quiet parish work, he was visited with a great trial, in the death of his little boy, Clement. His grief was only relieved by the conviction that “the angel child had learnt the new song, while the father knew it not.” He now went the more heartily into the restoration of Wymeswold Church, in which his lost child was commemorated by a memorial window. Again he had the offer of a bishopric—that of New Brunswick; but probably the thought of his Greek New Testament, to which he felt more and more drawn as he went on with his preparations, was an element in determining him to decline. He now consulted with Dr. Trench and other scholars on various points, and finding they regarded his plans favourably, he set vigorously to work. To enable him to consult German commentators with facility and success, a short residence in Germany was deemed advisable, and he accordingly went to Bonn in June, 1847. There he made the acquaintance of Scholz, Dörner, Arndt, and other scholars.

He tells us that he worked ten hours a day at German.

“I hope I have facility enough now to read slowly all the commentaries I want. In spirits I have never drooped, as I have had too much to do. When tired of my German work I have taken up my journal, having the satisfaction that I was recording what would be hereafter interesting to myself, and that I was writing to my dear ones in England.”

Having, on his return, come to the conclusion that his work on the New Testament, if well done, would not leave him sufficient time to do conscientiously the work of the parish, he intimated his desire to find a change. He had, besides, been led to entertain the idea that his work in Wymeswold was done, and that the parish would have more chance of prospering under the charge of another; but, on the earnest representations of five hundred of the parishioners, he agreed to go on, with the aid of a curate. Writing to a friend to ask assistance in finding a proper person, he speaks thus frankly, with a forecast of some of his later movements: “I want him to teach and preach Jesus Christ, and not the Church; and to be fully prepared to recognise the pious Dissenter as a brother in Christ, and as much a member of the Church as ourselves.

. . . . Some little experience in parochial work is desirable; a very young man would not suit me. Above all, he should be a man of peace, who will quietly do his own work, and not breed strife.”

Meanwhile, though the difficulties in the parish grew instead of decreasing, his New Testament progressed; and the first volume was published in 1849,—at once taking its place as a work of value. As has been well said, it is not perfect, but it was the first effort after a complete work of the kind in England. It led the way; and the wonder is, not that it should have had defects, but that it was done at all.

Another shadow fell across Alford's life whilst he was pushing forward the second volume, and grappling with difficulties in the notes to the Acts. His son Ambrose, a promising boy of ten years old, suddenly died. “Of all the sorrows my husband knew in his life, none, I think, made so deep an impression on him, or so often came back to his recollection, as this.” As a relief, he now finished his translation of the “*Odyssey*,” and wrote some review articles, which brought him new friends,—amongst whom was Mr. Howson, now Dean of Chester.

Preaching and lecturing in London and other places, his fame spread; and, as his father on his death-bed, shortly before

this, had advised him to try to get to London, he was the more gratified by an offer from the Rev. J. Hampden Gurney to become minister of Quebec Chapel, which he did in 1853. Some of his reasons he has given us.

"Untoward circumstances," he says, in a letter to Mr. Gurney, "have thrown me into false positions; and now that my Greek Testament withdraws me from the parish, I have, and must have, to the people in general the aspect of an idle shepherd, letting others do his work; and after eighteen years, as the generation grows up which knows not Joseph, this must infallibly get worse and worse. As to my Greek Testament, when the second edition comes out, I shall have arrived at a period of my work which will require more than any before that I should have access to public libraries. . . . As for preference, I fairly tell you I do not care two straws for it; but a high sphere of usefulness I own is tempting to me, and it has appeared to me that this place is the path by which God Himself is leading me to such a sphere."

A suggestion was made from more than one quarter that he should retain the living of Wymeswold along with the incumbency of Quebec Chapel. But to these representations he made this reply: "I have a decided objection to pluralities myself; where a man's duty is, there should be his residence; and one cure of souls is enough for one man." Considering that, with the increasing demands for the education of his family, he cannot but have often felt the advantage a larger income would be to him, his testimony on this head is all the more valuable.

The thoughtful earnestness and eloquence of his Quebec Chapel sermons soon drew together a large congregation; and on their publication in a series of volumes, they secured to their author a well-deserved reputation as one of the ablest preachers of the metropolis. There was a staid impressiveness, a quiet solemnity in his manner that was made all the more telling by his deep voice, with its fine and varied tones, and the grace and ease of his written style. His great achievement, however, was the afternoon service, which he used to speak of as being especially "his own child." This was a sort of exegetical lecture, in which the whole context was discussed, with the critical questions arising out of it. "I do not preach," he says, "but expound the Gospels; in fact, expand my Greek Testament notes; a sort of thing in which, as you may imagine, I delight much." Eminent men of all professions were soon attracted to this service in spite of the unfashionable hour.

So the years passed, with interests ever-widening—lectures, societies, philanthropic movements claiming his attention and help.

He had many thoughts about the best way of dealing with the poor, and was active in work for the improvement of the district. He tells us that he found this district-work most interesting, and managed to set on foot schools for the poor. "My situation, you must know, is no sinecure," he tells Mr. Vaughan. "I find it difficult to get time for my Greek Testament work." The monotony of this labour was broken now and then by a trip to the Continent, Scotland, or elsewhere.

But this happy London life was not to last. In March, 1857, Lord Palmerston rather unexpectedly named him to the deanery of Canterbury. Of Canterbury, with its mild and pleasant climate, the Dean was soon in high praise. "I find," he wrote, "this is a very good place for work, interruptions are few, and one's head is clear and fit for grappling with tough questions in a way which it never was in London." Instead of sinking into the slippared leisure, which one of our distinguished novelists would fain identify with the cathedral close, he multiplied his interests—sought to reform the cathedral system, interested himself more deeply than ever in social and political questions, and began to express in yet clearer terms his fears for the future of the Church to which he belonged, and to impress on others, by every means within his power, the necessity for more of consideration and conciliation towards those who, for reasons of conscience, remained outside her pale. He was anxious first of all to render the cathedral services really popular, and after much difficulty, he managed to institute an afternoon sermon, which was found to be of great service. His liking for music, and his knowledge of it, now stood him in good stead, and his fine artistic taste enabled him not only to go into the restoration of the cathedral with pleasure, but to direct and advise. The journeys which he now and then made—to Italy especially—he has recorded with unusual picturesqueness and vigour in his published books; but he differs from some travellers in this, that his love of art never led him into any apologies for what was associated with the evils of Popery. He was a true Protestant, and became more so the longer that he lived. He found many fit subjects for his pencil; for painting in water-colour he had studied whilst at Quebec Chapel, and he now found great pleasure in this art. His quick, quiet habit of observation, that sought to see everything in relation, his love of colour and tone, his precision of hand, and his patient eye for beautiful form, might, with due

study, have made him an artist of eminence. Always when he travelled he sketched, and many of his pictorial records have become familiar to the public through *Good Words* and other magazines. And all the time he was faithfully following up, and endeavouring to further popularise, the results of his labours as a Biblical critic and commentator. Among the most noticeable efforts in this kind were his "New Testament for English Readers," and his popular adaptation of it, "How to Study the New Testament," which first appeared in the pages of this magazine, and did much to throw light on obscure and difficult points.

One of the most important events in his life was the establishment of the *Contemporary Review* in 1866. He welcomed the opportunity it afforded him for impressing on the public what he conceived to be the true ideal of the Church, the possibility of radical changes, necessitated by that complete clarification of the Christian conscience which he delighted to anticipate; and the duty of firmly upholding Protestant principles, while encouraging liberal feeling in all allowable directions, and trying to serve the real interests of literature and art. He had no patience with schemes of union with distant churches, which excluded one-half of the Christian community at home. Such was his programme. It was a high ideal for a monthly magazine; but it was very nearly realised—the Dean never missing an opportunity of clearing away obstacles that lay in the way of good feeling between Churchmen and Dissenters, and doing much to forward his old scheme of Biblical revision.

But even whilst it appeared to strangers as though a long life of work and benevolence lay before him, he was often visited with misgivings, with fears that he might be suddenly disabled, and he quietly made provision for such a contingency. Surely we may call this a characteristic note: "I wish to provide myself with a home in case I am unfit for my duties as dean, for I have ever disliked the conduct of men retaining office in the Church after they are past their duties; and I long ago resolved that, if such should ever be my case, I should resign and retire."

With this view a small country house, named Vines Gate, near to Brasted, Sevenoaks, was purchased, and there the Dean frequently betook himself for a day's rest and change of scene. But he would not let go any of his privileges in the way of Christian helpfulness. When, at length, the Bible Revision Committee was appointed, he devoted

himself to the work with great delight, seeing in it a new opportunity for uniting members of all branches of the Christian Church in an important national enterprise. Owing to failing health and his growing desire to do for the Old Testament something similar to what he had already done for the New Testament, he resigned his editorship of the *Contemporary Review* in the beginning of 1870. But his activity was undiminished. He read, he wrote as much as ever, and showed no loss of energy in the work of the Revision Committee. At last his medical men stepped in with prohibitions. But ere long all aid proved vain—the vital energies had been too long overtaxed, and after a short period of prostration, in which he suffered but little pain, he passed away quietly on the 12th of January, 1871. Not only Canterbury, but the country mourned for him, and Nonconformists as well as Churchmen followed him to the grave in St. Martin's churchyard, where he had desired to be laid.

What is above all needed in our time is the sympathy and patience of culture, combined with the devout and stirring earnestness of deep conviction as to divine truth. Dean Alford was a happy instance of this combination. He kept well abreast of the knowledge of the time; was as ready as the most thorough rationalist to agitate for slight changes which he had convinced himself were needful in the sacred text; but he remained a sincere believer in the common doctrines of the Cross. He had been brought face to face with the difficulties that emerge in a strict scrutiny of Scripture; and yet he held firmly by the main evangelical dogmas. As a commentator, as a preacher, as a poet, and as an essayist, he did notable service. He was able to deal with the largest questions of doctrine and interpretation, and he uniformly did it in the most Christian spirit. He was, in the best sense, conciliatory, not by yielding up aught of his own convictions, but by exquisite consideration for others.

As a commentator, Dr. Alford's maxim seems to have been, "Never shirk a difficulty, but frankly face it." His practice was to examine, as far as was possible, and then unreservedly to admit the presence of contradiction or unauthorised reading. He had, perhaps, undergone more labour than any other English commentator to make sure his ground on his points; and his patience and industry were equalled by his singular ingenuousness. What could be more aptly illustrative of this than the candid manner in

which he tells us that no countenance whatever is given to the episcopal office by the word in the New Testament which in Acts xx. is rendered "overseers" in our version? And this is only a sample of what, almost at every turn, meets the student either of his critical Greek New Testament, or of his valuable English Version.

As a preacher, Dr. Alford was earnest, unlaboured, unconventional. Simplicity was attained; but it was not affected. It sprang rather from depth of conviction, which made the thought easy and natural. His sermons are wholes; and, though he was not a great thinker, there is a diffused and gentle eloquence, which flows on smoothly, chastely, like one of the quiet English streams which he loved so well. He was poet enough to command ready illustrations; but these are never overdone. He was neither florid nor high-flown, deeming that the majesty of the truth should awe the ambassador into simplicity. Never failing himself to regard preaching as being one of the most important functions of the Christian minister, he spared no pains to give his sermons all allowable literary graces. He sought to draw men by the winning attractions of Jesus rather than to arouse them by the stern denunciations which also may often be effective in the preacher's hand; but occasionally he did wax the more powerful in his stirring appeals, from the prevailing quietness of his manner.

As a poet, Dr. Alford is not now so much spoken of as he deserves to be, though in that branch he received no lukewarm welcome. His poems have little intensity. They are meditative and full of joyful, gentle love of nature. Vivid in picture, they deal with the more striking moods of human feeling but rarely. They have lyrical sweetness and grace, but they want passion. Nor does he deal with the complex and involved moods said to be germane to the time. All is simple and calm. The atmosphere is peaceful; the distant sound of streams, the low buzz of insects, and the chirp and chatter of birds are the only noises that break the stillness of his mood. But there is much of beautiful self-revelation in them. It is, however, as a hymn-writer that Dean Alford will take rank among the English poets. A few of his best hymns will live, and must find a place in every hymn-book that in the least strives to represent the whole circle of Christian thought and feeling. "Lo, the Storms of Life are breaking," and "Forth to the Land of Promise bound," are familiar to most people; but several of his later ones,

written expressly for his "Year of Praise," are quite equal to these. One of them, "Ten thousand times ten thousand," which was sung over his grave, we feel sure will recommend itself to the general Christian heart.

Of Dr. Alford as an essayist, there is little need to say much. He was no dilettante. He did not seclude himself with the remote and colourless topics which enchant the student and feed the egotism that looks askance at the hard work of life. He was eminently practical. When he retired to his study, he always carried some great interest with him. Latterly he was much exercised with the question of Christian unity. He would gladly have seen the Church of England disestablished, if true Christian unity could have been thus eminently secured. He was wont to laugh, in his own quiet way, at the idea that the Church of England could not exist without her endowments. He had figures at his finger-ends, proving the enormous amount of private endowment which would be forthcoming, and which was at present rendered unavailable.

And what shall we say of him as a man but that he was faithful, simple, childlike; devout in heart and open in mind? He "looked to the things of others," and was most ready to admit merits in those who differed from him. His extreme dislike to appear in any way to force his own advantages as against another, often made him appear timid, even vacillating. Of this the present writer could give many instances. Ready appreciation of merits, and wise considerateness for his associates, were qualities in the Dean known to many; but his large tolerance, his quiet patience, his willingness to overlook in others mistakes which had sometimes caused him to be not only misunderstood, but misrepresented and maligned, were qualities not so generally known, and indeed in one whose utter honesty made him prone on certain points to treat his adversaries with perhaps a little overplainness of speech, were hardly to be looked for. But these elements found a harmony in his character. His unreserved frankness indicated something of youthful freshness; his ready allowances sprang from a true counterbalance of youthful generosity which knew nothing of affectation or *finesse*. He never harboured secret dislikes; never brooded over injuries done to him. It is known to the writer that he would put himself to special inconvenience to ask for explanations in cases where his position might have been deemed to set him above thought of taking any such step. His

openness, his readiness to receive hints, was a beautiful and amiable trait ; but sometimes it tended to affect his writing prejudicially in making it diffuse. His versatility was astonishing, and it was intimately associated with this characteristic. He needed many interests and mild reliefs in turn, and probably prized more the satisfaction felt in the first fresh brush of active production than in bringing himself and his work into relation with ideal and objective standards. Hence, together with real generosity, a certain innocent self-will even in self-depreciation. He does not over-estimate himself ; but he so far evades the force of real criticism by a frank confession that he lays no special stress on the *particular* product under judgment. Not without its characteristic side is the following, which occurred in a letter received from the Dean, along with a copy of his "Lord's Prayer" for review :—

"Do not cut me up more than you can help : my old muse has put on her bonnet and shawl for a promenade ; but, if snubbed, she will keep indoors for the rest of her life. No loss, perhaps, some people would be inclined to say ; but I know you will say it, if you must say it, in a kindly way."

The review was written, and it is superfluous to say that the Dean did not express himself as though he felt he had been snubbed.

He was astonishingly free from the astuteness which much contact with men engenders. He was slow to suspect. And to some extent his extraordinary capacity for labour may be thus accounted for. He kept his mind free from worldly ambitions and distractions. And his incapacity to become a powerful Church politician substantially helped him in this respect. He was so excessively frank and plain-spoken that no party could regard him as "attached." This he himself not only felt, but said ; for when a friend, on Archbishop Sumner's death in 1862, suggested that one

of its consequences might be his appointment to a bishopric, he wrote thus :—

"I do not apprehend any such consequences as you picture, so I look round on all my comforts and thank God. *I am too outspoken, and too little leaning to any party, for them to take me.* If I am passed over by the fatal bolt this time, I am safe for the future. . . . If I am called I shall go ; but we are hoping to be let alone in our happy, pleasant home—I to finish my English Testament, now going on well."

Never, perhaps, did a man support ecclesiastical dignity with less of assumption or of affectation. He bore none of the marks of the dignitary. Of stately and impressive presence, there was yet in him an accessibility, a freedom and spontaneity of communicativeness, which must at once have struck and charmed those with whom he was brought into contact in ordinary society. And this lies near the prime quality of his character, which expressed itself in many ways. He was to the last young in heart. He delighted in simple pleasures. To escape from his books for a quiet ramble in the woods, or on the beach, or by the stream-side, was all the relief he needed. He would sit and sketch familiar or beautiful objects with a patient assiduity. He loved long rambles on foot, and had a keen eye for the aspects of nature. His wanderings in France and Italy were specially memorable to him because of the enfranchisement he then experienced from many rules and conventionalities from which he scarce could escape in England. He was personally without many faults of a positive kind. His ambitions were bound up closely with his self-respect, and therefore he had but slight experience of poignant disappointment. He had lived the studious life which he loved, and had met with but few great trials. Yet his sympathies were always warm, and prone to take the most practical form.

H. A. PAGE.

PRACTISING THE ANTHEM.

A SUMMER wind blows through the open porch,
And, 'neath the rustling eaves ;
A summer light of moonrise, calm and pale,
Shines through a veil of leaves.

The soft gusts bring a scent of summer flowers,
Fresh with the falling dew,
And round the doorway, glimmering white as snow,
The tender petals strew.

Clear through the silence, from a reedy pool
The curlew's whistle thrills ;
A lonely mopoke sorrowfully cries
From the far-folding hills.

A lovely night—and yet so sad and strange !
 My fingers touch the key—
 And down the empty church my Christmas song
 Goes ringing, glad and free.

Each sweet note knocks at dreaming memory's door,
 And memory wakes in pain ;
 The spectral faces she had turned away
 Come crowding in again.

The air seems full of music all around—
 I know not what I hear,
 The multitudinous echoes of the past,
 Or these few voices near.

Ah me ! the dim aisle vaguely widens out,
 I see me stand therein ;
 A glory of grey sculpture takes the light
 A winter morn brings in.

No more I smell the fragrant jessamine flowers
 That flake a moonlit floor ;
 The rustling night-breeze and the open porch
 I hear and see no more.

Great solemn windows, down a long, long nave
 Their shadowed rainbows fling ;
 Dark purbeck shafts, with hoary capitals,
 In carven archways spring.

And overhead the throbbing organ-waves
 Roll in one mighty sea,
 Bearing the song the herald angels sang,
 Of Christ's nativity.

Dear hands touch mine beneath the open book,
 Sweet eyes look in my face,—
 They smile—they melt in darkness ; I am snatched
 From my familiar place.

The summer night-wind blows upon my tears,
 Its flowery scent is pain—
 O cold, white day ! O noble minster—when
 May I come back again ?

To hear the angels' anthem shake the air,
 Where never discord jars,—
 The Christmas carols in the windy street,
 Under the frosty stars.

The dream-like falling, from the still, grey skies,
 With falling flakes of snow,
 Of mellow chimes from old cathedral bells,
 Solemn, and sweet, and slow.

To hear loved footsteps beating time with mine
 Along the churchyard lane ;
 Round the old blazing hearth to see
 Loved faces once again.

When may I come ? O Lord, when may I go ?
 Nay, I must wait Thy will.
 Give patience, Lord, and in Thine own best way
 My hopes and prayers fulfil.

ADA CAMBRIDGE.

IN REFORMATION TIMES:

Some Glimpses of Life at a Great Era.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PAPERS FOR THOUGHTFUL GIRLS."

PART II.—BATTISTA DI ROSSI.

CHAPTER I.—BATTISTA'S SUPPER.

BATTISTA DI ROSSI was a member of a great Florentine banking house. He had not settled in Florence, however, but in the provincial town of Rossi, where he had emulated the prosperity of his kinsmen. There he had this advantage—he was the great man of the small town, ranking even above the fathers of the monastery. He had in a great measure the Italian characteristics—half aristocratic, half mercantile—of the princely merchants of Genoa, Venice, Florence, and her conquered tributary, Pisa. In this, his forty-seventh year, Battista was robust and many-sided—a hardy, healthy-natured man. Relishing his position and his ancestry, he yet went heartily into the business transactions of his estates and factories; enjoying the excitement and contest of trade like a born trader. He had married Monna Olympia, of the Panciatichi house, according to a desirable arrangement between his house and hers; but, with her secluded sickly habits, and his busy, active life, he had seen very little of her when death stepped in and separated them.

On the whole, Battista di Rossi was very well regarded by his fellow-townsmen. He was a man of too marked a character not to provoke enmity; but he was too open-handed and genial to be ill-spoken of. Besides, he was zealous for the honour of Tuscany and of Rossi, and fond of patronising young aspirants in law and art; and, as he managed to keep on good terms with the prior, and as his mother, Monna Francesca, was lavish in her charities, Rossi was proud of Battista and the Rossi house.

On the occurrence of his forty-seventh birthday his poorer townsmen gathered, in goodly numbers, below the loggia, to wake the day with songs, and hang up garlands; while the higher classes thronged in flocks to the supper with which he celebrated the occasion in his moon-lit September garden. Garden suppers were the popular feasts of the wealthy and the refined, whether held by the Tiber, the Arno, or the Po. To add to the charm of these meals, which were expected to be enlivened as much by the sparkle of native wit as by the glitter of bossed plate and Venetian glass, the lovers of beauty looked out on the pure soft radiance of the moon, reflected

from the glossy leaves of myrtles, lemon-trees, and ilexes, and on the galaxy of stars, so kindling up the dusky blue vault that the bold outlines of the great mountain range in the background could be dimly descried, fraught with the fascination of mountains seen in cloudland.

Battista was an exceedingly courteous and jovial host. To do still more honour to his company, he had doffed his usual evening dress, and wore a scarlet doublet and hose. He was a towering, square-shouldered man, with a swarthy face—not handsome, but full of character. He looked a natural leader of men, and he was in this banquet once again asserting and vindicating his leadership. He capped quotations with his guests—many of them men of learning in its revival; and he bandied jests and pithy proverbs—homely, even coarse, it must be confessed, they sometimes were—in the middle of his apt sayings. At the close of the entertainment he rose, cup in hand, and drank, with sudden gravity, a long farewell to his guests.

A stir and murmur of startled surprise passed round. What was to happen? Was Messer Battista going to die? Had he been called to fill some high office in the State?

Battista did not leave his audience long in doubt. Looking round him with a slightly sarcastic smile he said, "My friends, were I a very prudent and cautious man, I should stop here and say no more, but permit your fancy to shape the end till it proved you to be good or bad guessers. But, in the first place, the end is so near, that it is not worth while to keep it secret; and in the second, I do not fear to speak of it though my worst enemy were present;" and here the light in Battista's eyes concentrated itself into a vindictive glow. "I have been falsely denounced to the Senate which has replaced the priori; the State has passed upon me a sentence of banishment from Tuscany."

A hubbub, rising to a half-stifled roar of indignation, showed that to the chief portion of the guests the communication was equally strange and unwelcome.

Battista listened closely, and with some sense of consolation, to the token, but he quickly arrested it when it threatened to become a riotous resistance to power.

"Well, well," he said, calming his friends by the philosophic serenity of his own voice and

face; "I am not the first or the most illustrious person whom the State has banished to its loss. I may live to show you that you can trust Battista di Rossi for that; at the same time, I wish you to know that I submit to the decree of the State. I will have no rebellion and disorder in my name;" and with this peremptory assurance, he contrived, without giving offence to his guests, to show them that he would dispense with any further expression of sympathy and partizanship till the time was ripe. Battista had better be left alone, or with a few of his more intimate friends.

So it happened that, within an hour after the departure of the supper-party, while all Rossi, from the refectory of the monastery to the humblest home of the poorest artist whom Battista had bidden to the feast, was ringing with the great man's proscription, Battista was strolling along the fragrant terraces of his garden, on his way to the stately suite of rooms so shortly to be dismantled of the treasures with which he had filled them. Among other things, he had to break to his mother the disaster which had befallen him. But although he was too proud, in some respects, too stolid a man to shrink from a painful task, yet he lingered almost inadvertently. When he first came to settle at Rossi, he had been fascinated by the magnificent view from the height on which the town is perched over the woods of the valley beyond the Maremma, away to the slopes of "the thin sandalled Apennines," while to the west slept the blue Mediterranean, only less blue than the sky. On this spot he had been inspired and encouraged to project enterprises which had proved highly remunerative. Unlike the rude, ignorant nobles, who occupied the castles perched among the craggy spurs of the Apennines, and led lines of banditti, robbing and either feasting or fasting in their strongholds, Battista had delighted to pursue art and literature, and to surround himself with as many of the gems of ancient bronzes, marbles, MSS. in vellum, and paintings, as any man not a prince could collect. But far above his private aims and ambitions, Battista could tell himself now, in this solemn hour, that he had desired the prosperity and honour of the ungrateful State which was thrusting him from its bosom. What wrung his heart at this moment as much as his own degradation, was the conviction that if this factious policy were persisted in, whether by imposed sovereigns or by the relics of the old signori, Florence and Italy herself must soon bring to an end the promise of the Middle Ages, the exultant hope

that she and States like her were to inaugurate a new Roman empire, and be a fresh mistress, not alone of the spiritual, but of the social, commercial, and artistic world.

As Battista revolved these prognostications, what was worldly in his face vanished, and it grew noble with the nobility which dignifies even a commonplace Italian face under the influence of the same devotion.

One of the many small owls which haunt the neighbourhood of Rome, but which had strayed to more northern regions, hooted eerily from a neighbouring cypress, at this stage of Battista's reflections. The sound reminded him that the night was waning; and he hurried into the house.

The burning heat and brilliant colouring out of doors, have made the subdued gloom and the half empty space of the vast rooms the greatest luxury which can be conceived. The life strangely simple and natural, preserving well-springs of tenderness even in the extreme cases when its men were at once effeminate and ruthless, and its women light-minded and corrupt, has not demanded the artificial aids to contentment which life has sought among other races.

But it was not in any of the large public rooms, but in her sleeping-room beyond that he went to meet his mother and his daughters. There was a wood fire crackling on that hearth, besides the surroundings of carved ivory, wrought steel, lace, and velvet, which marked the sanctuary of such a dame as Monna Francesca. It was an effort to announce to the little family group his misfortune, and to bid his mother prepare to forsake the house of many years and go, in her decline of life, where destiny called her; but Battista appeared in Monna Francesca's presence like the master of the scene and the circumstances, and showed himself equal to the strain on his powers.

Monna Francesca was not a very old woman, being but eighteen years her son's senior. In her elaborate head-dress—not unlike a canopy of dark blue velvet erected over her head—she appeared a very handsome woman of the magnificent large Contadina type. With her grand Roman matron's gait, bust, and great black eyes, and superabundance of rich black hair, just streaked with grey, she was as childish, simple, and gentle as her grand-daughters.

Agneta and Bona were two merry girls of thirteen and eleven. They wore carnation satin mitre caps on their curly heads, above dimpled brown faces, as if to atone to their rank in this way for the unvarnished primi-

tiveness and homeliness of their undress gogram bodices and skirts.

"You keep early hours, my son," said Monna Francesca to Battista, with a little tranquil wonder and approval of his unexpected appearance.

"We hope the supper has gone off well, father," cried the girls with one voice, leaving the game of working puppets in which they had been engaged. "We watched the company assembling from the loggia, and then we stole down and begged Matteo for a dish of lampreys and a few of the confetti, that we, too, might keep your fête-night, father."

"And I don't doubt that you had the best of it, for it got as hot as an oven in the pavilion, and the speeches were not so fine as to make a deaf man hear," declared Battista with a yawn: "but now try and listen quietly to an affair of importance which I have to make known to the madre."

The girls were flattered by being admitted to a family consultation. They fluttered down into a condition of ostentatious stillness and attention as Monna Francesca asked—

"Are you going on a mission to Rome, Battista, or are you summoned to Florence? It will be dull keeping house without you; but you will bring us the gossip of the day, and the blessing of his Holiness, perhaps."

Battista was not only fond of his mother, but he was grateful to her. True, he was aware that there had existed women much more gifted and qualified to be the mates of able men, but, on the other hand, he was acquainted with folly, and worse than folly, in queen-like Italian women. In this experience he could not feel too much affection and thankfulness to the mother who was as innocent at the same time that she was as ignorant as his young daughters. Directed first by her husband and her father confessor, and next by her son and his father confessor, she had never dreamt of straying from the right path thus pointed out to her, but had walked in it docilely, according to her light.

Battista did not greatly fear the effect of the tale on his mother any more than on his young daughters. Monna Francesca was not sensitive or imaginative. Her own husband's life had been attempted in broad day, in the open street; and, while she was in her father's house, she had shared a yet more generally inconvenient misfortune from having the house attacked and plundered by one of the Florentine mobs. She exclaimed considerably and fanned herself with vehemence during her son's narrative. She was hurt that he should be basely misjudged; but as

he appeared to accept the situation with equanimity, she prepared to accept it with the same calmness.

Removing with the tip of her fan the tears which had gathered in her eyes, she inquired, "And where do you propose to take refuge?" And she spoke as quietly as if she had been banished every year of her life.

"I have thought of the Castello of San Rocca; it is beyond the bounds, and yet within three days' journey, not too far up among the mountains; and you know I have a little shooting lodge there."

Monna Francesca reflected profoundly, "We might carry up feather-beds with us. The stores from Florence are expected to-morrow—they might be sent after us. But my fans—I am quite out of fans, Battista; you see this one is cracked, and admits the air by as many holes as are in my lace veil. I like my fans either black or green, and scented; but how should I get them of any kind in a poor people's nest like San Rocca?" she inquired with a resigned despair which would have become a Cornelia or an Octavia.

"Oh, we shall have you supplied before the warm weather," promised Battista with a little laugh; "never fear, madre mio."

"And only fancy," chimed in round-chinned Neta, "Bona and I shall feed and milk the goats, and ride on the bare backs of the mules! Why, it will be like the great festa, as good as the masks the madre speaks of."

Battista was thus delivered from trouble with his womankind in his new adversity.

CHAPTER II.—A SUMMONS OBEYED.

BATTISTA had hardly retired to his own room, when his servant Giovanni brought him a brief message, which had been left with the porter, to the effect that Messer Battista should go and speak with a friend who had come to lodge over the night in the third house in the Casa Ponte.

The message was not an attractive one in the circumstances. The time and its events were sufficiently out of joint, and Messer Battista was quite enough engaged with his own pressing affairs, to deprive him of any taste for evening expeditions claimed on the spur of the moment.

"Pista! What a fool you are, Giovanni, to deliver such an unreasonable request!"

"I thought the master liked all messages left with the porter to be communicated to him without exception," said Giovanni.

"So I did on ordinary occasions; but is this a time for me to hear how Messer Niccolo

has come in from the country to consult a notary, and wants to tell me that his breed of silkworms are a failure this year; or that Mase out at the olive-garden finds his woodmen refractory, and desires me to bribe the rascals with a festa on their own account? But now that I think of it," declared Battista, stopping short, "neither Messer Niccolo nor Mase would lodge at the Casa Ponte, while I know another mad fellow. Quick, Giovanni! My cloak and my sword! No, I don't wish your attendance—thank you all the same, I shall not be gone long. If this be Luigi Gondi," added Battista to himself when he was out into the moonlit piazza of the mercato, "why, his straits are yet greater than mine. What can the hair-brained fellow mean by coming within leagues of the shadow of the monastery and the grip of the Prior Ambrose!"

In a tumble-down house in the Casa Ponte, occupied by an old woman, who had been nurse in a family of some distinction in the neighbourhood, sat resting, on the side of a bed hung with tattered tapestry, a recently arrived traveller. He was still wrapped in his cloak, with the hood drawn round his face, which, wan and jaded, had yet the perennial youthfulness which haunts some faces. The old woman to whom the house belonged was on her knees, regardless alike of stiff joints and good petticoat, striving to coax into flame the charcoal in a rusty, disused stove, while the damp from the river had come out in blotches and ran down in drops on the green-tinged walls.

"Never mind, mother, I can keep heat in me with my cloak," asserted the stranger with patient cheerfulness, but belying his words by shivering in spite of himself.

"Not mind it, my bambino!" she gasped between the intermittent puffs of her breath to aid the flickering flame—"not give you of the best! Oh, how proud I should be to have you here, were it not for one thing, and to change that one thing, I have said, between this and the Nativita, scores on scores of aves and salves." And as she spoke, she glanced round with fear in her puckered, broad face.

"Never mind them either," her listener told her decisively. But he muttered to himself relentingly the next moment:

"Well, that is harshly put, seeing how she regards them. Besides, in another light they are the expression of the poor soul's love for another, and may give her some relief and warm her heart, though the well-intended exercise does me neither good nor ill."

Did this man, with all his graces and gifts,

possess the "bitter and pungent salt" required to recover an age from corruption?

At this moment, Battista's cautious knock called away the old woman in a state of tremulous agitation. The next moment Battista entered, and the stranger rose up to greet him.

"Luigi Gondi!" cried Battista before he caught the emaciated, taper hands extended to him, and embraced their owner. "What perversity has carried your feet to Rossi?"

Looking at the two standing together in the middle of the earthen floor, with the mistress of the house retiring respectfully out of ear-shot, it was hard to believe that Luigi Gondi was a contemporary of Battista di Rossi, and within ten years of him in age. It was not so hard for a student of human nature to perceive that the one man might possess a wonderful attraction for the other. Such men as Luigi Gondi are the Jonathans made to be loved by the Davids of all generations. Their uncalculating enthusiasm, magnanimous generosity, and sheer impracticability, expose them to be the prey of their craftier brethren, as it removes all temptation to jealousy and envy on the part of their true fellows. Battista had already engaged in considerable contention, and encountered serious risks to befriend and protect Gondi.

"I am on my way to Corvieto, Battista," replied Luigi plainly, "to brave the worst by making my opinions known where, believing them to be true, I was before guilty of letting them be hushed up. The archbishop has invited me to a contest with Fra Anselmo."

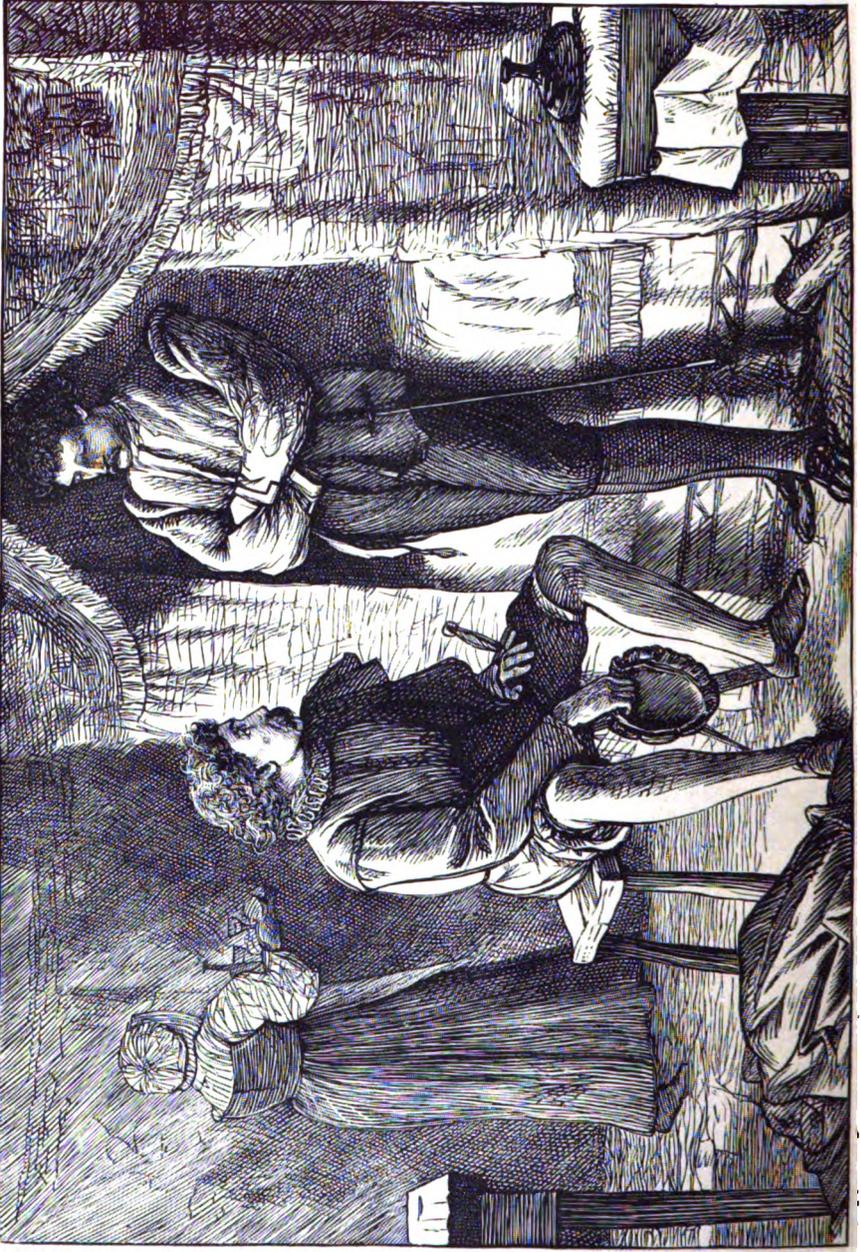
"But you know what such a contest means?" remonstrated Battista warmly; "you are prepared for its conclusion?"

"I hope so," answered Luigi in a low, pained voice. "I try to prepare myself by taking no thought of the rack and the risk, as the Lord bade, Battista, when He will lend his unconquerable strength. Obeying Him, I cannot fail. Oh, rest content," he added, with a burst of passionate reproach, which thrilled the hearer, as coming from one naturally tolerant and yielding, as the defiance of a timid creature, sheep or bird, turning at bay to defend its treasure, smites the conscience of the assailant; "you made me recant once; don't try it again, Battista."

Battista was silent, baffled by this agony of fidelity which renders the weak strong.

"The archbishop may not permit the contest, the proposal may have been a feint," he speculated half aloud, as a last hope. "A Gondi is too popular game to be flown at safely, in that quarter, except once on a time, especially when all the other Gondi remain





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faithful children of the Church. The hump-backed duchess in the north has not been brought round without more scandal than Rome liked—the persecution of Carmicchi has not answered the end. At least you are firm in offering yourself for the contest, Luigi?”

“Yes, and I did not come here to be dissuaded from the encounter by your too partial affection, Battista,” declared Luigi, calming down so soon as the opposition to his determination was withdrawn—showing himself desirous of proving how real and cordial was his regard for his old comrade and long-suffering associate; “but,” Luigi inquired earnestly, “there is no chance of my compromising you were this meeting known? You have become a great and prosperous man, it may be that the slightest suspicion of your having been in contact with a man known to hold heretical opinions, will be spied out and mischief made of it.”

Battista smiled with a scornful curl of his lip. “Not at all, man, I happen to be beyond suspicion.”

He said no more, his natural frankness checked by his equally natural Italian tendency to hold what he knew in reserve till he saw his way clearly.

Luigi also hesitated. “I am afraid you may not understand me,” he protested with a fretting trepidation stealing into his manner.

“No, I do not understand you, my friend; I never did,” declared Battista, folding his arms, and presenting a stern front to the apostle of a new evangel. How could you ever become a follower of the Pignoni? I know it was that visit to Naples, when Bernardine di Sienna and Peter Martyr were there before they went to Geneva, and the city of the old Guiscard was in a state of ferment with heresy. That visit was at the bottom of it.”

“You need not go so far as Naples to seek the origin of my heresy, as you call it,” retorted Luigi; “you know that Brucioli published an Italian version of the New Testament in Florence as early as 1530, and that before it was prohibited by the Council of Trent we all read it curiously. Ay, and you know well the prohibition did not prevent fresh versions being made. You know that the Oratory of Divine Love, the Society of Theatines, and the Society of Jesus, have been all insisting on the necessity of reformation in the Church, by very different modes, I grant you.”

“But reformation is not withdrawal, Luigi,” argued Battista; “no corruption can warrant abandonment of the Church.”

“Who compels us to abandonment?” de-

manded Luigi fiercely; “who thrusts us out? And we are not such a narrow sect or such a small circle at Naples as you would make us out to be; there is not a town in Italy which does not contain some reformer of note who professes the doctrines openly or in disguise, and who is spied upon, threatened, or hunted down. There are thousands of schoolmen under the ban of the Inquisition.”

“There is not a town of Italy,” parodied Battista coolly, “which does not contain some hare-brained enthusiast; and, alas! he is generally a man of note. As for the schoolmen, in practical matters they are the greatest fools going.”

“The foolish things of the world to confound the wise,” muttered Luigi.

“But, how you, Luigi,” continued Battista, not heeding the interjection, “a lover of all that is beautiful and civilised, could join a faction which wages war with whatever is pleasant, is a mystery to me. I should as soon have expected you to join Barbarossa and his corsairs.”

“Ah, but, Battista,” explained Luigi, “you forget that truth must be at the foundation of all real beauty and wisdom, whether in art, learning, or in life itself. What is false can never be permanently lovely and excellent, though it may possess a transitory charm. Therefore, before presenting pure, goodly offerings of the intellect, the affections, the skilled eyes, ears, and hands to our Master, it may be necessary to consume the mixed, meretricious—often gross and shameful works of men’s genius—which interpose between the same genius consecrated to God the Father and Jesu the Son. The one is like a picturesque ruin, and the other a fit, glorious, perfect temple. Who would grudge sacrificing the ruin to the temple?”

“Show me the temple first,” interposed Battista sceptically.

“Why, you believe, Battista,” pressed Luigi, “that this green, luxuriant earth, on which so many sinful feet have trod, as well as the sinless feet of the Son of Man, on which so many horrible crimes have been committed, besides the mighty sacrifice, must be burnt up in order to be replaced by the new heaven and earth in which dwelleth righteousness.”

“I believe as I am told,” answered Battista evasively. “I am no *frate*, no embodiment of a council to settle a text or a tenet.”

“Now, Battista,” objected his friend passionately, “you would scorn to be so ruled in what concerns you infinitely less—your perishing worldly business—or a question of mere grovelling human knowledge as to who

wrote that manuscript, or if this gem is a genuine antique, forsooth. You would have a decided personal opinion there. And to whom do you leave the most tremendous questions to be settled? To accomplished mockers in St. Peter's chair like Leo: to cold-hearted, wily trampers on men's rights and feelings, such as Clement, claiming to be sovereign pontiffs and vicars of Him who, when they sought to make Him a king, went and hid Himself. I thought we of Tuscany knew enough of the Medici to scruple to trust them with our inheritance for time, much less for time and for eternity. But I forget, Battista," the speaker broke off, disturbed by a sudden recollection, "that in your prosperity and power, perhaps you think you owe something to the Medici. There have been men among them who have been quick enough to discern and promote parts, and, it may be, probity which did not war with their own views. Any way, I ought not to speak evil of dignities, to a public man."

"Never mind me, Luigi," answered Battista, with something which sounded like levity, "if you have forgotten my obligations, I have much more forgotten them—supposing they ever existed. But you did not come out of your road to be within sting of a hornets' nest at Rossi—to rail at the Medici. Your friend, the sub-prior, is not more friendly to innovations, new lights, eccentricities, than of old."

"Forbid that I should rail at any one," protested Luigi, with a hasty, weary sigh. "*Mei culpa*, my own short-comings are so notorious, that he who runneth may well take up a railing accusation against me."

He began, in spite of the fatigue of his long journey, and of a recent illness, to walk up and down the earthen floor. "You cannot have forgotten how I temporised before at Corvieto, how I consented to be one in an idolatrous procession of the host, how I forsook—" he was pouring forth his confession when Battista gently stopped the stream of piteous self-abhorrence.

"Neither did you come here to rail at yourself for my special benefit, and at the tenth hour of the night, friend Luigi."

"No," acknowledged Luigi, restored to his right mind, smiling faintly indeed, but taking courage as he smiled at his infatuation, "for what am I and my sins to waste breath upon in this grand march of the ages? Better left to the mercy of the Most High and the grace of his right hand—the Brother Man—and forgotten with everything but the mercy and the grace blotted out. It was of yourself,

dear Battista, and to yourself that I would say a parting word, for you know that it may very well happen we two may not meet again in this world. You are strong and prospering. All this is good; no man need gain-say it, least of all do I carp at your success and usefulness. Besides, I know you, Battista—that the best part of you craves to profit our country by agricultural improvements, by trading enterprise, and by taking advantage of political openings whenever they occur."

"Now you say well, Luigi," testified Battista.

"I am aware that you—a large-hearted, liberal-minded man—are fain to leave Italy the better for you. It is honourable, it is glorious, but there is a glory that transcendeth. There is only one way for a man to deliver his country as there is only one way for him to save himself."

"And that is?" questioned Battista.

"That is by losing it, as by losing himself. My country is, after all, but a trust, held like everything else for the great King only to come to true dignity and honour with Him as his fief when He is obeyed and honoured. Do you think, Battista, that there will ever be freedom on earth, or that men will recognise and respect each other's rights, till all the debasing superstition of intervening virgin, saints, priests, bought favour and bribed amnesty, be swept away; till He be fully recognised who has made of one blood all the nations of the earth, and appointed beforehand their bounds and habitations?"

"Will that ever be, Luigi?"

"Do you doubt it?" urged Luigi sharply; "then you are a greater heretic than I. But I have lost sight of the fact that you have not, even yet, stopped to ask with our countryman, 'What is truth?' Nay, that you profess there is no call for such a pregnant question from a layman."

Battista did not give a direct response. By one of those rapid transitions peculiar to southern idiosyncrasy, he remarked instead, as he shrugged his shoulders ironically, "My prosperity, on which you have been descanting so eloquently, Luigi, has taken to itself wings and flown away. I have been banished by the seventy and the irresponsible head. With the cock-crowing I begin the removal of my family and such of my goods as are transferable to the little Castello of San Rocca up among the mountains. There I may stagnate and sink into one of the more substantial and slightly-enlightened, for all your thrust about truth; or I may originate a new band of brigands instead of being any more Battista

di Rossi—the well-born trader of Rossi—for anything that I can see.”

“I am glad of it—I am heartily glad of it!” exclaimed Luigi joyfully.

“You are not serious. Save me from my friends!” commented Battista drily.

“My poor Battista, it is not that I mean. I would give my right hand to have you rich and great,” urged Luigi; “but there is nothing so blinding, so blighting to most men as unbroken worldly prosperity.”

“It is what none of us quarrel with, and all of us aim at, my preacher,” interrupted Battista ironically; “even you, Luigi, would have no objection to being a popular and aristocratic reformer under court patronage.”

“Yes, blind bat that I am,” owned Luigi candidly, “because I, too, would have joined the cry to make my master a king, yet, in that case the earth ought to be pulverised without frost, and the corn to grow without rain. Now the scales will fall from your eyes, and you will have time to adjust other scales of responsibility and integrity, you will weigh evidence and sift testimony.”

“I beg your pardon, I shall do nothing of the kind,” contradicted Battista bluntly; “I don’t wish my head to be turned, neither do I wish to be at dagger’s drawing with all my neighbours—small and great. I shall rather study goat’s hair and the grain of the pine wood.”

“You cannot help yourself,” maintained Luigi confidently; “you will be rusticated in enforced idleness and solitude, without being crushed or distracted by the blow. You have too much independence to be destroyed by the most unrighteous state decree, which can but expatriate you from Tuscany and confiscate so much land and corn, so many bonds and orders. You will have space to ponder, to compare and contrast, to forget and remember. I predict a new life for you, Battista. I wish you joy for your good. You believe that, Battista?” appealed Luigi, wistfully, in the middle of his congratulation.

“Oh, yes, I believe it,” admitted Battista ruefully; “and I believe equally that you would wish me joy of the gracious intentions of the heavenly powers and my improving prospects, did you see me consigned to a prison cell or marched to the stake—all for my good, and as you would also have the greatest pleasure in bearing me company, I dare not take your wishes amiss, or even say decidedly that they are wrong, my poor fellow. What do I know, a matter of fact, worldly mule—sleek no longer?” finished Battista, as he prepared to take leave of his friend.

“There goes a fellow beyond redemption

to his doom,” murmured Battista, as he went down the casa, “and the world of onlookers, whether orthodox or heretic, will pick holes in his coat to the end of time, because of his inconsistencies, his blunders and falls; yet how many of his judges and critics could be as honest, as constant, returning ever to the charge? Angry with him, poor fanatical Luigi! I should prefer kissing his feet to kissing those of his holiness the Pope, of whom, to be sure, Luigi spoke with scant ceremony! He ought to have lived in the good early days of the Church, and become a victim to the heathen, since any way, and in all times, till earth is nearer heaven, such men must be victims.”

CHAPTER III.—LIFE IN THE CASTELLO.

THE Castello of San Rocca was one of the walled villages with casements in its walls and a tower in the centre to serve as a citadel, which covered the lower heights of the Apennines. One would have thought that a village might have claimed exemption from the humblest defence on the plea that it had little to defend. But poverty is comparative, and rapine, which stooped to the meanest prey, had its special lodgings in the mountains. The hostile villages, the holds of robbers by profession and cut-throats by calling, the passing visits of free soldiers, alike of the Emperor and the Pope, when these worthies chanced to be in high latitudes, supplied swarms of locusts fit to devour the scantiest supplies of cheese, bread, chestnuts, milk, sour wine, linen and woollen cloth, belonging to the wretched peasants.

San Rocca was not even a place where “the villeggiatura”—a pretty play at out-of-door life, dear to Roman and Italian families of rank, when they occupied their country villas—could be practised with comfort, even had Monna Francesca been ever given to a practice which implied a lively and adventurous spirit. The habitation was a very different one from the family house in the town; the ground-floor was a single cave for two cows, three mules, and half-a-dozen goats; the upper stories were reached by ladders, and were divided into small, damp, little rooms. A residence here could only have been quite endurable during a pilgrimage or a hunting-excursion made in the early spring or summer. The gorge of every bubbling stream was then a Virgin shrine decorated with lilies, cyclamen, maiden-hair fern, and myosotis. The keen aromatic scent of the pine-trees mingled with the balminess of all the bursting buds on the exhilarating mountain air, and was supposed with

justice to impart vigour to the sickliest frame. But it was no such holiday-errand which saw Battista di Rossi and his family established at San Rocca. The autumn rains had come on, the evenings were long and cold, the chestnut and beech leaves were yellow and red with more gorgeous tints than those of spring, and the shed cones of the pines helped to cover the sere grass and bracken with a sodden brown carpet. The stripped, battered ridges seemed to shiver in sympathy with the white mantle descending lower and lower on

the mountains. Down in the plains myrtles were green as ever, the purple and golden fruit of figs and oranges was hanging uninjured, clusters of damask roses were blushing crimson in the silvery autumn haze; but here among the hills, October and November were a different experience.

Battista soon regretted the impulse which had induced him to cast down the challenge, of fixing on the nearest point to Tuscany in accordance with the terms of his sentence of banishment, when he might have gone to



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Rome or to Naples, and led a social life, surrounded by all the luxuries and refinements of the age. At least he was the chief sufferer by his choice, for, strange to say, Monna Francesca and her granddaughters were less affected than he was by the isolation and deprivations of their position. Monna Francesca was dull certainly without her gossips, but she found a great resource in complaining by the hour of the absence of a hair-dresser's shop at San Rocca, which she professed to lament quite as much as

other losses. In addition to that simple comfort, she slept a good deal—the close smoky atmosphere produced by the wood fire on the hearth, serving as a narcotic. For farther employment and diversion, Monna Francesca entertained every begging friar and travelling pedlar on whom she could lay hands. Her hospitable inclinations thus becoming known and responded to, she was not absolutely immured from intercourse with her kind. Neta and Bona showed girlish adaptability to circumstances. When they tired of feeding and

making friends with the mules and the goats, and found that they could not stroll or ride bare-backed to any distance under the cloud-darkened skies, they took to learning from their admiring contadini girl-companions how to card and spin, to boil chestnuts, and bake bread.

But Battista was like a fish out of water, or a caged wild bird. He wriggled and gasped for breath and beat against his bars. All his other affairs had got into a dead lock, in which he could not venture to stir, so that his entire occupation was taken from him. He could not sleep and chatter with Monna Francesca, or be a graceful mocking bird with the girls. He did not take to goat's hair or to pinewood, as he had predicted. He went out moodily with his gun to shoot a wild goat or deer when it crossed his path, but spent the most of his time walking aimlessly, or sitting gazing abstractedly on the drooping landscape. Sometimes the sun would break through and the veil be lifted for a moment, but it was only to reveal splendid possibilities lost the next moment, like glimpses of success in the lives of men. Battista had not been altogether selfish in his aspirations. He had also schemed and striven to make the town of Rossi, in its favourable situation amongst olive and mulberry gardens, and not far from the great route between Florence and Rome, the nucleus of a great commercial city; and, to promote the welfare and renown of Tuscany until she should be independent of Rome. And the end of it was that he might retrograde into squalor and want, Florence sink into slavery, and Italy be boarded by the Turks and a second time swamped by the descendants of the Goth, for anything that he could do to prevent it.

He wished that he were at least one of the great men by whose losses the world was enriched. And the thought of the great men whose sorrows blossom into joys for others, reminded him of his encounter with Luigi Gondi on the eve of his banishment. Battista had not been able to learn what had been Luigi's fate, but now it haunted him like a shadow projected from another world into the worries and annoyances of this. He recalled his first acquaintance with Luigi when in Florence studying classics and jurisprudence under the same masters. The marvellous quickness and sympathetic power of the younger student had placed him at once on a level with his senior fellow-pupil, and the two had become fast friends. They had shared each other's pursuits and pleasures, seeing the same brilliant company, frequenting the same studios and patronising the same barber's shop.

They had visited Rome in one Holy Week, and assisted in the churches and their processions side by side. In all this intercourse Battista had been fascinated and allured by the single-heartedness with which Luigi threw himself into the interests of the hour.

The lives of the friends had separated from that epoch. Battista had entered on what is called the serious business of life; Luigi, having a small independent patrimony, and but little worldly ambition, had postponed settling down and protracted his experimental travelling days. He had gone to Naples, was won over to the intellectual circle of the Spaniard Valchy, led astray, as Battista was tempted to believe, by the very fires of persecution which certain doctrines kindled. Luigi had always shown a proneness to range himself on a losing side, such as that of the new religionists who were bent on introducing into Italy the views of the German ex-monk and the Franco-Genevese professor. These views had brought Luigi into a worse plight than that of Battista; for, whereas banishment and confiscation were common misfortunes in Italy, the suspicion of heresy caused a man to be regarded with loathing by his Roman Catholic fellow-creatures.

Where was Luigi? Battista often asked himself. He must either be rigidly watched and shunned, or be lying in prison, the iron entering doubly into his sensitive soul. Luigi knew the story of the monk who was taken to Rome and exposed to the most appalling test which the devilish spirit in man could conceive—put upon a diet of bread and water, which was diminished day by day, till the soul, deadly sick, offered any concession to buy a bit of mouldy bread and a draught of muddy water. Courage to die, that was nothing. There were other men in Italy who could shout "Victoria, Victoria," while blazing at the stake. But that might be a result of nerve and dogged obstinacy. There was something more in the courage which could face trials—superhuman to a man exquisitely human—who had already failed before them, and been lightly esteemed by both friend and foe for what they termed his pusillanimity. Yet, though Luigi Gondi was not a man of iron nerve, though there might be even some flaw in his faith, great and noble as it was, on account of which it could not remove this mountain; still this faith would face the mountain in the great invincible name of another, and try again and again till Luigi Gondi should die the truest of martyrs.

Battista di Rossi, like most natures of his cast, had hitherto warily avoided this principle, and had contented himself with more

or less of an outward conformity to, and respect for, the rites and ceremonies of his religion. Would he continue to escape from this enthralling principle? Luigi had said that it would be so, and that compulsory inaction and solitude would have a message for him, as they had for Dante, for Mahomet, for Moses. Was this principle, indeed, the salt of the earth, the sole ingredient which could keep it from perishing in its wickedness, and enable all its work, its duties, its enjoyments to be done and taken in integrity and hope? Must it be the pith and marrow, the lamp and staff, of each individual? Possessed of more than its first slight outlines, might Monna Francesca rise from her feebleness and submission into moral heights of holy contemplation and steadfastness, until she should not need a son, or husband, or even priest, to tell her what to think? Thus endowed, might Neta's and Bona's childish laughter be educated, until it acquired full tones, which might have tears in them? If Neta and Bona could not shine as stars, might they at least be able to stand alone, with a Saviour who was as far above patron saints and the blessed Virgin, as divinity was above humanity; so that when Battista came to die he should be nearer dying in peace, even though he left his daughters in their nonage, with their inheritance and their hands to be fought for

fiercely by contending claimants? Was there really one unmistakable, unerring clue, through this labyrinth of life, which was given to men to accept and hold? Had he, Battista di Rossi, been guilty of rebellious wickedness in resolutely ignoring the most distant indications of it? Was it necessary for him to go into banishment with chiefs of men so much greater than he to be compelled to look for this clue, and deliberately accept or reject it at its cost? Was this in a measure to see visions and have revelations with all the saints?

Over and over again, through the severe winter, and again into the soft spring, until he was almost half reconciled to his banishment, he revolved these questions — the legacy of his interview with Luigi. He studied quietly the few authorities which were within his reach, till a great calm followed the storm, a mild seriousness not to be disturbed.

It is not said that Battista actually joined the ranks of the reformers. "In Italy men did not adopt Lutheranism, though they approached it." It was their dogma, that "nothing could warrant or justify withdrawal from the Catholic Church, one and indivisible." Nevertheless, Luigi Gondi's words were borne out. Battista di Rossi's banishment and isolation constituted an era in his life, after which the passionate, vindictive merchant showed himself in many respects a new man.

THINE IS THE POWER.

OUR Father, our Father, who dwellest in light,
 We lean on Thy love, and we rest on Thy might;
 In weakness and weariness joy shall abound,
 For strength everlasting in Thee shall be found:
 Our Refuge, our Helper, in conflict and woe,
 Our mighty Defender, how blessed to know
 That Thine is the Power!

Our Father, Thy promise we earnestly claim,
 The sanctified heart that shall hallow Thy Name,
 In ourselves, in our dear ones, throughout the wide world,
 Be Thy Name as a banner of glory unfurled;
 Let it triumph o'er evil and darkness and guilt,
 We know Thou canst do it, we know that Thou wilt,
 For Thine is the Power!

Our Father, we long for the glorious day
 When all shall adore Thee and all shall obey.
 Oh, hasten Thy kingdom, oh, show forth Thy might,
 And wave o'er the nations Thy sceptre of right.
 Oh, make up Thy jewels, the crown of Thy love,
 And reign in our hearts as Thou reignest above.
 For Thine is the Power!

Our Father, we pray that Thy will may be done,
 For full acquiescence is heaven begun,—
 Both in us and by us Thy purpose be wrought,
 In word and in action, in spirit and thought,
 And Thou canst enable us thus to fulfil,
 With holy rejoicing, Thy glorious will,
 For Thine is the Power !

Our Father, Thou carest ; Thou knowest indeed
 Our inmost desires, our manifold need ;
 The fount of Thy mercies shall never be dry,
 For Thy riches in glory shall mete the supply ;
 Our bread shall be given, our water be sure,
 And nothing shall fail, for Thy word shall endure,
 And Thine is the Power !

Our Father, forgive us, for we have transgressed,
 Have wounded Thy love, and forsaken Thy breast ;
 In the peace of Thy pardon henceforth let us live,
 That through Thy forgiveness we too may forgive,
 The Son of Thy love, who hath taught us to pray,
 For Thy treasures of mercy hath opened the way,
 And Thine is the power !

Thou knowest our dangers, Thou knowest our frame,
 But a tower of strength is Thy glorious name ;
 Oh, lead us not into temptation, we pray,
 But keep us, and let us not stumble or stray ;
 Thy children shall under Thy shadow abide ;
 In Thee as our Guide and our Shield we confide,
 For Thine is the Power !

Our Father, deliver Thy children from sin,
 From evil without and from evil within,
 From this world, with its manifold evil and wrong,
 From the wiles of the Evil One, subtle and strong ;
 Till, as Christ overcame, we too conquer and sing,
 All glory to Thee, our victorious King,
 For Thine is the Power !

Our Father, Thy children rejoice in Thy reign,
 Rejoice in Thy highness, and praise Thee again !
 Yea, Thine is the kingdom and Thine is the might,
 And Thine is the glory transcendently bright,—
 For ever and ever that glory shall shine,
 For ever and ever that kingdom be Thine,
 For Thine is the Power !

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL.

ASSOCIATION OF COMETS AND STAR SHOWERS.

PART II.

THOUGH there does not appear to be any connection as to the matter of which comets are composed, and those strange systems of meteors or star showers, yet it is possible they may be associated with such systems in other ways, and for other purposes. Thus it is possible they may be the travelling reservoirs or dispensers of magnetic or electric power, and may, in their various orbits or courses, be as the sun and stars are in their own systems—feeders of magnetism and electricity to the universe. They do not themselves indeed seem to possess any attractive power so as to influence the more solid bodies of the universe in this way ; on the contrary, they are themselves subjected to

the powerful attraction of our larger planets, Jupiter, Saturn, and Uranus. It is evident, however, that within their own substance there is something strongly resembling the phenomena of magnetic or electric force and action, and as dispensers of this they may possibly be of importance. As to their association with star showers; as yet, at least, it appears to be limited to a few, and this association therefore may be but the chance falling in of these light gaseous bodies with such streams of meteors as those of August and November, along which they might be borne as a boat is carried down a rapid stream. But the whole of the subject of this association is so involved in mystery that conjecture is vain, and the above suggestion is only given for what it may be worth, until future discovery shall have at length solved it fully.

In the meantime another and recent apparent association of Biela's comet with a stream of meteors has occurred, which adds to the interest of the subject; but which, although it has not yet served to clear up the mystery, has added another item of evidence in favour of the theory. On the 27th of November, 1872, at seven o'clock P.M., the writer witnessed a magnificent shower of stars. This shower, which he first imagined to be that, or part of that, which was due on the 13th, and which for some unexplained cause had been retarded, he soon perceived to be a different stream, having a different origin, and seeming to proceed from a different quarter of the heavens from the November shower of 1866, which latter came from the star Alpha Leonis, in the constellation of Leo, from the north-east, meeting the earth in its course; whereas this shower appeared to come from the neighbourhood of Andromeda, from a much greater height, and rather from behind the earth's course. This circumstance at once distinguished the two systems to the writer. The latter shower appeared likewise to be resolved at a more distant point from the earth, although in other respects the phenomena were identical.

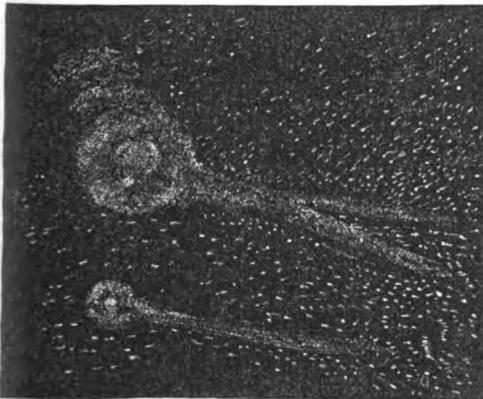
While debating in his mind to what to refer this shower, a report reached him that a German astronomer who had witnessed it had announced that this shower was but the stream associated with the comet known as Biela's, which has a period of $6\frac{1}{2}$ years, and whose perihelion was calculated for October 14th, but which could not be discovered at the time or place where it was due. Taking, then, the direction of the shower, and by it calculating the probable place of the comet, the astronomer mentioned com-

municated by telegraph with Mr. Pogson of Madras, requesting him to look for the comet, which by observation of the associated shower of meteors he assumed should be seen there, though not visible in Europe. Accordingly it is related that after two nights' vain search, something resembling Biela's comet was discovered by Mr. Pogson in the place described. The particulars of this observation have not yet been made known, but in the meantime grave doubts have been raised as to the identity of the object seen by Mr. Pogson with Biela's comet; and until this is ascertained beyond doubt no definite opinion of this strange matter can be formed. The following passage from the *Athenæum* of January 18, 1873, thus comments upon the matter: "Astronomers do not universally indorse the idea that the object discovered by Mr. Pogson on the 2nd of December was without doubt the lost comet of Biela. All that is certain is that Mr. Pogson turned his telescope on the track of the retreating meteors of November 27, and saw an object of *cometary appearance*. If really Biela's comet, something very extraordinary must have happened to that body, which, according to the very accurate calculation of its path, would have been in perihelion on the 14th of October, whereas the group of meteors which produced the shower seen here on the 27th of November did not arrive at its nearest distance from the sun till the 25th of December. The earth crossed the orbit of that comet with which the meteors appear to have so remarkable a connection on the 27th of November (the night in question), but the comet itself was far away unless some catastrophe had occurred to it since last seen (concerning which speculation is quite at fault). It is more likely that what Mr. Pogson saw was another concentration of cometary matter in the orbit of Biela."

The probability of the correctness of this last suggestion is confirmed by the writer of an elaborate and able article on the shower of November and star showers in general in the January number of the *Cornhill Magazine*, while in the mind of the present writer, likewise, it confirms the theory which he has himself already suggested in the pages, that these objects, such as Biela's comet and Enke's, should not be classified as considered identical in matter with the great comets, but are to be looked upon simply as clusters or aggregates of the matter of which the star showers are composed; in fact, what Mrs. Ward beautifully and poetically described as "the GEM in the ring" of star showers.

But the suggestion in the *Athenæum* seems to be confirmed likewise by the statements of the writer in the *Cornhill*, who asserts positively that Biela's comet *has disappeared entirely from the heavens*, not having been found where it should be at its perihelion on October 14th, notwithstanding the most careful scrutiny by Mr. Hind and other eminent searchers for the last two periods. He also suggests that probably a catastrophe has occurred to it which will prevent its ever resuming its place in its orbit, and that it will never be seen again. In a few days, however, after this paper had appeared, and subsequent to the star shower of the 27th of November, Mr. Pogson is said to have seen it in quite a different place from where it ought to be, and apparently uninjured by any catastrophe, and this just as the uninitiated readers were beginning to form their own conclusions, and to suppose that the star shower of the 27th of November was neither more nor less than the débris of the comet of Biela, into which the earth had come in contact.

Now, how are these contradictory statements to be reconciled? In the one place, Biela's comet is reported dead, smashed to atoms; in the other, alive and well as ever, only having taken a trip for its health or amusement to Madras, leaving a tail behind it to tell where it was gone. The eccentricities of Biela's comet, and its strange performances in another way, may perhaps render the latter achievement less wonderful. It is well known that Biela's comet some twenty years ago split in two, and the two comets thereby created travelled amicably together like a pair of coach horses, side by side, occasionally exchanging flashes with each other, for a whole period of seven years. Since that



they have never been seen, till being searched for in October, 1872, and nothing found but

their wake of star showers when they crossed the earth's orbit on the 27th of November, lo and behold, suddenly *one* appears at Madras—as we have seen a duck in the water when pursued by a dog, making a long dive and coming up a long way off, leaving its pursuers completely bewildered and baffled. In the meantime, however, the real *dénouement* is anxiously looked for by those interested in such subjects.

The association of comets with meteors is illustrated in a curious manner by a vision of St. John in Revelation xii. It is believed by many that St. John had a comet before his mind's eye, in vision, when he says in the 3rd verse, "There appeared a wonder in heaven. Behold a great red dragon, and his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven." By the dragon, which is equally translated serpent, St. John means Satan, who is called in the same book "the old serpent, which is the Devil."

Now, the appearance of comets in the heavens has frequently been compared to that of a serpent. Thus a work of the sixteenth century,* describing comets, says, "There are some comets that bristle with twisted serpents, another draws after it the twisted folds of a long tail." The likeness to a serpent is indeed that which suggests itself most readily to the mind on seeing the long tail of a comet, which is frequently twisted like a serpent. Probably this, brought to the mind of St. John by "The Spirit," was used by him as an illustration of Satan. But in this case the celestial serpent, or Satan, was accompanied in the apostle's vision by stars, which he is represented as "drawing to himself—even the fourth part of the stars of heaven." Here then is a vision, associating stars with a comet, and illustrating by it the presence and power of Satan. Now, have we any evidence that St. John might have himself seen [such an association of stars in the presence of a comet as, impressing his mind, may have led ultimately to this magnificent description of Satan in his vision thus illustrated. According to the calculations for the return of the November star shower of 1866, reckoning back from that date fifty-three periods—of thirty-four years each—we should arrive at A.D. 64 for the appearance of the same system in the heavens. Now, it is remarkable that it is recorded by Seneca, in the month of October, A.D. 64, a comet appeared "from the north by the west;" and it is more than probable this comet continued visible for the

* "Souciët."

succeeding month of November. Here then was the simultaneous presence of a comet and a star shower in the heavens at the same time; and if this shower proceeded from Leo, or was in fact our Leonides, or November star shower, of which there is little doubt, then the effect would have been just what St. John describes in his vision—the apparent drawing of the stars of heaven from the north-east by the comet to itself in the west. St. John, it must be remembered, was himself alive at the time referred to, and probably witnessed it.

Josephus refers to the appearance of what he calls a flaming sword in the heavens about the same time, A.D. 65, possibly the same comet that first appeared at the close of the preceding year, and appeared to St. John in the form of a serpent. This is brought forward not as a positive proof, but rather as a curious possibility of scriptural evidence of the remarkable association of comets and star showers.

But the able writer of the paper on meteoric showers in the *Cornhill* advances the theory that we must be prepared to believe that all meteoric showers and all comets must be derived from the large immatured planets of our system in a sun-like state, and with which space is filled; and that these bodies could have no other origin, but must have been shot out of their parent suns or planets, their orbits depending on the direction of the discharges, together with the attractive influence to which they are respectively subjected by other planetary or solar bodies. And a most ingenious theory is adopted as to the power of our greater planets to arrest or entangle, or prevent the entrance of, foreign star systems or comets that would come to us from without—from the interstellar space, and which derive their origin from other suns and systems, and the possibility of which the writer doubts. Yet of all this there does not appear to be a shadow of proof that can be considered satisfactory. Questions like these are beyond our reach; they are among the secret things that belong to God. The great fault of the present age, and of scientific writers, seems to be to find in secondary causes alone sufficient to account for what belongs to the First Great Cause and His immediate agency on matter; in fact, *creation by the Creator*. This is plainly beyond our faculties and knowledge. Who, for instance, can penetrate the mystery of the creation of

our own globe or any planet in the heavens? They challenge us to explain their origin from their beginning to what they now are—to explain their varied motions and the nature of the power that impels them on their course, or, having fixed their axis, preserves their inclination permanently in it. Many ingenious theories have been brought forward, it is true, to explain all this by secondary agencies, but no one has answered such questions beyond certain definite boundaries, except by guess. So with star systems and comets and all the matter with which space is doubtless filled. It is but waste of time and thought to attempt to account for their origin by secondary causes. How, for instance, does the theory assumed by the writer referred to, "that comets and star showers *must* have been derived from other stars or planets," clear up the difficulty? Supposing that it was the case, it only removes the mystery another step, and leaves us bewildered. This question still recurs, From what were the stars or planets themselves derived? Did they each produce themselves or each other, or were they each shot out of each other?

Must there always be something visible from which another something visible is to be derived? The Apostle tells us, on the contrary, that "the things which are seen are not made of things that do appear;" or, according to another reading, "are made of things that do not appear."

Such I do believe to be the case of comets and star showers. They are independent races that owe no parentage but God, and have their own peculiar functions to discharge, which we know not; but they are not made of anything which we are enabled to see; we cannot trace their pedigree. There is, in truth, but one answer to all inquiries as to the origin of such bodies, which will serve as well for comets and star showers as for suns, and stars, and planets—"He made the stars also." While we willingly allow that the Creator works through secondary causes, and has graciously permitted us to investigate many of these to our delight and instruction, He has not admitted us to His creative counsels, nor permitted us to go one step beyond the limits He has assigned to our knowledge and experience of those facts of which we may be cognisant without presumption, and which have been positively ascertained.

J. CRAMPTON.

SILENCE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PATSY'S FIRST GLIMPSE OF HEAVEN."

SILENTLY falleth
 The pitying snow ;
 Bountiful rivers
 All silently flow,—
 Silently shineth
 The sun in the sky ;
 Silently twinkle
 The great lights on high ;
 Silently groweth
 The corn in the field ;
 Silently, quietly,
 Deep wounds are healed :
 Silently loving,
 A strong heart is won,—
 Silently working,
 A good deed is done.

Noisily waketh
 The thunder's loud roar,
 Noisily breaketh
 The foam on the shore.
 Loud is the cannon
 And fierce is the strife,
 When man against man
 Is warring for life.

Hatred is loud,
 And contention doth cry ;
 But softer than summer
 Is Pity's low sigh.
 Winds that are cruel
 Are heeded by all ;
 But no man regardeth
 When soft breezes fall.

Earth's loudest battles
 Will cease before long ;
 Goodness is silent,
 And silence is strong.
 The Temple was builded
 Without any clamour—
 No voices of workmen,
 Nor sounds of the hammer ;
 The kingdom of Heaven
 In silence is growing ;
 The nations, like rivers,
 Unto it are flowing.
 We hear of the wicked,
 Their vice and their woe,
 But the prayers of the saints
 Have no record below.

AGAINST THE STREAM:

The Story of an Heroic Age in England.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE SCHONBERG-COTTA FAMILY."

CHAPTER XXVI.

PIERS and I were very full of our project of establishing a Sunday-school.

The word has not certainly, in these days, an exciting or a romantic sound. It does not exactly represent an "advanced" phase of philanthropy.

But to us in Abbot's Weir, in those days, it represented an advance which to Piers and me, and to Claire and Amice, was more exciting than any romance. To the conservative element of Abbot's Weir it represented an element of progress, most daring, not to say

Utopian and Chimerical. "Utopian" was my Uncle Fyford's term, "Chimerical" Mr. Rabbidge's.

"You will lift people out of their places," said my uncle, "and upset all orderly arrangements, until the country will be as unsettled as France. The principles of the Christian religion should be inculcated from the pulpit, as I endeavour to do. If sacred things are to be taught to ignorant infants by boys and girls, what becomes of their solemnity? And what guarantee have you they are not teaching heresy and schism? My opinion is that you will find these schools nurseries of separatists."

"But mothers have to teach, Uncle Fyford," I said.

"Then let the mothers teach, my dear," he replied, "the clergy, and parents, are undeniable authorities. Indeed, the more I think of it the more it seems to me a dangerous disturbance of the designs of Providence."

"But you cannot teach all the children, Uncle Fyford, and the mothers don't. If we only taught them the Catechism and a little of the Bible, it could hardly be heresy; could it? We can send them to say the Catechism and their texts to you when they know them."

"Thank you, my dear. But really I am not used to children, and the duties of my office are onerous enough already."

"We thought so, uncle. And so, you will let us try and help you a little? Perhaps you would even set us a few lessons? Or you will examine the children, and give the prizes, if they deserve any?"

"My dear, lessons for little children are really not in my way. If you do indeed keep to the Catechism and the Bible—the Gospels I should say—I daresay, after all, you will not go far wrong."

"You could always come and see us, you know, Uncle Fyford. And if you can only grant us the great favour we have to ask you, we shall be within easy reach. We want the old room near the Abbey Gatehouse for our schoolroom to begin with."

"My dear, it is a den of rubbish."

But he went with us, and soon his constructive mind was quite interested in the capabilities of the place, which we with Dick's aid had previously critically explored. There were blocked up windows which could easily be opened; and with a little boarding for the floor, and a little repairing of the roof, a fire-place, and a few benches and books, a desk and a bell, our preparations would soon be complete.

"Well, I suppose I cannot refuse you, Bride," he said, half good-humouredly and half resentfully. "Your 'Rights of Man' perverted you to getting your own way too long ago. But it is rather a pity I did not make the discovery before. It would have made an excellent museum for my Coleoptera. The scheme is certainly Utopian. But perhaps the world is a little better on the whole for some people having, or having had, Utopian schemes."

Mr. Rabbidge looked on the experiment from a high and philosophical point of view.

"My dear young lady," he said, pointing

to several shelves of those ponderous folios, in which to him the delights of possession and of perpetual search were blended, "look at those venerable volumes. They represent the theological researches of the wisest men of many centuries. Each of them imagined he had reached a conclusion on which Christendom might repose, and be at accord. And you see Christendom is not yet at repose or at accord. And you hope to make all this plain to babes in a few broken hours! It does sound a little chimerical."

"But, Mr. Rabbidge," I said, "the babes have to grow up and to be good, if they can. And we cannot wait until the folios are finished, and Christendom is at repose, can we, to try and help them?"

"Theology is a difficult science for young ladies to handle," he replied, "although it is one which every tinker used to think he could fathom, and which, for the feminine mind, seems to possess irresistible attractions."

"We do not want to teach them theology, if that means the contents of all those folios," I said, "I am sure. How can we dream of such a thing? We want to teach them something about Christianity, how God has loved us, and how we can show our love to Him."

"Christianity also is a large word, Miss Bride," he said, "and has many aspects. This scheme I repeat, seems to me a little chimerical. Moreover, I confess I consider it rather an interference with the order of nature to take the children from their parents for religious instruction. But I have no doubt it will do the babes good to be an hour or two every Sunday with you and your brother. And," he added pathetically, "I hope you will find the instruction of youth an easier avocation than I have."

Miss Felicity's opposition was more immovable. "What are parents for," said she, "if they are not to teach their children religion? And what are Sundays for, if they are not to give poor working people one day to spend with their families? I consider the plan at once Jacobinical and tyrannical, upsetting parental authority, and intruding on family life. Depend upon it, the poor children will learn two things in your Sunday-schools; to despise their parents, and to dress like their betters. And meantime you set the mothers free to idle and gossip away the day as they like. If you want to teach any one, teach the mothers to mend the rags, not to gossip and scold, and to keep their homes tidy."

My father undertook our defence on this occasion.

"Miss Felicity, you would scarcely set Bride to teach the mothers as they are. And in teaching the children you know she is teaching the fathers and mothers that are to be. Let us hope the Sunday-schools will succeed so well that in the next generation none will be wanted." A hope which did not seem as Utopian to us in those days as it does now.

Thus, even so humble and peaceful a mode of reformation as Sunday-schools was begun "against the stream."

In the town opinions were divided. Fortunately our family was too well known for us to be suspected, as Mrs. Hannah More had been a few years before in a similar undertaking at Cheddar, of seeking to "entrap the children in order to sell them as slaves." Nor did our fame or the extent of our operations expose us to the self-contradictory charges brought against her, of "disaffection against Church and State," of "abetting sedition," of "praying for the success of the French," and of "being paid by Mr. Pitt."

Moreover, Mrs. Hannah More and her generous sisters were pioneers, and the success of her labours, closely following those of Mr. Raikes and others, had made Sunday-schools appear rather less of an extravagance. I often think that perhaps those self-denying and calumniated labours among the "actual savages," of the Mendips may outlive all those books of hers which were welcomed with a chorus of adulation by bishops, great ladies, and statesmen. "*Aut Morus aut angelus*" might be written with more permanent letters on these than, (as they were,) by Bishop Porteus on her "Estimate of the Religion of the Fashionable World."

In our part of the country, moreover, the Wesleyans had been at work for fifty years, and the discovery of the treasures contained in the Bible had inspired hundreds and thousands of our west country miners and labourers with the determination to learn to read it. Convince any body of people that there is something infinitely well worth reading, and they will find some way to learn how to read. Let any number of people have something worth writing, friends who care to be written to and the means of communication, and they will learn to write.

The religious revival among the people of England came before the educational movement, and gave it at once its stimulus and its food. Our educational aspirations indeed were of the most moderate. Hannah More herself entirely disclaimed the idea of teaching the poor to write. "She had no inten-

tion," she apologetically assured one of her episcopal correspondents, "of raising the poor above their station."

And we had decidedly no presumptuous intentions of surpassing Mrs. Hannah More. Indeed, we were not attempting week-day schools at all. The body of religious literature with which we began was not ambitious—Mrs. Hannah More's "Church Catechism, broken into short questions," the New Testament and the Prayer-book, a spelling-book, and Watts's Hymns for Infant Minds: pictures we did not possess.

But it was a great innovation; and our dear old England, conservative to the tips of her fingers in those Jacobinical days, did suspect us very much, and resentfully wonder what new-fangled treason we were plotting at Abbot's Weir.

Of the two "vested interests" we had to contend with, the parents, and the Dames of the day-schools, the parents were divided, and not inaccessible in a slow way to conviction; but the Dames naturally were unanimous and entirely immovable. They said the gentry were going to take their bread out of their mouths, and put grand empty words into the mouths of the children. In vain we protested that we did not mean to interfere with one of their schools, but only to keep the children in order for them. The Dames were wiser in their generation than we were. They said it was easy to sow the seed, but not so easy to keep the crop from spreading. They said we should make the children discontented with them, and no one could say where it would end. Education, they felt, and felt very sagaciously, as a means of maintenance for superannuated old women, would pass away, if it was to be regarded primarily, not with reference to old women, but with reference to the children to be educated. As in so many reforms, the people to be reformed saw more clearly whither these reforms tended than the reformers.

The West Indian planters foresaw the emancipation of the slaves, when the abolitionists only intended the extinction of the slave-trade.

The Dames of Abbot's Weir beheld in agonized vision vistas of day-schools—Lancastrian, British, National—and the abolition of Dames—while we only contemplated gathering a few children together on Sundays to teach them the Sermon on the Mount, Watts's hymns, and the Catechism.

In one sense the opponents of Hannah More were not so far wrong. The germs of

a Revolution lay, awaiting development, in the first of Mr. Raikes's Sunday-schools.

The Dames, therefore, were naturally implacable. And, looking back, in my heart I pity them, more, certainly, than we did at the time. The gradual passing away of one industry after another by which poor bereaved toiling women could, by work in their homes, keep their homes together, has its darkly pathetic side. And after half a century of experience, the article manufactured in our wholesale national schools is not altogether so satisfactory as to bear no competition.

If Dames could be rendered efficient, I am inclined to believe girls at all events would be more effectively taught the things best worth a woman's learning, in small individual clusters than in great roughly classified crowds.

And if fathers and mothers could or would teach their children at home, I am sure no Sunday-school could or can compare with the moral and spiritual results of such home teaching.

But these two *ifs* involve the Golden Age.

However, these considerations make me more tolerant to the Dames and the Parents of Abbot's Weir, looking back from my old age, than I was at the time in my sanguine youth.

"Utopia!" What was there impossible for us in Utopia?

Piers and I, and Amice, and Reuben Pengelly, in that little school in the old abbey gatehouse, and the rest of us throughout England, were unsealing a fountain which was to rise, and spread, and float Abbot's Weir and England above all the rugged Ararats in the world, and begin a new era!

And the fountain of great waters did rise, and did float England, as I believe, above many a peril; although that

"Divine event
For which the whole creation waits"

seems scarcely yet in sight.

Meantime the war with the Dames waxed hot. The Dames moved the grandmothers in general, and the grandmothers moved the mothers; and I scarcely know how it would have fared with us if Reuben had not adopted the Machiavelian policy of subsidising the most intelligent and indignant of the Dames, the one who could read and write, to take charge of the babies in church. It was, Amice protested, an infant sacrifice to Moloch; for she declared that subdued sounds of woe, as from pinched and cuffed infants, surreptitiously pinched during the singing of the Psalms, issued from the dame's charge. But the stratagem answered. A split was effected

in the hostile cabinet. The babies grew up; in due time the dame grew too feeble or too mild to pinch, and the subsequent babies were mercifully suffered to sleep on warm afternoons, if they did it quietly.

Our beginnings, as in most undertakings that live, were small. We started with five teachers and ten children.

The mothers brought the little ones, and left them, not without anxious exhortations to us, and many encouragements to the children. They evidently regarded it as a loan in concession to some fancy of ours, for which the subjects deserved compensation.

One woman only addressed her exhortations to the child, and her encouragements to us.

"If you can make anything of he, Miss Bride, it's more than his father or me can, or the dame, and sure enough, you're right welcome to him."

A challenge which greatly stimulated our ambition.

A beginning was all that was needed.

Amice, herself permitted to come only under a kind of commission of lunacy (Madam Glanvil protesting that the world being turned crazy, it was as well to encourage the least frantic of its delusions), took the youngest class, the babies, as we called them, although we had none under five. She said to me that the babies suited her and her theology best, and as by-and-by she hoped to have to do with the lowest class, the children among the races, it was the best training for her.

She painted them Bible pictures, she brought them flowers, she taught them in parables; and they certainly heard her gladly. Her class was the most popular of all. The difficulty was to get any one to grow out of it.

Yet more than one darling little one did grow out of it into higher teaching than ours. Infant epidemics carried off far more in those days than now.

In long after years reminiscences would be brought out to me, by mothers, of little hymns and sacred sayings of some lost darling, and of the name of Jesus, blended by infant lips with that of "mother," and of "Miss Amice," as of One nearer, and dearer, and kinder, and better than all, to Whom it was nothing strange or sad to go.

And more than that, the hymns and texts the little ones had loved would be spelt over by lips and hearts often as simple, though not indeed as innocent, as theirs; and rough men would come to be taught the way the little lost children had found so pleasant, and to tread it, pleasant or hard, if only it led where they were gone.

Claire did not join us, but she sought out many a stray lamb to send to us.

The elder class fell to me; and many a lesson I learned in trying to teach them; among them, a greater allowance for my stepmother and Miss Felicity, and a general appreciation of the difficulties of teachers and parents, ministers, pastors, and masters, and all governing persons; many a lesson also as to the defectibility of my own temper, and the fallibility and general vagueness of my own knowledge.

For if there is no flattery so delicious as the attention of children, it is just because they are quite incapable of the flattery of pretending to attend when they are not interested, or of pretending to understand when they do not, or of accepting a rhetorical paraphrase instead of a clear explanation.

The school soon grew, so that we had to transfer the boys to one of the large workshops at the Foundry.

The girls soon became at home with me, as the lads did with Piers. They knew us already on so many sides, as, also, we knew them.

Amice and Piers and I found that we had to study the histories of the Bible in quite a new way, to make them real to our pupils, and to study the outer and inner world, nature and life, anew, to transfuse Christianity through them.

And so, if we and our friends did not altogether make a new era in England or Abbot's Weir, the little Sunday-school certainly made a new era for us, and I trust for not a few who came to it.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THROUGHOUT the winter of 1801, and the spring of 1802, the enthusiasm with which the people had welcomed the peace with France had been slowly cooling.

By March, 1802, when the "Definitive Treaty" of Amiens was announced, all idea of the peace being definitive had begun to fade away.

The most immovable of Tories in those dreary days had the best of it in prognostication. Those whose hopes of human progress had been largest and most enduring, had to confess themselves most deluded. But few kept hold, through those terrible years of the failure of freedom and the triumph of falsehood, of "blood and fire, and vapour of smoke," in which the last century set and the present rose, at once of faith in freedom, and of trust in the loving rule of God.

This world for Napoleon Buonaparte, and

the next for justice and the just, seemed as much as the hopefulness of any could grasp.

To my uncle Fyford and Madam Glanvil, indeed, the question was entirely without clouds.

"The French had given themselves up to the devil," said Madam Glanvil, "and the devil had been sent them in the person of Napoleon Buonaparte. It was quite clear, and all fair; at least as regarded the French. And it would be quite clear for us if we did not resist the devil, that is, fight the French, as the Bible told us."

My uncle Fyford, in more clerical and classical language, observed, "The democracy of Paris has gone the way of all democracies—run to seed in despotism. If the democracy and the despotism are not to become universal, William Pitt and England will have to crush them."

France began to be embodied to us in the terrible form of the Corsican, terribly rising and growing gigantic before the eyes of the Democracy that, like Faust, had evoked the earth-spirit, and could not banish it. And, instinctively, England began to look around for some one princely will to encounter the foe.

Men began to feel bad weather was ahead, and to ask, like St. Christopher, for "the strongest, that they might obey him."

"*Il parle en roi*," said our ambassador, the Marquis of Cornwallis, writing of Napoleon from Paris. There was no trace of Jacobinism in the new French Constitution. No government could be more despotic. Also there was a concordat arranged by Napoleon between France and the Pope.

"Royalty without loyalty," Madame des Ormes said, "and religion without faith! The republic was bad, but this vulgar new pomp, how can any one bear it?"

Englishmen and Englishwomen in those first months of peace flocked to Paris, the Paris which since Englishmen saw it last had guillotined her king and queen, devoured brood after brood of her Revolution, deluged her own streets, and Europe, with the best blood of France, adored the goddess of reason, established *tutoy*-ing and the abolition of all titles, and now again was commanding men and women to call each other *Madame* and *Monsieur* (*Madame* being politely restored many months before *Monsieur*), nay, was even said to be rising to the height of *Monseigneur* and *Votre Altesse*, and secretly preparing the Temple to Cæsar in which her offerings for so many generations were to be laid.

Madame said mournfully, "All can go

back to France except her own children. And yet what should we find there? Scarcely even ruins; they will be buried under the new constructions. Yet I would give something for tidings of our old *terres* and the peasantry. The château is gone, and the lands are confiscated; but I think the people—some of them—would remember us affectionately."

After that Piers began to think of an expedition to Paris. He set his whole heart on it, I could see, although he spoke little.

But to us the year 1802 was full of many events which prevented his departure.

The timber trade had been much disturbed by the war; my father had lost more than one cargo by privateers. Not a few of our merchants had effected a kind of Lynch law insurance by taking shares in privateers, paying themselves for piracies by robbing some one else. But this my father would never do. Piers, therefore, was peculiarly unwilling to ask him to incur any additional expense for him.

Moreover, Francis went to Oxford that year, which had involved many expenses, and among others the clearing out of Piers' and my purses, to clear off all the various small debts he had contracted in the town.

Piers hoped that an entirely fresh start, and the relief which he imagined it must be to any one to have the burden of debt altogether lifted off, would be the best possible chance for Francis's turning over a new leaf.

Francis himself, of course, was completely of the same opinion. He seemed for once really grateful.

"It was more than brotherly," he said, "and he should never forget it."

He acceded with fervour to Piers's declaration that this help was the very last secret help he would give. He admitted with decision that a young man at the university was in a totally different position from a lad at school, and must of necessity be a totally different being. "Besides, his allowance was ample, his outfit most elaborate—he never could want anything beyond." He smiled at Piers's apprehensions. "In fact, although he did not like to promise too much, he intended that neither Piers nor I should in the end be losers by our most generous conduct."

So the summer passed, without Piers seeing any means of accomplishing his journey.

But in our little circle at Abbot's Weir one act of Napoleon wrought more indignation than any besides. This was his expedition to restore slavery in St. Domingo.

All the previous winter Loveday Benbow had been watching with the deepest interest

the movements of Toussaint L'Ouverture and his black republic in Hayti.

She thought, with thousands besides in England, that at last the despised negro race was about to manifest its capabilities. It was true that the supremacy of the whites had not been overthrown without bloodshed. This was to dear peace-loving Loveday the only doubtful feature. But if ever war was justifiable, it was to rescue the feeble and oppressed from slavery; if Leonidas and Wilhelm Tell were heroes, Toussaint L'Ouverture's banner was at least as pure.

The negro government once established, all seemed going on peaceably and justly. The trust of the liberated negro in liberated France, liberator of nations, is as affecting to look back on as the betrayed confidence of a child.

Looking back also, we can see that the whole movement was only too childlike; the reverence of the long oppressed for the ability of the dominant white race only too great, the copying too exact.

France had a republic, and permitted no title but citizen. Toussaint and San Domingo must therefore have a republic, and the *ci-devant* slaves own no dignity beyond that of citizen. Poor blind copies of what was in itself a poor parody of the institutions of grand old times and grand old races, without significance or foundation! Citizens who had been trained in no civic rights, had no civic life, indeed, no civilisation, except the thinnest crust of French polish!

Then France instituted a First Consul. Immediately, Toussaint L'Ouverture proclaimed himself First Consul, and wrote to the First Consul (intending it as a compliment), "*The first of the Blacks to the first of the Whites.*"

Napoleon responded by a sarcasm, and an army. "*He would not have military honours assumed,*" he said, "*by apes and monkeys.*"

It is easy to see now how thin and imitative that black republic was; but its very childishness only makes its history in some ways more pathetic. To us, then, fondly catching at any sign of capability in our poor blacks, it seemed like the inauguration of a new era.

Cousin Harriet wrote enthusiastically from Clapham. "Some people," she said, "thought Toussaint L'Ouverture was inaugurating a new era, not only for the negroes and the West Indies, but for the Church and the world. Some one had said that the negro race would probably commence a new age of Christianity. The Eastern Churches had

had their age of subtle thought and elaborate dogma, and the Latin and German races had shown the strength and ability of man. The negro race might be destined to manifest his gentler virtues; to develop on earth for the first time the sublime and lowly morality of the Sermon on the Mount. Greeks had taught us how to think, Romans how to fight, negroes would teach us how to suffer and to forgive."

It was a golden vision.

Only, as Amice suggested and Loveday mournfully admitted, they had not exactly begun in San Domingo with forgiving. However, the forgiving might no doubt come afterwards.

Madam Glanvil was naturally much irritated at the whole thing.

She was almost reconciled to Napoleon for characterizing the negro republicans as "apes." "Apes and monkeys they were," said she, "only he might have carried the comparison a little further home. The French aped the Greeks and Romans, Brutus and his conspiracy of assassins, and now they seemed likely to ape Cæsar, and more successfully; and the blacks aped the French. There was a difference; the French did it better. But apes they were, all alike."

Indeed Madam Glanvil had difficulty at times in not taking Napoleon Buonaparte as her hero. They had many points in common.

To her the great authorisation of the "powers that be" is that they be powers. Had Napoleon been a Bourbon, she said, there would have been no revolution. In his sarcasms against the republican theorists she greatly rejoiced.

His "*Je ne veux point d'idologues*" expressed her convictions better than any formula previously invented.

She was not a little inclined to agree with him, that the swallowing up of Piedmont and the Valais were "*deux misérables bagatelles*," not worth our disturbing ourselves about.

If he would have let England alone, she would have willingly consented to leaving the rest of the world, black and white, alone with him.

"Those foreigners," she said, "will never understand either loyalty or liberty, or a constitution. Some one is sure to tyrannize over them and make them uncomfortable. What does it matter who?"

But England was rising slowly to another mind.

In the spring of 1802 my cousins wrote to me again, mentioning the threatened French expedition against San Domingo. "Can

you believe it?" they said. "English merchants have been base enough to assist in it with transports. Mr. Wilberforce remonstrated in the House of Commons; but Mr. Addington responded very languidly. Papa says we must have Mr. Pitt back, or everything will be lost—honour, commerce, negroes, and England." They said there must be meetings everywhere; the people everywhere must be roused and instructed. They only needed to know.

"*Could you not get up a meeting in Abbot's Weir for the abolition of the slave-trade?*"

It was so easy to get up meetings at Clapham! My cousins had no idea what a difficult thing they were proposing.

Father said of course we could.

Piers said then of course we *would*.

I felt ashamed of myself. I had thought so much of self-denials and tests of the reality of conviction, as a little deficient at Clapham; and here, at last, came a test to me, and I shrank back from it.

For an anti-slavery meeting presided over, as it must be, by my father, meant, to me, banishment from Court; and, to Amice, I knew not what, of perplexity and trial.

I dared not say anything for or against. I only told Amice; and she, after a pause, said what I knew she would say.

"It must be done, Bride. You must do it, and you and I must bear it. Think," she added, "if it was only the least little push onward to the lifting off of the terrible wrong! What does it matter what little trials we have to suffer? The wrong is there, the sin is there, the suffering is there, and that *is* the trial."

So I wrote, by my father's desire, to Cousin Crichton to say we would do all we could—receive the deputation, take the room, advertise the meeting, and explain its intention.

The year wore on. The French expedition reached San Domingo in February.

The reduction of the emancipated negroes to slavery was too plainly its object. Toussaint L'Ouverture and all the Blacks understood it, and made a determined resistance; not in vain, as a proof of what negroes well led could do, but necessarily in vain as to success against the veteran brigades of the French Republic; for the Frenchmen they encountered were veterans, and were Republicans. The First Consul was believed to have a double object in view in this expedition; to re-enslave the Black race, and to dispose of some troublesome Republican troops, which might be too austere to bend to his imperial purpose.

In the last object he succeeded completely. About fifty thousand French soldiers were slain in the conflicts with the Blacks, or perished of disease between February, 1802, and December, 1803. In the second object he succeeded but imperfectly. Toussaint L'Ouverture, the noblest and ablest of the Blacks, brave and not unmerciful; with his determination to liberate his own race, and his noble readiness to learn of the white race, whose superiority he acknowledged, was entrapped by false promises, and sent to France to die of starvation. But the Negroes continued the resistance under more savage leaders; and in the end the last French general, Ferrand, abandoned by France, blew out his brains "in despair," the Spaniards recovered the island, and slavery was re-established.

In August, Toussaint L'Ouverture was thrown into the Prison of the Temple in Paris, thence transferred to the Fortress of Joux, in a ravine of the Jura; the victim we all felt of too frank a trust in the honour of the white men he believed in, yet had dared, and dared successfully, to resist.

The lull of the parliamentary anti-slavery conflict, which had lasted since Mr. Wilberforce's defeat in 1799, continued. All the more important was it that the struggle should not be suffered to be forgotten in the country, and the campaign be carried on in detail. Accordingly our anti-slavery meeting in Abbot's Weir could not be deferred.

My cousins wrote of it with enthusiasm. They considered it quite a fresh launch for Abbot's Weir. Cousin Crichton himself was to come down to assist. At last, in October, the fatal day arrived.

Large handbills had been posted on various friendly walls and gates for a fortnight. The old town-crier had rung his bell and sounded his "Oyez!" although that was by no means an effective way of trumpeting any fact. The room over the market-house had been engaged.

Still Madam Glanvil had not apprehended the event which both Amice and I believed would involve a sentence of banishment from Court, for me and mine.

The meeting was fixed for Monday. On the Saturday before, Amice and I had a long walk in the woods of Court, the brown carpet of fallen leaves rustling under our feet, the gold and crimson canopy of fading leaves above our heads growing into a fine network, through which the blue sky shone on us; whilst below the river rolled with its full autumn volume of sound. For some time

I had avoided dining or spending the day in the house; nor had Amice pressed it. We felt it would have been a kind of treason to Madam Glanvil. Indeed, it was hard to know how far we ought to tell her what was intended.

Our hearts were very heavy. Amice and I had often an opposite feeling as to the sympathy of nature. To-day this was especially the case.

To me there seemed a deathlike weight on all the woods. The birds we startled flew with an uneasy cry from us like creatures who had no home to fly to. The river rolled sullenly on. Even the green fronds of the ferns were hidden under the withered and sodden leaves. Everything spoke of joys, and hopes, and life vanished. The very pomp was funereal. So often we had wandered about those woods together, free and glad; and now we only seemed to creep through them like trespassers.

I was very sad; and it seemed to me, in my childishness, all nature was sad too. But Amice entirely rejected the idea of such sympathy.

"Nature is too old and wise to mew and puke with her children like that," said she. "And she is also too grand and far-seeing. Our mother, if you choose to call her so, is a queen. She has her kingdom to care for, and if now and then she gives a kiss or a smile to our little miseries, it is all we can expect of her. She has seen so many such breakings of hearts healed. She is too stately and too busy, to heed our complainings overmuch. She knows nothing of death and parting. She only knows death as a phase of life. The dead leaves and flowers are dear to her as the cradle of next year's leaves and flowers. If they were dead trees or forests she would not care more. She would wear them down into mould for new trees and forests, or perhaps into bogs and coal mines. Nothing comes amiss to her. The war and torture even among her animals do not disturb her. She is very stately and philosophical, even if she does not enjoy it; like a matron of old Rome at the gladiatorial fights. She is healthy, and has strong nerves. And to imagine she would look downcast because you and I do not know what trouble to-morrow may bring us!"

We went home by the kitchen garden. We had determined to spend our last half hour at the window-seat in Amice's bedroom. All kinds of first things came into our memory, as so often happens, when we are, or think we are, on the verge of the last things.

We passed the old damp mouldy arbour.

"Do you remember your portrait, Amice, the crocus bulb feeling for something to root itself in?"

"And do you remember," she replied, "putting your arm around me, and half sobbing, 'You mean *me*, Amice?' so surprised and glad you were! and then half sadly, 'only *me*—what am I?'"

I remembered.

"We have learned that *only me* would not quite do, Bride. Only One will do to rest one's whole heart in. But your *only me* has been no little help. Ah, Bride, for how many years!"

We went up to her room, hers and once her Great-Aunt Prothesea's. We sat on the low window-seat, and she repeated to me two stanzas of one of her German hymns:—

"Du bist der Hirt der Schwache trägt
Aux Dich will ich mich legen,
Du bist der Arzt der Kränke pflegt
Erquick mich mit Segen.
Ich bin in Wahrheit schwach und siech
Ach komm verbind' und heile mich
Und pflege den Elenden."

"The Shepherd who carries the weak, and strengthens them by carrying," she said. And then rising into a more joyous strain, she began:—

"Nun ich will mit Freuden
Schen was Er thut
Wie er mich wird ansehen
Weil er doch nicht ruht
Bis er mir kann halten
Seinen theuren Eid,
Dass ich noch soll werden
Seine ganze Freud."

"No," she said with a quiet triumph in her deep tones. "He will not rest, until to us, even to us, He fulfils his dear oath,' that we, even we, shall become through and through, 'altogether a joy,' even to Him."

We sate some minutes silent, hand in hand, while through the open window came the colours of the autumn sunset, and the murmur of the river, and now and then a quiet song of a robin.

"Listen!" she said, "I will call nature no more irreverent names. She sings all through our sorrows, as the robin sings through the cold, as the white-robed multitudes in the Revelation sing on the Hallelujah, and 'again they cry Hallelujah,' through all the tumult of earth. She sings because she sees a hand within, an end beyond, a Face above. Or if she does not, we do, Bride! We see, and at all events, through all, we will sing. Some sighing, I think, is singing; and some silence is better, when patience and hope, who never seem long far apart from each other, make melody in the heart."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

WHEN I returned from Court that Saturday evening, Cousin Crichton had arrived.

He was one of those people to whom his own favourite epithet "sound" applied in every possible way. Health, heart, purse, judgment, doctrine, all with him were sound; not a flaw anywhere, nor an angle to make flaws in other people's health, persons, or hearts; his round, sound, solid personality, made the world around him seem more solid and better balanced, as if it had another broad-shouldered Atlas to bear it up.

Every one was in the state drawing-room. The amber furniture was uncovered. Mrs. Danescombe encompassed with crust after crust of clothes and conventionalities, a new tiara with an erect feather, a new silk that would "stand alone," and looked as if it would have liked it better. My father a little like an exiled potentate, as he always was in the amber drawing-room, trying to feel at home, and as little able to do it as the chairs placed at irregular angles with an elaborate pretence of being accustomed to be sat upon. And Cousin Crichton beaming with kind intentions and hospitality *in esse* or *in posse*, rubbing his hands with that effusive manner which always gave him the effect of being everybody's host; elaborately making the very best of Abbot's Weir, the narrow streets, the little houses, our church, our hills, our old grey tower and chimes, in a way which gave one the impression that he was perpetually apologizing to Clapham for having been born in so insignificant a corner; sanguine about the abolition meeting, about the peace, about everything, and yet all the while, one could not but feel, liable in the most placid manner, at every turn, to tread on all the uncomfortable toes of Abbot's Weir, as unconsciously as if Abbot's Weir had no toes to be trodden on.

"Well, Bride," he said, kissing me and laughingly rubbing his hands, "my fair Trappist, have you forgiven us yet for being so 'terribly rich' at Clapham?"

My stepmother looked,—petrified I cannot say, since the word represented rather her usual manner,—she looked as if she were going back from a fossil to a living madrepora, cold and gelatinous. Could I have said anything so rustic, so vulgar, so presumptuous?

"You have all but perverted your cousin Harriet into a reformer," he said. "I am half afraid of her going into bread and water, or Quaker bonnets, or starting off for the Indies, East or West. She does not seem

able by any means to make herself as uncomfortable as she would like."

"Cousin Harriet to the Indies?" I said. "Is she to be married?"

"Quite the contrary," he replied; "unless she can find some one who is poor enough to make her as uncomfortable as she would wish. Seriously, Bride, she is a dear, good girl, but just a little wild about the prisons and the slaves, and the missionaries, and everybody's wrongs and rights. At last, you know, the Church of England has sent to the heathen not only the money you so magnificently despise, but a *man*, a Senior Wrangler. Henry Martyn (one of our West-country men, by-the-by) has given up the best career in England to devote himself to the conversion of the Hindoos. At last we have sent one of our highest; not a German, nor a shoemaker, nor a Separatist of any kind, but a first-class university man, and a sound English Churchman. But Harriet seems most inclined to the Moravians. I believe if I would allow her, she would go to-morrow to teach slave children in one of the Moravian settlements in Antigua."

A thought flashed on me, and with it a pang. Could it be that this was another cord being woven into the net which I was so afraid would at last sweep away Amice from me?

The next day was Sunday. After the afternoon service Cousin Crichton asked which was Madam Glanvil. He had pleasant boyish recollections of shooting over the covers of Court. He was anxious to see the lady of the manor; the earliest state ceremonial he could remember being Madam Glanvil's triumphal entry, as a blooming bride, with the young Squire, into Abbot's Weir, under arches of flowers, with the old bells clashing cannons, and ringing joyous peals; the tenants and townsmen hurraing, and the boys, himself among the number, indulged in an unlimited allowance of noise.

He had no idea in what a hostile form he was now entering Madam Glanvil's principality. The coach was at the church door before we had finished our inspection of various old family monuments and tablets of our own.

We came out at the old Lych gate, just as the two black footmen were drawn up in the usual form to usher Madam into the coach. But there was a variety in the ceremonial, to me terribly significant. Amice, instead of lingering behind, as usual, for a greeting from my father, was marshalled before her grandmother, who followed her without turning

round for the imperial but friendly Jupiter nod with which she usually favoured us. For a moment I caught sight of Amice's face leaning eagerly forward and looking very pale. In another moment, by a stormy flash from Madam Glanvil's steel-grey eyes, I saw that her *not seeing* us was positive, not negative. Then the blind was drawn violently down, the footmen sprang up behind, and the horses pranced demonstratively away.

By this I knew that Madam Glanvil had heard of the abolition meeting, and that sentence had gone forth between us and Amice.

"I thought Miss Glanvil was your greatest friend, Bride?" Cousin Crichton said.

"She was," I almost gasped, my heart beating violently; "she is, she always will be."

He looked amused at the solemnity and terseness of my protest.

"Preoccupied to-day?"

"It is the abolition meeting," my father interposed.

"Ah, I remember. Her father was a West India planter. The young lady has slave property. I see."

"Indeed," Cousin Crichton, I said, "you don't see! She is more fervent for abolition, for emancipation,—than any one. We can all talk. That is easy enough. But she *suffers*."

"The old lady does not approve?"

"Approve!" I said. That mild phrase applied to Madam Glanvil's sentiments, indicated the depth of Cousin Crichton's want of comprehension. "She is furious, mad, against it, against missionaries, against philanthropy, against Clapham, against every one and everything that dares touch on the subject."

"Ah!" said genial Cousin Crichton, "very unpleasant for the poor girl! But not even fathers or mothers, much less grandmothers, must stand in the way. It is written, we all know, 'Cut off the right hand, Pluck out the right eye.'"

"Unpleasant!" yes, I should think it would be unpleasant for Amice! In the bitterness of my heart I said to myself that unpleasantness was the sharpest form of martyrdom Clapham knew, or chose to know in its own person. The plucking out of the right eye, being so rich, it naturally paid to have done by proxy—by Germans, Methodists, Baptist shoemakers. I was as unjust to prosperous Clapham as Madam Glanvil. Talking was so easy; and yet to me the talking to-morrow evening would actually be cutting off the right hand. My only consolation was to go

and sit with Loveday. She knew, at all events, something of what right hands and right eyes meant; although for her, dear soul, the crushing and cutting had been done by an irresistible Hand, and had only been made her own act by acquiescence.

She was resting on the long cushioned window-seat, beside her a little table with a great nosegay of flowers from the conservatories at Court. Amice sent one, or when she could, brought it, every Saturday.

She had brought that yesterday.

That little trifling token of kindness melted

me out of my lofty heroics. I burst into tears, and pointing to the flowers said—

“Oh, Loveday! It is the last! She will never bring them again.”

Loveday started.

“Amice ill?” she said. “What has happened? My dear, I am afraid my deafness increases, I am so stupid. I must have heard wrong.”

“No,” I sobbed. “The meeting; the meeting to-morrow! She was not allowed to speak to us to-day.”

Loveday leant back. Her lips quivered a



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little, but instead of tears came that smile of hers which was like music.

“It is beginning, dear child,” she said; “*at last it is beginning!*” taking my hand. “You know it must have come. And she is ready. It has not come before she was quite ready.”

“But I am not ready!” I said.

“No; naturally. We never are ready for our dearest to suffer. Therefore the cup is not in our hands.”

“But not to stand by her! Not to be able to help her in the least!”

“You can help her, Bride. You know

how. And the bitter cup itself will help her more. It is good, Bride, it is God’s best to give us to drink ever so little of the cup He drank of; the cup itself strengthens, Bride,” she said, with the conviction of one who has tasted. “After so many thousand years, do you think the Master does not know how to mix the bitter herbs?”

The Anti-Slave-Trade Meeting was not impressive as to quality or quantity, “rank or fashion;” no chariots as at Freemasons’ Hall, no titles, clerical or lay.

We had one clergyman, a young man recently appointed to one of the parishes bordering on the Moor. Shy, he looked, and gentle, and rather overwhelmed by the prominence that had to be given to him. We had our one physician, and much to Dr. Kenton's credit it was that he came, running counter by that act to the prejudices of Miss Felicity and of his patroness, Madam Glanvil. Madam Glanvil, indeed, had never been known to be in need of a physician. But in attending this evening Dr. Kenton must have counted the cost to science and to himself, and must have known that whatever happened in the future, he abandoned the inmates of Court to being systematically "lowered" into the grave.

There were several small tradesmen attending at some risk of loss; there was one Methodist farmer, brought by John Wesley's "Thoughts on Slavery;" there were numbers of mechanics and labourers, many of them from our foundry and timber-yard; and there were all our Sunday-school children—the boys very impressive in stamping applause, when they understood it was allowed.

My father took the chair. The forms of "moving and seconding" seemed like parodies in that confidential little gathering. But Cousin Crichton was rigid in his adherence to them.

It seemed scarcely worth while to have summoned Cousin Crichton from London, and to have severed such ties, just to spread a little information among a few people, all of whom we knew, and to whom we could say so much more in confidence any day!

At least my cowardly heart said so.

But might not the same be said of all symbols? Was there not a moment in life when two people clasping hands before a few others meant union for life and death? Were not nearly all the testing acts of life from the first recorded, in themselves mere trifles, such as the plucking of one fruit?

Had there not been a moment when the future of the world depended on a hundred and twenty men and women, most of them poor and unlettered, meeting together in an upper chamber to confess that they believed One to be alive who was said to be dead, and waited for some gift He had promised?

Poor little meeting in the Abbot's Weir market-room! It meant something, perhaps, even above. It symbolized enough indeed to me.

But just as my father was beginning his speech, one figure quietly entered, and remained just inside the door, whose arrival took

away all doubt as to the significance of the symbol to me.

Veiled and cloaked as the figure was, I knew it at once. It was Amice Glanvil.

My father recognised her also. I knew by the little tremulousness in his voice.

An officious porter would have placed for her a chair of honour, but my father motioned him to be quiet.

She did not remain cloaked. As the speeches went on, she threw aside her cloak, and her hood fell back unconsciously as she leant forward, listening, quite calm, and apparently seeing no one, but with a steady fire in her eyes.

I trembled, now, lest Cousin Crichton should say any severe indiscriminating things against the planters, as if they were all Neros, which she could not bear to bear.

But severity was not his weakness; and the audience was not impassioned enough to sweep an orator on into any wild statements.

Cousin Crichton began with praising everybody whom he could praise. And then a new and paralyzing fear came over me that he would round off a period with "heroic women forsaking their parents, and cutting off right hands." But happily either the bad light of our tallow candles saved him from the discovery, or his better genius interposed.

He much commended the shy young clergyman.

Conservative as he was, true to Church and King, Lords and Commons, and all the details of our inimitable constitution, he confessed he regretted that in this instance the Upper House had scarcely taken the lead in good works, as might have been hoped. The Bill for the abolition of the abominable trade had once passed the Commons, but never yet the Lords. We were told indeed that "not many noble" (in my presence he did not venture on the "not many rich"). "But he rejoiced to tell them—if they did not already know—that among those doubly ennobled by being first in this noble cause were their own Earl and Countess of Abbot's Weir; and that one at least of the royal dukes, the Duke of Gloucester, was with us. (Prolonged cheers.)

"He would have been glad also, loyal as any man in England to his Church, if her ministers, or, at all events, her bishops, had led their flocks in this crusade. But the bishops, as a body, had not yet taken this position. Two of their number, however, were firm supporters—Bishop Porteus, of London, and Bishop Horsley, of St. Asaph's. The exceptional names deserved mention,

much as one regretted their being exceptional."

Then, with a tribute to the young clergyman present, to John Wesley, to the Quakers, and to my father, each of which brought its meed of cheering, and gradually warmed the audience into a readiness to receive the facts he had to relate, he began the serious portion of his speech.

First of all the decrease instead of increase of the slave population through cruelty and toil, which was the originating cause of the Trade; the inciting of the natives of Africa to war; the kidnapping and packing in the hold of the ship, illustrated by a large copy of Mr. Clarkson's dreadful diagram; the statistics of death on the voyage. Thus, in a calm, English, business-like way he went over the whole terribly familiar ground.

He would not dwell on isolated instances of excess or of cruelty. There was isolated excess in a thousand directions, among our parish apprentices, among our seamen. It was the cruelty involved in the mildest form under the mildest task-master, owner, or overseer, the cruelty inevitable in the traffic, on which he insisted. Unless the toil and the punishments in the plantations were such as to crush a race, a tropical race, it must be remembered, working in a climate congenial to them, the population would not have to be recruited from Africa, and the trade would not be needed. Unless a system of savage warfare, secret attacks, burning villages, kidnapping, and wrongs unutterable, were encouraged in Africa, the trade would not be possible.

Then he went into the history of the struggle, giving their due to John Woolman, Antony Benazet, Leonhard Dober, the Moravians and Wesleyans, and the American Quakers, and alluding to the labours of Granville Sharp and of Clarkson, and to the championship of Mr. Wilberforce, he concluded with a contrast between the professions of liberty, equality, and fraternity in France which had ended in this invasion of San Domingo, and in the imprisonment of Toussaint, the greatest negro, in the dungeon on the Jura—and the freedom based on a religion and a constitution like our own; between the noisy explosion of revolution ending in despotism to the white, and slavery for the black, and the great patient struggle against wrong, carried on now from the Houses of Parliament to every corner of our country, and before long, as he believed, to end triumphantly, or, rather, as he dared to hope, to begin a fresh era of conflict and victory, by the abolition of the slave-trade.

And all the time I was listening, not in my own person, but in that of Amice Glanvil.

When Cousin Crichton closed, I ventured to steal another look at her face. It was full of a great joy, although I could see it was wet with tears.

The young clergyman pronounced a benediction. We sang the Doxology; and then the meeting broke up.

Amice caught my eye, and I rose instinctively to move towards her. But she looked very grave, shook her head, motioned me away, and in another moment, with her rapid movements, had cloaked herself, and disappeared from the room.

I was anxious how she would get home. But before I could say so, Piers had disappeared, and did not return among us until he had watched her safely inside the gate.

At the gate she turned and shook hands with him; but she said nothing.

And as Piers came back he met Reuben Pengelly on the same errand.

"Poor lamb!" said Reuben. "We say the words, but she has to carry the wood for the sacrifice."

I felt sure I understood what she meant. She would resist her grandmother's will for what she deemed a duty, a confession of the right. But she would not by that means win for herself one moment of pleasant intercourse with us.

When should I know what or how she had suffered? Loveday said we did know how she endured, and that was much.

I knew sooner than I expected.

The next morning a letter came from Amice, saying, "I have told Granny I mean to see you, and to wish you good-bye. Come this afternoon to the old hollow trunk that hangs over the violet bank, by the river, just inside the gate. *It is begun*, Bride. I feel that my work, the work for me, has begun. And it will not be left unfinished."

When I came to the old trunk we had sat on so often, she was there. She took my hands and kissed them. I would have thrown my arms around her, but she would not have it.

"*I am one of them*, Bride," she said, "not by condescension or sympathy; but really, literally, by *birthright*. Granny says my mother, my father's wife, was a slave. Therefore I have a right to care for them. You see I am scarcely myself freeborn."

And as she said so, her eyes kindled, her form rose into such a majesty, and her face so shone with the feeling and purpose of the

soul, as to give one some conception of what might be meant by a "spiritual body." Free-born indeed she was; free-born in the old Teutonic sense, every inch and every thought of her, *free*, that is, *noble*; possessor of herself and of who could say what besides, free and royal as the heir of a hundred generations of royalty.

"Granny would never have told me," she said, "unless she had been beside herself with anger. And I believe she would give much to have the words unsaid. It happened in this way. It was on Sunday afternoon, as we drove to church. On a bit of old wall fronting the gate was one of the advertisements, and in the large letters, '*Anti-Slavery Meeting, Monday evening*,' and '*Piers Danescombe in the chair*.' She was there in the morning, but she had not seen it. Instantly she leant out of window and stopped the carriage.

"Cato and Cæsar came to the window looking very conscious and sheepish.

"'Tear down that,' she said.

"She was too angry for epithets.

"The poor fellows tore the paper into shreds.

"'Take up the shreds,' said she, "and carry them to Mr. Danescombe's counting-house to-morrow with my compliments, and tell him I shall prosecute with the utmost rigour of the law whoever dared to fix that vile trash on my walls. Now drive on.'

"Cato trembled, but I caught sight of a grin on Cæsar's face as he retired.

"'Now,' she said, turning to me, 'when did you know of this?'

"'Some weeks since,' I said.

"'And that little silky creature from the town, too,' said she. 'Fool that I was to expect more from *your mother's child*.'

"And in that frame of mind we entered the church.

"How we left it you know.

"As for me, I could not help being more than half on her side. How could it look to her, but as a long course of concealment? How could she understand all the reasons which made us feel it hopeless to tell her beforehand? her deafness, her imperiousness, the hopelessness of arguing with her, the impossibility of abandoning what we considered right.

"Before the evening I should have made a determined effort, and told her all I felt, cost her and me what it might; and it might have ended, after a storm, in our understanding each other better than before.

"But for those words '*your mother's child*!'

I think she would have withdrawn them, if she could, and have concentrated her anger on you and your father. But she could not tear the words out of my heart; nor could I suffer all she said of you.

"I need not tell you that, Bride; it would be ungenerous and unjust, You know her; and how much, and how little, such words mean."

I knew, indeed, that Madame Glanvil did deal largely in superlatives, although not at all in the style of the superlatives of Clapham.

"However, she roused me beyond endurance. I defended you,—I could not help it,—and said a thousand vehement things, which of course had a doubly vehement effect, shouted close to her ear. It is so difficult under the calmest circumstances, to discuss anything with a deaf person without seeming in a passion.

"I said you and your father were the very soul of truth and honour.

"Then she turned on me and said again,—

"'She had been a fool to expose me to low hypocritical influences, but that no influence would ever have persuaded a true Glanvil to do what I had done. What could the *child of a slave* know of honour?'

"As usual, her own passionate words, once uttered, cooled her.

"She became reasonable, and would have softened them.

"'I mean no insult to your mother or your poor father,' she said. 'She was a faithful wife and a good woman, they say, and her birth was not her own fault, however her beauty may have been his ruin. The misfortune was his, the fault was his, or her Spanish forefathers', at whose door it lies that these beautiful half-castes exist. I am sorry I said anything.' (She was actually apologizing to me for my birth.) 'Forget it, child. We will both forget and forgive. But never talk to me, and never expect me to tolerate one of that Danescombe set again.'

"And she did say very bitter and untrue things; more than I felt I ought to bear. I was perfectly calm then. And when I am quite calm I can always make Granny hear without shouting. I spoke quite slowly, so that she must hear, and I could see that she heard.

"First of all, naturally, I defended you; and then I said, 'Granny, I thank you more than I can say for what you have told me. For now my duty is clear. If my mother was a slave, the slaves are her kindred, and mine. I have a duty to her race and mine,

not only because they are men and women—because God made them and our Lord redeemed them—but because they are *my mother's people*. And in one way or another, I will devote myself, body, soul, and substance, to helping and serving them in every way I can, as long as I live.'

"She did not storm any more, poor Granny. She looked actually bewildered and frightened, and began to contradict herself.

"Your mother was not exactly a slave,' she said, 'when my poor George married her. She had been, as an infant; but her parents were set free in San Domingo. They were more than half Spaniards: *Musteers* I think they were called in our islands. Three parts white, or more. They were free, and living on a plantation of their own, with this their only daughter, when your father saw her.

"Poor George! I cannot blame him much; though I did blame him bitterly, more than I should, perhaps. I am a hot-tempered old woman, now; at all events. She could not help her beauty, and no woman he loved could help loving him. Poor fellow! I wrote to him again before she died, and sent some jewels for her; and she sent me a pretty message, poor thing. And then she died, and he died, and there were none left but you and me. And you have been not so bad a child, or would not have been, but for those hypocrites. So let us forget and forgive.'

"It was much harder, Bride, to oppose her gentle, and pleading tenderly, like that.

"I ventured to take her hand. It was rigid, but she let me keep it in both mine.

"Dear Granny, *I can never forget, I must never forget*. I will be your own child, if you will let me, as long as you live. But now, and always, *next to you*, I will, I must, I ought to care for *my mother's people* and my father's servants, his slaves, and my kindred. My mother's people must be mine.'

"The little gleam of rare softness and tenderness vanished.

"She snatched her hand from me and went up-stairs. I took her candle as usual and followed her up to her bedroom. At the door she turned and said, with a concentration of suppressed passion, 'You may sit at my table still, if you like, being your father's child; *as long as I live*, as you say. And then, if you please, you may go to your mother's relations, to the King of Dahomey, to the Pope of Rome, or the Methodist madmen, or wherever you please. I dare say you will not have long to wait.'

"And so," Amice concluded, "I do sit at her table; and neither of us speaks a word. Her heart—poor dear Granny—burning with wounded love and pride, and a sense of bitter ingratitude and wrong; and mine overflowing with pity which I cannot utter or look; with reverence for all the long reticence which my many provocations never made her break through during all these years; and with sympathy for what she must feel about my 'wilful folly and heartless ingratitude.' Never once to have suffered me to see a glimpse of a fact which she believed must have at any moment brought me down on my knees in abject humiliation and subjection! And when she brought out this terrible, irresistible weapon, faithfully concealed so long, to find it indeed terrible and irresistible, but altogether turned, as she must feel, against herself. The thing I am most sorry for as regards myself and you, Bride!" she resumed, "is this appearance of concealment about the meeting. I don't think we could have done otherwise. But this made me more resolved to throw off all disguise, and come to the meeting myself. I thought over it all Sunday night, Bride. I hope it did not look like bravado, or any reflection on my father. You think I did right?"

"I am sure," I said, "it was not bravado; it was *confession*; and how are we to help confession looking like bravado sometimes to those who hate what we confess we believe?"

"Yes," she said. "And for those who are gone, whom we cannot see or consult any more, I always feel we must try to do, not what they would perhaps have wished when they saw in part, but what they would wish now that they see 'face to face;' that is, as far as we can find it out. And I think there is no doubt what would be wished in heaven as to not driving black men like brutes, or as to teaching slaves of Him who makes us all free."

"No doubt at all, I should think," I replied, "as to what is thought in heaven about the slave-trade."

"No," she said; "so I came."

"And now, Bride," she said, "good-bye. You may kiss me if you like, now you know I am the daughter of a slave."

"But why good-bye, Amice?" I said. "You told Madam Glanvil;—and now you are fairly in opposition!"

"For shame, Bride!" she said. "I shall begin to think 'Methodism,' as Granny calls it, does lead to insurrection, as she says.

I belong to the Church of England, and believe in the Catechism; and if I have any leaning to any other form of Christianity it is to the Moravians, who are the most conservative and submissive people upon earth. In my great-aunt Prothesea's hymn-book, there are whole sections of hymns on the stillness and resignation of the heart, on patience in inward and outward tribulation, on poverty and lowliness of spirit. Do you know, Bride," she said, with one of her brightest sudden smiles, "I really feel in some way nearer Granny now, and love her better than before. I am not sure sometimes that I do not really love her more than I love you or any one, as I ought perhaps always to have done, and never could do. I am so sorry for her. In every possible thing, Bride, I will submit to Granny, as far as possible; and in this thing, which costs me more than anything, most of all. I have told Granny that you and Mr. Danescombe, and Piers, are noble as Norman conquerors and crusaders, and saints and angels, of better blood than the Glanvils, and ten times better Christians than any of us. And I have also told her that until she sanctions it, I will not see one of you again."

There was no moving her. She had "begun" indeed; as Loveday had said. We neither of us said "good-bye."

We just gave each other one long kiss, and turned and went home our different ways.

So, as it seemed to me, the sun was blotted out of my life; and Amice's warfare began.

CHAPTER XXIX.

COUSIN CRICHTON went away in a state of radiant satisfaction.

"Who said the tone of Christianity in these days was lowered? Who said people were not ready to cut off the right hand, to go to the rack, the block, the stake, if duty demanded?" His sense of "*solidarité*" in such matters was keen, although the word was yet unborn. He felt, I am sure, as if he had cut off his own right hand, metaphorically. That is, he felt the virtuous satisfaction, and rejoiced in us who had to bear the pain. For Court was closed to us, as absolutely as any Bastille.

Of all our circle only Cousin Dick Fyford and the vicar continued to enter those dear old gates between the savage heraldic griffins.

And Dick's reports were anything but cheerful or cheering. I began almost to believe he had really fallen in love as I had

"fallen in friendship" so long ago, deeply, hopelessly, and for ever.

"The gates of Court were like the gates of Dante's hell," he said. (He had been cultivating poetry of the severest and gloomiest kind. Byron was not yet available—had not yet written his satire on "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers." Despairing young persons had therefore to draw from deeper sources, and Dick had found a translation of Dante in Uncle Fyford's library congenial.)

"Abandon all hope, ye who enter here,"

"Lasciate ogni speranza voi ch'entrate,"

was, he considered, breathing out of the savage mouth of those heraldic griffins, written like ancient Hebrew texts on the posts of the doors, furrowed on the faces, black and white, of domestic and host. Only to find a similitude for Amice had he to rise to another book of the Divine Comedy.

She was radiant, angelic—more than angelic—tender and good as a dear child, beneficent, gracious, imperial, and, alas! far off as the Madonna Beatrice.

Madam Glanvil never spoke to her. Nor could it be said Madam Glanvil spoke graciously to any one. She seemed, he said, in a kind of way, defying the world to come nearer to her than the child she was thus rigidly keeping from her.

"Very strange," said Dick; "it seems as if those two really loved each other better than before."

I remembered Amice's words.

I thought it was very probably true. Madam Glanvil's speech was at no time exactly conciliatory, or calculated to promote tender feeling.

Perhaps the two were going through a "discipline of silence," as Claire suggested, and it was doing them both good.

But then, for a moment, came a little foolish pang, whether it could be possible that Amice was really not only outwardly but inwardly submitting to her grandmother's will, and making a sacrifice of me in her heart. She was not a woman to do things by halves. And if her conscience did get the upper hand of her good sense, it might possess her like a demon, and lead her to do anything, everything that was hard and dreadful and agonizing to herself. It is just of such strong, true, passionate, steadfast natures martyrs are made; of such natures, a little twisted, anchores, faqueers, Simon Stylites.

And I, feebler, smaller, with less rangeless tone, like a harpsichord to an organ, like my stepmother's spinet to the organ in West-

minster Abbey, as I was beside Amice; yet she had always called me her "good-in-everything," her "good genius of common-sense." And I was not near to plead for myself or for her. And Dick said she never mentioned me, never asked for any of us, never alluded to us.

Did it mean that she was really giving me up; or did it only mean she trusted without the shadow of a fear that I would always trust her without the shadow of a doubt?

Yes, it meant that. In all my sane moments I was sure it meant that.

Loveday never had the least doubt it meant that.

Nor had she the least shadow of a doubt who would conquer in that contest between Amice and her grandmother. "Love is stronger than Death," she said, "and than all the shadows of death. After all, death, that is, hatred, pride, selfishness, has only shadows for its weapons, and can only conquer shadows. And Amice's love and truth and faith are no shadows. She will overcome sooner or later: she will conquer evil by good. And I think it will be soon."

It did not seem soon to me. And the evil thing which severed Amice and me seemed to me at all events a very substantial negation, as substantial as the negation of a rock to a ship breaking to pieces on it.

It was a time of negations and partings.

At last, Piers was able to fulfil his desire of paying a visit to France.

He had no need to gather fresh details as to the situation of the château where Claire had passed her childhood. That, I knew, was what the journey to France chiefly signified to him: but even I never said so, even to him. And to any one else it seemed the most natural thing in the world that any young Englishman, who was able, should take advantage of the closing of the war-gates, to enter the land those open gates had closed to us so long, and might close again so soon.

Madam Glanvil was the only person who looked censoriously on the expedition. And that she did so, was only implied in an observation Dick heard her make to Uncle Fyford.

"The First Consul is doing one good work, at all events," she said. "He is converting the Whigs. I understand he says he could buy all the French Republicans with a little money and gold-lace. He seems to buy ours without any such expenditure. Charles Fox was hand and glove with him, I understand, in Paris. No wonder if the small fry follow."

"You will pay homage, my friend," said Madame des Ormes, when Piers came to her room to take leave, "to Madame, or *Son Altesse*, the First Consulee, or whatever they call her, the Creole wife of the Corsican. They say she has a fine Court at the Tuileries, and dresses well. They have set up the opera again. Scarcely necessary, I should have thought. That new theatre at the Tuileries must be more attractive. And Italians and Creoles have talents for the drama, frequently. Of the older noblesse you will find more in England—I had almost said at Abbot's Weir—than at Paris. M. Buonaparte's *corps dramatique* is complete now, I hear. They have a Church as well as a Court; priests who take the oath to violate the confessional if the government demands information about what it is pleased to call a *Plot*; bishops appointed by the Corsican, and all the clergy paid by him. It is quite complete, and all absolutely in the Manager's hands."

"Mamma," said Claire colouring, "M. Piers said he would inquire about our dear old curé at Les Ormes. At all events *he* has not taken that oath."

"No, indeed; many of the old priests are in prison. God bless them," replied Madame. "See, my children," she added, "I grow bitter! Do not the books of piety tell us that all earthly glory is tinsel, all courts but a stage? Only some tinsel is in better taste. There is gilt paper and *ornolu*. And to us, children of time that we are, a thousand years will seem longer than yesterday."

"Mamma," said Claire in a whisper. "It has done one good work, that new government. It has abolished the festival for the guillotining of our king."

"That is always something," Madame conceded. "And the Fast for the Day of his Martyrdom, the prayers, and the weeping, no power in France or out of it can abolish."

"And," suggested sanguine Claire, "they have abolished the Decade, and restored the Week, and the Sunday, and opened the churches."

"Condescending certainly to old-fashioned people, so let them say September and Sunday, once more," Madame admitted.

"There is nothing you can give me to do, Madame?" said Piers.

"My friend," she replied, "my living are here. My dead only are there. Would you have me send you on a pilgrimage to tombs and ruins? I cannot even guide you to those! Our people are industrious. They will not let even the stones of our ruined Châteaux be wasted. They will have built

useful little *bourgeois* houses with them. But the King, the Queen, Madame Elizabeth—who will tell you even where they sleep, that you might weep for them? My dead in France have no tombs. It is not until the third or fourth generation that men build the sepulchres of the prophets."

"Mamma, pleaded Claire, "there is M. le Curé, who instructed me for my first communion. He was so good, and all the people loved him. And there were many who would like to hear of us, of you, if M. Piers were near Les Ormes, any day."

"*Ma chérie*, Les Ormes is near nothing, except Port Royal des Champs. *There* are tombs at all events, although trampled on and in ruins."

"Madame," said Piers, glancing at Claire, "I will certainly make a pilgrimage to Port Royal des Champs."

"Strange that I have not an introduction to offer you," she said. "It was not so ten years ago. Stay, I will write a little letter for our poor curé."

"Mamma," murmured Claire. "My uncle, l'Abbé, says the First Consul has a strong secret police, and at the head of it a terrible M. Fouché, who was a Jacobin. If compromising letters were found——"

"True," replied Madame. "Take this," she said; and opening a little cachette, she took out a signet ring and placed it on his finger.

"This is our family *devise*," she said. "M. le Curé will recognise its bearer as a friend, and will tell you anything he can. Or any of our old servants. But what dreams am I indulging? Who knows where the curé is, or the church? And our old servants may have been made conscripts and killed long ago; or republicans, and may denounce you; or proprietors, and not too anxious for news to disturb their possession; or they may have been massacred, or *noyaded* as faithful men and women. Take care, my friend, how you use that token. But keep it always, if you will, as a memorial of the old days of our race, and of all the chivalrous kindness of you and yours to an old French citizenne. It is not a bad motto," she concluded—"'*Foi, roi, loi*,' in a circle—so that no one can say which comes first. Make it Divine, my friend, and then certainly it matters little where the circle begins."

He kissed her hand, as we had been used to do from childhood, grasped Claire's for an instant, and went away.

He was to start the next evening.

It was his birthday, in January, the month

which had once given and taken away so much, in our home.

I went up to his room to help him pack, or rather to talk while he was packing. He was always independent of feminine aid in that matter. But carefully as I had looked over everything, there might yet be some stray button or string to sew on.

He talked very fast. He was in high spirits.

Once more it was a beginning for him, and felt like an ending for me.

"It is very unreasonable," he said, as he gave a last impressive stamp to his carpet-bag, "to feel as if I were going to do something important. It is scarcely farther, in time, to the French coast than to Clapham, scarcely as far, if the wind is fair."

"No," I said. "We have heard enough of that lately from Dick. He says the French say they could be in London in a few hours, from Boulogne. And he would greatly like to be under Nelson's command and to see them try."

"I hope they will wait till I come back, and have accomplished my mission, whatever it is," he said.

"Do you remember years and years and years ago," I said, "when you were a little boy, and when first we met Claire, and when Claire kissed me with the fool's cap on, and you said '*it would be worth while to do something like that for her*,' and I said, 'there was nothing to be done;' and you said something always came to be done when it was the right time."

"Bride," he said, stooping over the port-manteau, and energetically snapping the lock. "Your grammar is getting very confused. Unhappily you never went to Mr. Rabbidge's and learnt about aorists and imperfects, and narrative tenses. Something has never come, you see. And to go to France to look for it does seem what Uncle Fyford would call Utopian and Mr. Rabbidge chimerical."

"Yet you are going," I said.

"It would be something to find there was nothing to be done," he answered. "To find, that is to say, that France can do nothing for her; and, so, that there may indeed be something for us to do for her."

And so the next morning, to Madame Glanvil's indignation, to Madame des Ormes's perplexity, and a little to Claire's, but full of purpose and hope, which, as usual with him, came out but little in words, in the crisp January frost, he went off across the moors to the sea.

THE EDITOR'S ROOM.

I.—HOME NOTES.

LABOURERS FROM MANY LANDS.

NO doubt among the men that laboured on the walls of Jerusalem under Nehemiah there were some that liked the sword better than the chisel and mallet, but there were not a few, we may be sure, that, despite their prosaic character, liked the chisel and mallet better than the sword. Comparisons are odious: both were necessary; the chisel and the mallet could have done nothing without the protection of the sword, and the sword could have effected no positive and permanent good without the chisel and mallet. Building up, however, is essentially a more satisfactory process than fighting—more godlike in itself, and yielding a more godlike pleasure. The sight of men actually passing from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God; the sight of the wilderness and the solitary place becoming glad, and the desert rejoicing and blossoming as the rose; and the sight of the building growing into an holy temple in the Lord, is refreshing to the spirit both of God and man. We ask our readers to take a seat with us at a quiet dinner-table in a private house, on occasion of one of the recent gatherings of labourers from different parts of the vineyard; and though the company is casually gathered, mark how many forms and modes of Christian activity they represent.

Here, first of all, is our good and noble friend, John Bost of Laforce, with a face radiant with faith, hope, and charity—far more so indeed than would be inferred from his portrait some years ago in this Magazine,—telling of his five blessed institutions, to which he is now about to add a sixth, supported at an annual cost of five thousand pounds, for the whole of which he is dependent on the spontaneous offerings of Christian friends. Under his wide-spreading wing the lunatic, the epileptic, the idiot, the imbecile, and afflicted persons of almost every type find shelter, and treatment, and overflowing Christian love, not to be met with (for Protestants) in any other institution in France. Here too evangelical religion presents its most winning recommendation; the real soul of Bible religion is seen in the work of faith and labour of love; and an impression of Protestantism is conveyed constraining men to feel that a religion so heavenly in its fruits must be heavenly in its origin. Glad are we to see that with all his heavy charge years sit so lightly on our friend's frame; his locks still bushy and black as the raven; no approach as yet to a "barren head," either in the ordinary or in his own peculiar sense of the term, when, as he still tells with much glee, on his first visit to Scotland he begged the indulgence of the General Assembly, seeing he was a Frenchman, and had never addressed an audience with so many "barren heads."

Next him, wearing a massive turban of white linen, that makes his swarthy face look more swarthy still, and, with the other peculiarities of an Eastern dress,

is a converted Brahmin, Nerayun Sheshadri, for many years past an active and successful missionary in western India. He is wonderfully at home with the English language, more so, indeed, than Mr. Bost, who looks so much more like an Englishman. He is an excellent and impressive preacher of the Gospel,—simple, sensible, and spiritual; and in his own country he has combined the active missionary, the successful organizer of Christian labour, and the social reformer. Along a line of a hundred and twenty miles in length he has planted a chain of native Christian agents, catechists, teachers, colporteurs, and what not; and he has lately originated a Christian village, for which the children in Scotland have furnished the means (not inconsiderable) of building a well. His wife, we understand, is like-minded, and does valuable work in his absence in the way of superintending his varied organizations. To see and hear such a man goes a great way in refuting not a few of the disparaging stories we so often hear about the success of missions.

Two missionaries from India, one Scotch and the other American, and a missionary's wife, are also in the group. All have borne their share, and that in many forms, of the heat and burden of the day. In teaching, in the training of native agents, in translations, in Christian literature, in itinerating work, in Zenana labours, and even in Christian colonisation, they have done their part. They exemplify what one delights to find in missionaries of the higher type—the concentrating of the heart on individual conversions, as the only way of truly evangelising a heathen country, yet letting their desires and their efforts go forth in suitable arrangements for every species of domestic and social amelioration. As to the Christian colony which one of them has been engaged in promoting in India, we do not happen to have precise information; but whether it be a locality where British families of the humbler class may settle, in a somewhat healthier climate, and more adapted to bring up children, or one where converted natives may enjoy the full benefit of Christian fellowship, as an aid to the spiritual life, it is a valuable adjunct to the more peculiar work of the missionary.

Next we come on a minister, from the interior of the United States, who gives us very interesting information of what we may almost call a lost tribe of the house of Israel. About twenty-five years ago, as some of our readers may remember, there occurred a remarkable awakening among some of the Portuguese in the island of Madeira. Dr. Kalley, an earnest Christian physician, was the main instrument of the change. Mr. Hewitson, a Scotch minister, remarkable for his spirituality of character, was a helper in the work. The place became too hot for the converts. They were driven from Madeira, and thrown upon the world. Their case excited no little interest in the Christian Church at the time. Ultimately, they proceeded to the United States, and obtained a

settlement in Illinois. In the interval between that time and the present, we confess that they had vanished from our remembrance. What was our satisfaction to find that they had settled in the immediate neighbourhood of our friend's residence, and are enjoying a fair share of prosperity? Better still, they continue steadfast in the Protestant faith, forming two congregations which, though still Portuguese, are probably on the fair way to undergo the absorption in the American race and the English tongue, which sooner or later all emigrants to that country must undergo. They have shown no tendencies back to Rome, but continue to cherish the hope that gladdened them when they first came to know "Christ in them the hope of glory."

In our group, there are several home labourers, with distinctive fields of work, two of whom we must notice. One is the Secretary of the Irish Colportage Society. He has but lately entered on his work. But he reports most encouragingly of it, and is full of the hope that it is to prove the means of great good to Ireland. Nor is it only in the North of Ireland that he finds a hopeful field. In the Roman Catholic districts also, he finds an encouraging sphere. The truth is, he says, the Roman Catholics have been pretty well educated, and their minds are groping after knowledge. They are by no means likely to remain long under the influence of the priests. To a large extent, they have broken away from it already. But what they may turn to—whether to infidelity or to the Bible—remains to be seen. Possibly, like the people of France or Italy—to infidelity and irreligion; but rather let us hope, through God's blessing, to a sincere and earnest biblical religion. We can think of nothing better fitted to stir men up to encourage the Colportage Society.

The other labourer is a lady—busy with the emigration of children. It is a branch of philanthropy akin to that of the Ragged School; only instead of waiting till the children (in this case girls) are ready for service or situations in this country, the arrangement is to dispatch them to Canada, after they have received some Christian training here, and commit them to the care, first of Miss Macpherson and her coadjutors, and then of the families where such children are readily and cordially received. We learn that some five-and-twenty children, after receiving a winter's training, not only in Christian truth and in the ordinary branches of education, but especially in domestic duties, are just on the eve of leaving the country and emigrating to Canada. The details of this movement are of the most interesting kind; we are shown photographs, making it apparent to the naked eye that the change to the children is like a change from death to life, and we learn that the arrangements are carried on in that trustful and prayerful spirit which, believing that the work is God's, believes also that He will provide the means, and send the blessing. Happy workers in a blessed service! may the Great Master encourage all your hearts and multiply your number even a hundred-fold!

CHURCH PROCEEDINGS IN EDINBURGH.

The ecclesiastical flood-tide of May sets in somewhat mildly in the beginning of the month with the meeting of the Reformed Presbyterians, gathers more volume as the larger body of United Presbyterians assemble in the middle, and becomes a great tidal wave, flooding the city, when Established and Free Church Assemblies muster together at the end of the month. Of all dissenting bodies, none has stood firm for so long a time to its original position as the Reformed Presbyterians. Dating from the days of Richard Cameron and the Revolution of 1688, and continuing from generation to generation in its place outside the Establishment, it has testified continuously against the defects which it found at first in the Revolution settlement. A few years ago, however, the majority took a position in advance, or as the few who separated from them thought, a step backward; and now, advancing still further, they are willing to unite with their Nonconformist brethren. But the great union scheme between the Free Church and the United Presbyterians having failed for the present, the smaller body of Reformed Presbyterians is left in a great dilemma, quite willing to unite with both, but by no means disposed to unite with the one apart from the other. For the present there is to be no general union; a scheme by which ministers of the negotiating churches may be called to congregations in any of the several bodies, on their signing its formulas, being the chief legacy of the negotiations of ten long years. We have no desire to enter into the controversy that has arisen, which of the two sides has gained the victory. Formally, there can be no doubt the opponents of union have conquered; but the other side are sure that decided progress has been made toward the consummation, and that the completion of the union, to which the Mutual Eligibility Scheme stands in the relation of a betrothal, is only a question of time. And as a further pledge of this they point to the fact that next year will witness an incorporating union between the representatives of the negotiating churches in England. The opinion seems to have gained strength that a more comprehensive union, in which the Established Church should be embraced, ought ultimately to be aimed at. A great difficulty in the way of this lies in the fact that in the eyes of the Free Church, the Establishment is unwarrantably under the control of the State, while the United Presbyterians object to it as receiving State pay. The whole of the United Presbyterians and the greater part of the Free Church are of opinion that disestablishment, or the renunciation of State control and State pay, is necessary to such a comprehensive union.

While the outer world is chiefly interested in the attitude of these several bodies to each other, many of their friends feel that the internal work of Christian enlightenment and conversion in which they are engaged is in reality more important than the other. And doubtless the various churches have had before them a vast amount of Christian work. They have been attending to their own discipline too, and per-

fecting their legislative and their executive arrangements. The Established Church has had under review the case of Dr. Wallace, accused of very advanced Broad Church opinions, but the case is not finally disposed of, having been remitted to the Presbytery of Edinburgh. Mr. Knight's case, which would have naturally been before the Free Church Assembly, was postponed in consequence of that gentleman's state of health. Although the nobility and landed classes have to a very large degree left the pale both of the Established and the Nonconformist churches, the contributions raised for their Christian and benevolent objects continue to make steady advance. In spite of all the adverse circumstances of the last thirty years, the Moderator of the Assembly of the Established Church said that she had never more vigour, or more success in her work; while the increasing attachment of their people to the Nonconformist churches is shown by the fact that, in the case of the two largest, the united contributions for the year are not much under £800,000.

IRISH GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

Hardly have the ecclesiastical echoes died away in Edinburgh, when they are heard reverberating in Belfast. Financially, the abolition of *Regium Donum* has proved a benefit, the new Sustentation Fund having contributed to raise the stipends of the ministers above the former point. As in the case of other churches, the quieter and more obviously useful proceedings, connected with the work of missions, colportage, education, Sunday-schools, and the like, was overshadowed by a great discussion, the subject being, whether instrumental music ought to be allowed in their churches. The subject not being ripe for decision, was virtually postponed to a future day.

DR. HESSEY ON PRAYER FOR THE SICK.

The proposal to test the efficacy of prayer by what was thought to be a crucial experiment in regard to one of the wings of an hospital was pretty thoroughly canvassed at the time, but some additional touches have been given to the argument on the other side by Dr. Hessey in the course of the Boyle Lectures which he is now delivering. He is reported to have said that the proposal "professed no disrespect for prayer, but only desired a quantitative analysis in reference to its effects." Taking the proposer on his own grounds, and accepting his medical terminology, Dr. Hessey suggested to him that in order for a quantitative analysis to come fairly into operation a qualitative analysis must first take place, *i.e.* it must be ascertained that prayer, which he had debased to the level of a drug, was actually present. He had not done this. In fact, the utterance proposed by him would not be prayer at all. "It absolutely demanded a result, it was not supplicatory or submissive. It was an experiment whether the Almighty would—not an entreaty that He might—grant. It demanded an immediate and sensible result: it did not wait God's time, and content itself till that time should arrive with inward consolations. It was made to be seen of

men, it was not to the Father who seeth in secret." Besides, however, thus mistaking the nature of prayer, and neglecting a process which he would have applied of course to material drugs, the proposer had ignored the omniscience of the Almighty, and the impossibility of isolating one of the wards from the action of prayer. These mistakes the lecturer exposed at some length, and concluded with a discussion of the domain of prayer, and a denial that it was limited to petitions for spiritual blessings.

"More things were wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of."

VISIT OF THE SHAH OF PERSIA.

The visit of the Shah of Persia to this country is in many ways a notable fact. In the first place, it is a remarkable evidence, and one of many of the like sort, how much God is bringing the world together. The Duke of Wellington's striking remark in his day, that steam had bridged the English Channel, is now quite out of date. Steam has bridged the Atlantic Ocean, the Pacific, the Indian—indeed all the oceans of the world. The world is getting much more like one State. Prejudices and local customs, good and bad, are yielding to the influence of intercourse with the rest of the world. Evidence is multiplying of the extreme folly and evil of war between nation and nation, and the immense benefit to all, at least in a commercial sense, if the whole of the obstacles to easy intercourse were removed, and a highway existed from country to country all over the globe. There is a mighty call to the Christian churches to increased efforts for the extension of the Gospel, for it is very certain that the dream of universal brotherhood can never be realised without an outpouring of the spirit of Christian brotherly love. Further, it is interesting to us to have among us the successor of that Cyrus and the other Persian monarchs, who hold so conspicuous a place in Old-Testament history. And still further, it is interesting to find our friendship prized by the ruler of so distant a country, and to have the prospect of such a bulwark to our Indian Empire. It is said that the Shah feels a special interest in the manufactures of Great Britain; it is a pity that the living elements of our manufacturing world are in so disturbed a condition. We trust, however, he will see enough of the fruit of intelligence, industry, skill, and self-control to awaken his curiosity as to the deeper sources of our prosperity, and may be led to see how much it depends on the habits formed under the influence of our Bible training.

RACING AND BETTING.

The Derby Day is in more senses than one the climax of English racing. We fear the net results of it can be put down as only evil. It is universally admitted that among those more immediately concerned with the horses, a vast amount of trickery, bribery, and dishonesty in every form is practised. The whole betting system is obviously demoralising. In spite of the protection of Parliament, it is a scene of much and

wide-spreading iniquity. Of course it has its attractions, especially to those who choose to shut their eyes to its uglier features. But it can never be too much impressed on all classes, and especially the young, that very often the highest form of duty is to turn away from that which in one aspect is bright and attractive, on the ground that in other respects it is wicked and pernicious. Does the moral and religious training of the day sufficiently recognise this? Is self-denial in such matters habitually and earnestly enjoined in our families, in our schools, and from our pulpits? We greatly doubt it; and until a higher tone is taken in these quarters we fear that racing and betting will increase. The space given to racing news in the secular press is alarming, and we are sorry to observe that some newspapers that might have been expected to act otherwise, are now conspicuously parading their racing and betting intelligence. We need an infusion of Spartan virtues, or rather we need to be reminded that Christian discipleship requires that a man should deny himself, and take up his cross daily to follow his Master.

II.—JOTTINGS FROM THE MISSION FIELD.

THE SPIRIT OF THE ANNUAL REPORTS.

I.—THE LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

We think that it may be useful to give a column month by month to the annual Reports of the great missionary societies, and let our readers know a little more about them than it is possible to do when they are all massed together. And we begin with the London Missionary Society, one of the oldest, and yet, in point of enterprise and vigour, one of the most youthful of them all. Its chief missions are in the South Seas, in India, in the West Indies, in Africa, in Madagascar, and in China. In the first place, it has a favourable report to give of its purse. Taking everything into account, there has been put into the bag no less than £115,070 8s., and of this sum £3,631 7s. 6d. has been contributed by children for a missionary ship. There is not much change in the total number of European missionaries, though several new ones have been sent out, but there is a steady increase in the number and efficiency of the native labourers, who now amount in all to one hundred ordained missionaries, and three thousand native assistants. In the South Sea missions, these native evangelists have been remarkably successful, and in Madagascar many of them are turning out most valuable. Mention is made of a Madagascar preacher who goes about over a large extent of country, usually preaching three times every Sunday, and travelling long distances to reach preaching stations, whose allowance per month from the native mother church is only thirteen shillings. In South Africa a young man of deep Christian spirit has been raised to the influential position of chief of his tribe, and, along with his like-minded brother, seems likely to render most valuable aid to the cause of Christian truth. The close of the Report takes

A Hopeful View of the Future.

"When with glad heart we see all the great nations of the Eastern world quickened by the great stir of life in Christian lands; when we see Japan opening her ports to trade, and inviting the aid of Christian men to improve her laws, re-shape her government and educate her people; when we see China yielding reluctantly and at last, and permitting other nations to hold intercourse with her on equal terms; when the Shah of Persia comes to see the cities and institutions of Christian Europe; and the Sultan of Turkey, the Caliph of the Mahomedan world, desires a responsible ministry, constitutional law, and religious liberty, for the various races of his dominions; when isolation, exclusiveness, ignorance and pride everywhere break down; when the civilised world knocks with a firm hand at the last stronghold of slavery, and demands that the natives of Africa shall no longer be sold, but shall be treated as free men, we cannot but wonder at the enormous results of the earnest zeal, the aggressive life and teaching and example of this great missionary age. The mighty love of the gospel, expanding as the race grows more numerous and spreads more widely, invites them all, the little and the great, barbarian, civilised, bond, and free; it is conquering their vices and superstitions; it is healing all their wrongs; it will not rest till the earth is purified from every stain. Kingdom and king and law it brings to every nation under heaven; and soon the acceptable year of the Lord, a new year of perfect life, and love, and peace, shall be proclaimed to all mankind."

A Voice from Savage Island.

Early at the anniversary meeting there rose up a speaker who said he was only a Savage Islander; but if every speaker at Exeter Hall had as remarkable a tale to tell, the speeches would all be well worth listening to. Savage Island, it appears, is a solitary coral rock, forty miles in circumference, standing all alone in the ocean, four hundred miles from the nearest land; it derived its English name from Captain Cook, who would fain have landed on it, but when he tried to do so, the people rushed on him more like a horde of wild boars than human beings, and the gallant captain was forced to retreat. The natives call their island Niue, and knowing of no other country, they used to consider it the world, and regard themselves as its only inhabitants. "No intoxicating drink was ever known in Niue, and there is now a law in existence," says Mr. Lawes, "and has hitherto been maintained, to prevent the introduction of any foreign spirit into this Good Templar's Paradise." But for all that, they were naturally an extremely savage people. They had no word in their language for hope, and none for sin; the aged and the sick were neglected, parents were often killed by their children, and suicide and infanticide were quite common. The missionary himself had recently had two servants in his family, a young man and a middle-aged woman, the former of whom had killed his father, and the latter five or six children of her own.

The Story of its Evangelisation.

About forty years ago the celebrated missionary, John Williams, landed on the island; but was hurried off just in time to escape a murderous troop whc

appeared with their spears and clubs on the cliffs, as his boat was pushing off from the reef. It was nearly twenty years later before they would have the gospel. In fact, they lived in a continual fear of foreigners, and when a vessel came near, they would hurry to their temples and pray that the evil spirits might not be allowed to land, and to bring all manner of disease and calamity to the island. If a native once left the island and returned, he was usually killed, and several crews that had drifted to it were murdered. It was in 1849 that the work of conversion began. Their first missionary was a Christian teacher from Samoa, who might be called

A South Sea Apostle Paul,

for his name was Paolo, and he was a man full of the Holy Ghost, with a remarkable faith in Christ, and deep trust in God, and a firm belief in the power of prayer. Before his death he had the happiness of seeing the whole island outwardly Christian, and a large number enrolled as members of the Christian Church. Very remarkably, this result had taken place before the first European missionary landed in 1861. The missionaries found "the Sabbath observed, a sanctuary in every village, a good road all round the island, the horde of wild boars turned into a peaceful community." All had been effected by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Native Christians had preached the Gospel of the grace of God, and what was more, they had loved it. This native agency has been wonderfully blest in most things; but there were two things that were quite beyond their power—they could not translate the Scriptures, nor train up a race of pastors. There was not now a dwelling in Savage Island, said Mr. Lawes, from which the voice of prayer and praise did not ascend daily—often, it might be, a mere form, but a form preferable to the power of heathenism. The people had formerly been thieves and robbers; now, in the course of a year but five or six had been convicted of dishonesty. Some of them showed their forgiving Christian spirit by praying for the traders who, by carrying off their young men, did them the cruelest wrong. For Christian ordinances, they subscribed on an average about £230 yearly. In their clothing and their homes they had ceased to be savages, and had given evidence of the civilising power of the Gospel. Trade was now active among them. A literature had begun. Some books of the Bible, school-books, and tracts were in circulation. The same account in substance might be given of other

Two Hundred Islands in the South Pacific,

which had received Christianity, and which contained 50,000 church members, and 250,000 adherents, connected with the various societies. But there were hindrances to the spread of the gospel, and of these the most formidable was

The Polynesian Coolie Traffic.

"I have known," says Mr. Lawes, "a great deal of this traffic, and my testimony is that it is a far greater

evil and curse than in England you have any idea of. The Act passed last session will do good; the expression of public opinion in England will do good; but two or three vigorous sharp gunboats will do more, because you must remember that the men with whom we have to do, and for the regulation of whose traffic this Act has been passed, are men whose vocabulary does not possess such words as honour, honesty, and truth; and nothing save the said gunboats will bring them to their senses." Even when men that had been carried away returned, they returned demoralised, and they were worse clothed, lived in worse houses, and cultivated their land worse than those who had never left the island.

We leave the Report of the London Missionary Society with reluctance; it has been the means of doing much for the cause of Christianity. "I never doubted the conversion of Africa," were the words of Dr. Moffat; this Society might extend the saying; it does not doubt the conversion of the world. In praying for a continued blessing on its English missionaries, its one hundred native pastors, and its three thousand native assistants, we ask for great things for the heathen world; and let us remember we ask them 'of Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.

WORK IN THE TURKISH EMPIRE.

Referring to some recent tidings of missionary work in various lands, a writer in the *Watchman* observes:—

"A great and glorious work is going on in various parts of the Turkish Empire, which seems to attract little notice in England, but which is, nevertheless, real and important in its connection with the advancement of the kingdom of Christ. The honoured agents in its accomplishment are chiefly American and Scottish missionaries of the Presbyterian school, who are well adapted for the work by their education, intelligence, and undoubted missionary zeal. This mission work in Turkey is carried on not so much among the Mohammedan population as among nominal Christians professedly belonging to the degenerate and decayed Greek Church, many of whom are almost as ignorant and as spiritually destitute as the most benighted pagan people in the world. By the faithful preaching of the Gospel, the establishment of Christian schools, both common and higher class, and systematic evangelistic effort in Constantinople, Smyrna, Beirut, Damascus, Jerusalem, and other places, thousands of these people have been enlightened and gathered into the fold of the Redeemer. At the eighteenth anniversary meeting of the Turkish Missions Aid Society, recently held, the Right Hon. the Earl of Shaftesbury presiding, interesting details were given of the progress of the work in all its departments. And J. C. M'Coan, Esq., of the Reform Club, lately bore the following testimony to its importance and genuineness:—

"As an old resident in and an extensive traveller through Turkey, I have had unusual opportunities of observing the course and results of missionary work in that country, and I can testify that of all the foreign agents thus employed, those of the American Board of Missions have been in every way the most successful. I have visited their great stations at

Oroomiah, in Persia, where they have done so much to educate and evangelise the Nestorians; and again at Mosul, Mardin, Diarbekir, Erzeroum, Kharpoot, Beirut, and elsewhere, in the Asiatic provinces. I can bear witness that they have done more to civilise and morally elevate the nominally Christian populations of those districts than all the other influences that have been at work during the past fifty years. And so, too, in the capital. In and around Constantinople they have laboured with a zeal and success which cannot be too highly praised."

CHINA.—REMARKABLE MOVEMENT IN FORMOSA.

Whenever we hear of the rapid propagation of the Gospel in any quarter of the heathen world, we may almost certainly infer that the people are not connected with any of the great dominant races, nor their religion with any of the great ancient systems. Among races as among individuals, we are finding that what is often hid from the wise and prudent is revealed to babes. In the South Sea Islands, in Madagascar, among the hill tribes of India, among the Karens of Burmah, the Gospel has in our time made wonderful progress; but the people among whom it has triumphed have been neither Mahometans, Buddhists, nor Brahminists, but simply poor idolaters. A remarkable missionary movement of a similar kind has just taken place in the island of Formosa, in China, chiefly under the auspices of the missionaries of the English Presbyterian Church; but the converts do not belong to the Chinese family, but to an aboriginal race, a branch of the same people that are found in New Zealand, Tahiti, and the Sandwich Islands and Madagascar. In fact, in the island of Formosa, there are found two distinct races; the Chinese who inhabit the western portion of the island, and the native or aboriginal who inhabit the central and eastern portions. While the former have been barely touched by the mission movement, the latter have been wonderfully affected by it. At a recent meeting, Dr. Maxwell, medical missionary, stated that there were now twelve or thirteen mission stations in the island. There had been admitted as members of the Church during the short time when the mission had existed, about 450 souls; while the number besides these who came regularly to hear the Gospel, was 1,300 or 1,400. The people had been in a state of utter ignorance, but schools had been established, and during the last three years not less than from two to three hundred had been taught to read, and many of them also to write. The missionaries had also been able to a large extent to alter the marriage and the funeral customs of the people. The same remarkable power of conveying to their countrymen the impressions which they had themselves received, that had been established by the native converts in the South Seas, was also shown by the converted Formosans. Plain working men had sometimes been the means of forming new mission stations, and awakening large numbers of the community to inquiry and concern. Dr. Maxwell, with the caution of his countrymen, remarked that as the mission had existed only since 1865, it might be thought that sufficient time had not elapsed to test the stability of the movement; but his own

opinion and that of his fellow-labourers was, that it was a true and honest movement, and in the faithful lives of the converts, and not a few death-bed testimonies, they had ample proof that they had submitted themselves to the truth.

III.—GLANCES ABROAD.

FRANCE AND HER RULERS.

The change from Thiers to Macmahon as President of the French Republic seems already a thing of the distant past. Without speculating on the political results which this change may possibly produce, we may remark, that there are not wanting persons who see in the elevation of Macmahon a presage of everything dear to ultramontane souls. In this we fondly hope that they may be mistaken; but seeing that the wife of the supreme ruler has often a predominant influence in religious matters, there is perhaps some ground for ultramontane gratulation in the fact that Madame Macmahon was lately one of those who headed a great pilgrimage to Lourdes. It appears, however, that though there was at first great joy in the Vatican when it was announced that Macmahon had succeeded Thiers, the joy passed into gloom when Macmahon made his official announcement that in foreign affairs he would adhere to the policy of his predecessor. The Bavarian *Vaterland* let out its feelings very freely in the interest of Macmahon and the Church, and ventured to foretell, as the speedy consequences of the step at Paris, the restoration of monarchy in France, the re-establishment of the Jesuits, the retirement of Bismarck to look after his nerves, and the sweeping away of that miserable king, Victor Emmanuel. Happily, however, the Bavarian *Vaterland* has not been entrusted with the reins of Providence.

POPULAR ENTHUSIASM ABOUT PILGRIMAGES.

"Pilgrimages," says the correspondent of the *Guardian*, "have now become so much the fashion that it is proposed to establish a periodical, to be called the *Revue des Pilgrimages*, which shall provide, besides a full account of such proceedings in themselves, a complete history of the different localities to which they are made, with the incidents, miracles, &c., which have given celebrity to their shrines. The *Univers* seems to regard such a revival of medieval usages as the chief means and hope of regenerating France in the present day; and has already intimated that various religious and political successes, in its own point of view, including the 'upsetting of M. Thiers,' and the accession, as it anticipates, of a clerical and Romish party to power, has been one of the fruits of these intercessions. It announced the other day, that a hundred and fifty Deputies of the Right (the number is probably greatly exaggerated) had gone off to a pilgrimage to Chartres, and no doubt expects a new display of zeal from them in the Assembly on their return. These pilgrimages, such as the one above mentioned for instance, are now arranged with all the exactness of a pleasure train or one of Cook's excursions, as regards prices, departures, &c. You can 'subscribe' for the trip at many of the sacristies of the Paris churches; where, if you like, you can pay beforehand both for the journey and also for bed, breakfast, dinner, and all other

expenses. Most of them, of course, especially those which were organized during last month, were *à la gloire de Marie*. The announcements generally indicate the chief attractions offered in the way of relics, &c., which are exposed to the adoration of the faithful on such occasions. Thus, for yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow, there is a famous pilgrimage to Longpont, in the adjoining Department, where, besides a celebrated veil of the Virgin, there are preserved portions of the Cross, thorns, tunic, &c., deposited, we are told, in no less than forty caskets or coffers of great artistic value. The pilgrimages are always attended with processions, in which these reliquaries are carried about the town or village. A similar pilgrimage was recently organized to Argenteuil, where also a miraculous tunic was displayed. Another was also made to Pontoise; 'such a sight,' we are informed, 'as has not been witnessed there since 1638' for the numbers and enthusiasm of the pilgrims. The Dominican monk who addressed the assemblage pointed out how this 'miracle-working Virgin' might again, as she had done before, restore to France the three blessings of 'victory, peace, and national greatness,' which had been lost. Another pilgrimage to Notre Dame de Lépine, near Châlons, was for 'soliciting the protection of the Virgin upon France and the Church.' The Bishop was present and officiated, and the processions were on a splendid and imposing scale. The above, however, are only a few of the proceedings of a similar kind which are now announced on every side, and which promise to become again a national institution in France, quite ample enough to supply materials for such a review of them as that which is proposed to be established."

THE FRENCH ANNIVERSARIES.

Notwithstanding the terrible shock experienced of late years by the religious Protestant societies of France, the anniversaries this year showed an increase of interest and efficiency. The various institutions designed to promote the work in France have obtained the usual tokens of encouragement and prosperity, and in addition to this, a prosperous report is presented from the mission to the Basutos in Kafirland. There the French missionaries are assisted by 57 native catechists, and above 2,000 children are at work at the schools; and during the year there have been 321 baptisms of adults and 200 of children.

GERMANY—OPPOSITION OF THE BISHOPS TO BISMARCK.

The Roman Catholic Bishops have taken up the attitude of opposition. Their "pronunciamento" to the Government declares their purpose to resist the recent laws. "These laws," they say, "violate the rights and liberties which by divine appointment belong to the Church of God. They deny entirely the fundamental principle which acknowledges in the State and in the Church two separate authorities appointed by God, which, therefore, in the manifold points of contact and intermixings of their relations regarding the ordering of the boundaries of their authorities, are required not to proceed in a one-sided direction, but to come to an understanding among themselves." The bishops repudiate the heathen position that the Church has no rights save those which the State concedes to her. To acknowledge the new laws would be equivalent to a denial of the

divine origin of Christianity, as well as a repudiation of all the special rights acknowledged by the State at other times.

This is moderate language for Roman officials. The old controversy between the *imperium* and the *sacerdotium* witnessed a higher style. Hildebrand and his compeers would not have been so willing to acknowledge in the State a separate and independent jurisdiction conferred by God. The German bishops no doubt feel the necessity of avoiding extreme assumptions in the perilous struggle on which they have entered.

ITALY—THE JESUITS AND THE PARLIAMENT.

It is well known that the conflict that has been raging at Rome whether the religious orders are to remain, has been settled by a kind of compromise, giving permission to the several "Generals," or heads of orders, to occupy a part of their present residence during their tenure of office. In most cases, the office of General is held for the limited period of four years, and at the end of that period, at furthest, they will be obliged to decamp. In the case of the Jesuits, however, the office is held for life. Now the Jesuits are of all the religious societies the most hated, and hated it would appear most intensely by those who have been brought up in their schools, and who know them best. Familiarity with them seems always to leave behind an awful impression of their hypocrisy, and of their readiness for any of those odious proceedings of which hypocrisy is often the screen and protector. An attempt was therefore made recently in the Italian Parliament to dissolve the Jesuits utterly, and to deprive them of any right of organization or association under any pretext whatever. This step, however, the Government and the Parliament did not take. All that is provided is that the General of the Jesuits—"the Black Pope," as he is called at Rome—will have to leave the house where he has usually resided, and find quarters somewhere in the Vatican. The Jesuits will not be interfered with in their special work, provided they comply with the laws of the country. The majority of the Chamber are not prepared for the rôle of Bismarck; they think that in the atmosphere of liberty and in the light of free institutions, the Jesuits like the owls will be unable to work.

IV.—OUR LIBRARY TABLE.

The Land of Moab: Travels and Discoveries on the East Side of the Dead Sea and the Jordan, is unmistakably the production of a working traveller, not of a diletante writer of books. It is entirely in the style of Dr. Edward Robinson's *Researches in the Holy Land*. Dr. Tristram, both as a traveller and a man of science, has earned for himself the high reputation of a man of work, a laborious, earnest investigator, who does not play at science, or at travelling, but sets himself vigorously to go forward in the interest of both. This, we may remark by the way, is what gives to Dr. Tristram so high a place, even among those who have least sympathy with his earnest

evangelical views. The volume before us is a substantial book of four hundred pages, describing, step by step, a journey over a region that has very few features of interest except for a biblical traveller. The land of Moab is a parallelogram of some fifty miles long and thirty broad, lying to the east of the Dead Sea and the Jordan. In its general features it abundantly verifies the scriptural account of it, the ruined towns and villages that seem to occur every ten, fifteen, or twenty minutes, now utterly desolate, showing that at one time the country must have been one of extreme richness and abundant population. The chief results of Dr. Tristram's travels are, that he has brought to light a remarkable palace of singular magnificence at Mashita, which is believed to have been built in the seventh century, by Chosroes, King of Persia; he has minutely described Machærus, the fortress east of the Jordan, where John the Baptist was beheaded; and he believes that he has discovered the site of Zoar, the city to which Lot fled on leaving Sodom. At Machærus, he has found two dungeons—miserable places truly, in one or other of which he believes that the Baptist must have been confined. To have stood on the very spot where the Baptist suffered must have been singularly solemnizing; and as we read of Dr. Tristram's doing so, the thought arises,—How remarkable it is that our Lord should have suffered, not at this remote place, but at Jerusalem; and not by being beheaded, but crucified! One is apt to overlook the many circumstances that show how remarkably the Scripture was fulfilled in the whole circumstances of his birth, life, and death. Zoar is believed by Dr. Tristram to be represented by a considerable place—all in ruins—now called by the Arabs Zi'ara. It is situated to the north-east of the Dead Sea, and far from its southern border, where it is commonly believed that the five doomed cities were. The circumstances mentioned by Dr. Tristram seem very forcibly to show that he is right in his conjecture. But if so, and if, as the result, the cities of the plain were near the north of the Dead Sea, we must give up the traditional Usdum on the south, as the site of Sodom, for Zoar was "near to flee to," whereas Usdum is many miles from Zi'ara. On a former visit, Dr. Tristram identified Nebo, from which a most commanding view of the Holy Land is obtained. It is melancholy to read of the great wilderness of ruins the land presents. Morally it is a place of "spoilers." One of the people our traveller came across, Goblan, told him the story of his first crime. When a very young man, riding over the plain, he noticed a horseman before him on a splendid iron-grey mare; the demon seized him, he resolved he would have the mare, and watching his opportunity, he speared the rider and carried off the animal. He never found out who his victim was; but he feels sure that some one has vowed vengeance, and that he shall yet suffer retribution. "I cannot sleep," he said, "without seeing the grey mare and her rider before me. But she was a splendid mare. Who would not have killed a stranger for her?" Dr. Tristram describes Dibon, where the

Moabite stone was found, which he believes had been thrown out by the earthquake of 1837. No more such stones could be come upon. The palace of Meshita had sculptured tablets, but the photographs of them were unfortunately lost.

Dr. Tristram set a good example to travellers in the East, by resting on the Sabbath day according to the commandment. Hard though it was to restrain his followers from shooting and hunting on that day, the impression produced on the Mahometans was highly favourable.

History of the Missions of the Free Church of Scotland in India and Africa. By the Rev. Robert Hunter, M.A.—The interest of these missions, especially those in India, is due in a large degree to their having been associated with Dr. Duff of Calcutta, and Dr. Wilson of Bombay. Few missionaries of modern times have commended themselves more to the esteem and confidence not only of the church catholic, but of the world at large. The origin and progress of their labours, and also of those of their colleagues, the steps taken for the erection of buildings, the plan of mission work in the several stations, the conversion and baptism of natives, and the ordination of native pastors, are all detailed in this volume, with a faithfulness that shows the industrious and most conscientious compiler, although the minuteness may sometimes be felt by the general reader to be *de trop*. To those who have a special interest in these missions, and especially to the younger members of families, this volume is fitted to be of considerable use.

Some Present Difficulties in Theology, with Preface, by Rev. J. O. Dykes, M.A., is a small volume of papers intended to guide young men in finding their way over the difficulties of the day. Mr. Dykes begins with a lecture on the Authority of Holy Scripture, in which he analyzes and vindicates authority in general and the authority of the Bible in particular. He shows the emptiness of the objection of Theodore Parker and others to revelation, as substituting a hard authority, *ab extra*, for the free and spontaneous exercise of a man's own faculties. He shows that legitimate authority is either the authority of evidence or the authority of law. It is out of the question for any man to object to either. The Bible makes its appeal to us and its demands on our submission in virtue of these two things. The other papers in the volume are—one by Dr. Lorimer, proving the unscientific character of disbelief in the Christian miracles; one by Mr. John Gibb, in which, after noticing the remarkable combination of adverse influences which Christianity overcame at first, he adverts with great ability to the revived opposition to its claims, and the efforts of such men as Mr. Arnold to find some *via media* between Christian faith and utter disbelief; and lastly, one by Dr. Chalmers, on the several theories of the atonement. Such addresses as the present collection are eminently needed in our day, and though fragments, they are fragments of a great subject, all too great indeed for treatment in any one book.

CROOKED PLACES:

A Story of Struggles and Hopes.

BY EDWARD GARRETT, AUTHOR OF "OCCUPATIONS OF A RETIRED LIFE," ETC.

PART III.—MILLICENT'S ROMANCE, AND WHAT IT WAS MADE OF.

CHAPTER XIX.—D. M. AND M. H.



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had been given him by a gentleman in the station early that morning. The man described the gentleman as "a short gentleman, quiet enough in manner, but snappy-like. Didn't know what train he went by, or whether he went by any. Guessed he did though, as it was the Harwich train guard that called him to wait upon him. Reckoned the guard would know all about that."

Robina had shown David the letter, which said nothing more than this:—

"The creditors may do their worst; it won't hurt me now. I will not see D. M. or M. H. again. It is too bad."

David only hastened to follow up the railway porter's information. The morning's train to Harwich must be just about its destination. So David telegraphed to the guard, if possible to detain the traveller who had called for the porter, and if not possible, to telegraph back at what station he got out, and what he did.

The answer had come speedily: "Passengers had all cleared off before message arrived. Gentleman got out at Harwich, and called a boy to carry his great-coat.

II. N.S.

Don't know which way he went. Don't know the boy; but have seen him at the station before."

David had rapidly come to the conclusion that he must go down to Harwich and pursue the search himself. It did not matter in the least that he felt he was the "D. M.," whom the poor wanderer did not wish to meet again; nay, that was the more reason that such meeting should be swiftly made an accomplished fact, will he, nill he. He could understand and pity Fergus, in his physical and moral humiliation, hiding away from the two pairs of eyes that had been used to regard him with such proud trustfulness. But in this state of covering misery, repentance was likely to be only useless remorse—a stone about his soul to sink it, not a staff to help it up. Therefore Fergus must be brought to stand upright in his altered position, and to bear to see affectionate faces with forgiveness and patience in them, instead of pride.

This was what he came to say to Millicent Harvey, and this was what she said to him:—

"Go at once; and in case I could be of any use in reassuring him—in case it would be well for me to soften some of the hard things I said last night, I will follow you in the course of the evening, if possible; if not, I will be there early to-morrow morning. I will invite one of my nephews to come with me, and then my sudden absence at the seaside will not provoke any comment out of my own family circle."

"I could not have asked you to do so much," said David warmly. "But the very fact that you, who, I am quite sure, know so much more than I know, will yet do this, will surely be his salvation, for earth and for heaven."

It was characteristic of Millicent that she instructed David. "Do not take rooms for us; we will take them when we arrive. I could not stay at any hotel. Let me choose my own place."

Millicent knew what was due to her mother. Though she was a middle-aged, independent, and somewhat unconfiding spinster, she would not take a step like this, leaving Mrs. Harvey wholly in the dark.

Her sense of justice and mercy too revolted from the over-common practice of treading down the feelings of a dozen true hearts, to spare those of a perverted one, which is a species of humanity that might possibly prescribe a bath of innocent blood to refresh the weariness of a satiated debauchee. Millicent had felt, though she had scarcely noticed, this same consideration in David Maxwell. In all his eager pity for the Lauries, he had never in one iota attempted to sacrifice her feelings or comfort for theirs. He had asked her to do nothing; he had left all to her own free will. If we have a right in this world, it is the right to sacrifice ourselves. But so many people think their right is rather to sacrifice others!

While she hastily packed up her clothes, Millicent told her mother about it all. She did not tell her all about it. She told of Fergus's gradual fall, of their conversation on the previous night, and of her own severity and his flight. She did not tell of the offer of marriage. But reading between the lines, Mrs. Harvey felt it was there, though she could not tell where—no, not whether it was years ago, or only yesterday.

Millicent's proposed escort did not fail her. "Grandmamma" went to invite him, and it must have been a strange request of "grandmamma's" that George and Christian did not instantly grant. The boy himself was glad of the holiday, and the glimpse of the ocean, without much thought of his companion; but when grandmamma, who herself went to the station to see them off, drew him aside and told him to take particular care of "Aunt Millicent," then the boy felt that she was in some way a charge of his, and tried to fulfil his duties by carefully adjusting the railway carriage windows, by pressing her to eat biscuits, and pointing out the noticeable houses and churches on the road.

There could not have been a more unromantic-seeming pair of travellers. Of the two, superficial eyes would have seen more possibilities of pathos in the bright-looking lad with his merry chatter, than in the prim woman, who looked quite elderly as the deepening twilight made shadows on her face. Though she answered him cheerily, Robert Harvey soon felt that she wanted to be undisturbed, and let her sit in silence, watching the sunset, one of those sad spring sunsets, which seem like the last good-bye of a young life, that yet has lasted long enough for its own happiness.

They reached Harwich at last, and found David on the platform, having come there

for the chance of meeting them. Though he had obeyed Millicent's orders not to take rooms for her, he had reconnoitred the place, and discovered two or three houses that he could particularly recommend to her notice. And while young Robert Harvey started a British boy's eager talk to the briny lad who volunteered to carry their luggage, David and Millicent dropped behind to hear and to tell the latest news.

"He cannot be far off," David informed her. "I have found the boy that he employed at the railway station, and he took him to the principal hotel here where he lunched. He left soon after. No steamer has left Harwich today, since the hour when he came in, and nobody off his description has gone away in any coach. From his coming here, I fancy he must mean to leave by the German boat, and will probably stay in some quiet lodging till its time for starting. Very likely he will wander about after dark. I mean to wander too. There are not so many ways here, that we are very likely to miss each other. And I shall take care to see all the passengers go on board the steamer. You see, Miss Harvey, the question is not merely one of finding him, but of finding him quietly, and bringing him to a calm state of mind. Therefore we must resort to no means likely to defeat this end."

Millicent assented, but her heart felt sick within her, and her face looked so grey and worn that David was glad that she was satisfied with the first lodging to which he conducted her. So, with an assurance that he would see her early in the morning, he committed her to the care of the motherly landlady whose neatness and cheerfulness had attracted his attention to her very humble house.

"Now, you're just dead tired, miss," the good woman chattered; "an' if you'll take my advice you'll go straight off to your own room and stay there, an' I'll bring you up a cup o' tea and a bite of nice fish. Don't you trouble about the young gentleman, miss, I'll lay you my best china pot, he'll soon find his way into the kitchen to my old man, and then he won't want for yarning. They'll make up to each other, easy, miss, for our dog Gib has got her pups down under the dresser, and dogs, and pups especial, is a fine subject to begin talk upon."

Millicent was too tired in heart and limbs to rebel. Nay, she felt it a pleasure to be ordered,—a gratification which, like most strong-willed people, she was little likely to get from those who knew her best.

Nor had she any occasion to regret exchanging the little tawdry parlour for the sleeping apartment. This was a long low room running the whole length of the old house. It did not look like a room carelessly furnished for shifting inmates. There were two or three really good prints on the walls, and a lounging chair stood between the window and the fire-place, with an occasional table, and a bracket with books placed near it. Millicent noted all this half unconsciously. This would be her home for a piece of her life that could never fail to be memorable.

"Ah, it's a nice room, isn't it?" said the chatty landlady, going to a cupboard in the wall, and rattling out a little tea service. "These cups go with this room, and I always keep them and wash 'em up on the shelf outside,—they never go into the kitchen to be knocked up against the pewters and willow-patterns. This was my dear lady's room, and these were her cups, and this is how she left everything. Them's her books. Dear, dear, she were a blessed woman if ever were,—though I didn't dare say so to her, it made her that sad. 'I'm no better than the worst of the girls in the town,' she would say to me, so softly, 'and there's few of those poor things that have had thoughts of murder as I had once,' she would say. 'It's a wonder I didn't rush before God with my hands red with my fellow-sinner's blood.' I never knew the story rightly, miss, only she'd gone wrong in her young days,—most likely been awfully deceived,—for, anyhow, something cast up that made her hate the man she'd loved too well,—maybe she found out he'd been married all along, and she started off on a long journey, with a knife in her pocket to stab him. And then she said, 'God met her.' You should have seen her face, miss, when she said that! It was kind as if she saw Him before her. She never said a word more about it, no more than Moses talked much o' whatever he saw on the top o' the mountain. She turned off on her journey and came here. She was a fine-brought-up lady that could paint, and sing, and speak the languages, but there was no work to be had for the likes of her but a common servant's place at a little eating-house. And there she lived, and slaved, and by-and-by, she took to going among them poor bad gals that is always about where there's sailors, and many a good word she spoke, and many a good deed she did, unbeknown, while she was earning her bread—cooking and washing up. At last, a minister

heard of her, and got her a little salary to give her more time for doing good. She didn't have it very long, but in the meantime she got into the way of getting the fine sorts of needlework, and she did as much, and earned as much as if she'd done nothing else, but every evening she was out, and many an one she's saved, and many an one she's snatched out the fire. She lived in this room, and she died in it; and whoever she was, and whatever she'd been, a saint went to glory when she was taken. She was mighty fond of her books, and I hope you'll amuse yourself with them, miss, for they used to sound very grand when she read bits to me, being as I don't know an A from a B myself."

Millicent turned to the "bracket" as the landlady retired. She had not given much heed to her story, though she would have been interested enough by it at another time. Nor did it even interest her very much to find among that slender store of books an old worn copy of her brother's early work, "Talks and Meditations." She saw that book often enough in many places. The terrible review had not laughed it down to nothing, and George's only pleasant regret was that in those guileless days he had parted wholly with its copyright.

Millicent had never heard of the incident of her sister-in-law Christian's long-ago journey to London. It is a way of breaking in halves that stories have in this world. And so Christian missed a happy satisfaction, and George lost a solemn delight. Only for a little while. Every kindly doer, and every faithful worker will find many such satisfactions and delights in heaven.

"What is that noise?" Millicent asked listening, as her landlady returned with the tea and toast.

"It's the rain agen the windows, miss. You've got safe under shelter none too soon. It's blowing great guns from the nor'-east, and the skipper says it'll be an awful night," replied the sailor's wife.

CHAPTER XX.—FOUND AND LOST.

THERE was one who was out in the rain and the wind.

David Maxwell had not failed in his proposed twilight wandering about Harwich town. He had lingered in the principal street, he had haunted the quay. He had let the cheery fisher folk enter into talk with him, if happily some scrap of their chance information might give him a clue. He found what seemed one, at last. Standing

in a shed, for shelter from the rain, when it was past midnight, his refuge happened to be shared by a man, who stated he had seen "a strange gentleman carrying a big coat, on the road far down below Dovercourt. The gentleman had stopped him, and asked whether there was any place near where he could stay for the night, and he had recommended the Stars Inn. The gentleman had remarked that he was a stranger, new in Harwich that morning."

David's further questions elicited that this Stars Inn was situate about seven miles out of Harwich.

There was no time to be wasted in an endeavour, almost sure to be fruitless, at such an hour and on such a night, to procure any conveyance. David knew himself to be a quick walker. There was just time for him to reach the Stars Inn on foot, see this gentleman, and if he were not his missing friend, get back to Harwich in time to watch the passengers go on board the early morning boat.

David was tired and wet, but the moment he got this clue he forgot all about that, or remembered it only to dismiss it with the thought, "There will be plenty of time to rest when I have found him, and as for the bad weather, surely I can bear for once, what sailors and shepherds endure every month of their lives."

He had a long and dreary tramp. The road lay between hedgerows, sometimes stretching long and unbroken, sometimes dotted by a few houses; but the lights in these were all out, save where just once or twice, all the dreary seven miles, a winking taper was set to watch in a chamber of birth or death. The road passed through one village, with its tavern-sign creaking in the blast, and its old church standing back among its graves. Once or twice, struggling beneath his umbrella, David struck lucifer matches, to read finger-posts by their fleeting light. He had started with oilskin as well as umbrella, but both were presently unavailing, and there was nothing to do but to face the storm in dogged defencelessness. Once or twice in the earlier miles of his walk, David thought longingly of his snug parlour in Hackney, and of Phoebe's faithful ministrations. But when he was thoroughly wet through, it seemed easier to go on so. It even seemed to lay his anxieties,—nothing could be done for the next two or three hours, but walk straight on even as he was doing. Once or twice he sang, scarcely noticing what he sang, or even that he sang at all. But in one of

the little houses, a young mother watching through her first night with her child upon her breast, laid it up as a good omen for "baby," that she heard a voice pass in the tempest, singing,—

"Then let our songs abound,
And every tear be dry;
We're marching through Immanuel's ground
To fairer worlds on high."

The "Stars" was reached at last, and after many knocks and shouts, the landlord's head was lifted off its pillow and thrust out of window. The host was rather grumpy, but he could hardly refuse answers to David's rapid questions, not put without ample apology for their untimeliness.

"Yes, there was in the house a gentleman who had come from Harwich that day."

"Did not know his business."

"Did not know his name."

"Is it a matter of life or death?"

"Just ask him to let me see him," David answered. "It may be life or death to whom I am seeking, and unless I see him, I cannot tell whether this be he or no. And delay may be of terrible consequence."

Up went another window: the stranger had evidently been listening at his casement to the alarm, and thus appealed to, he responded, in broad Scotch, and a gruff voice, unmistakably not Fergus Laurie's—

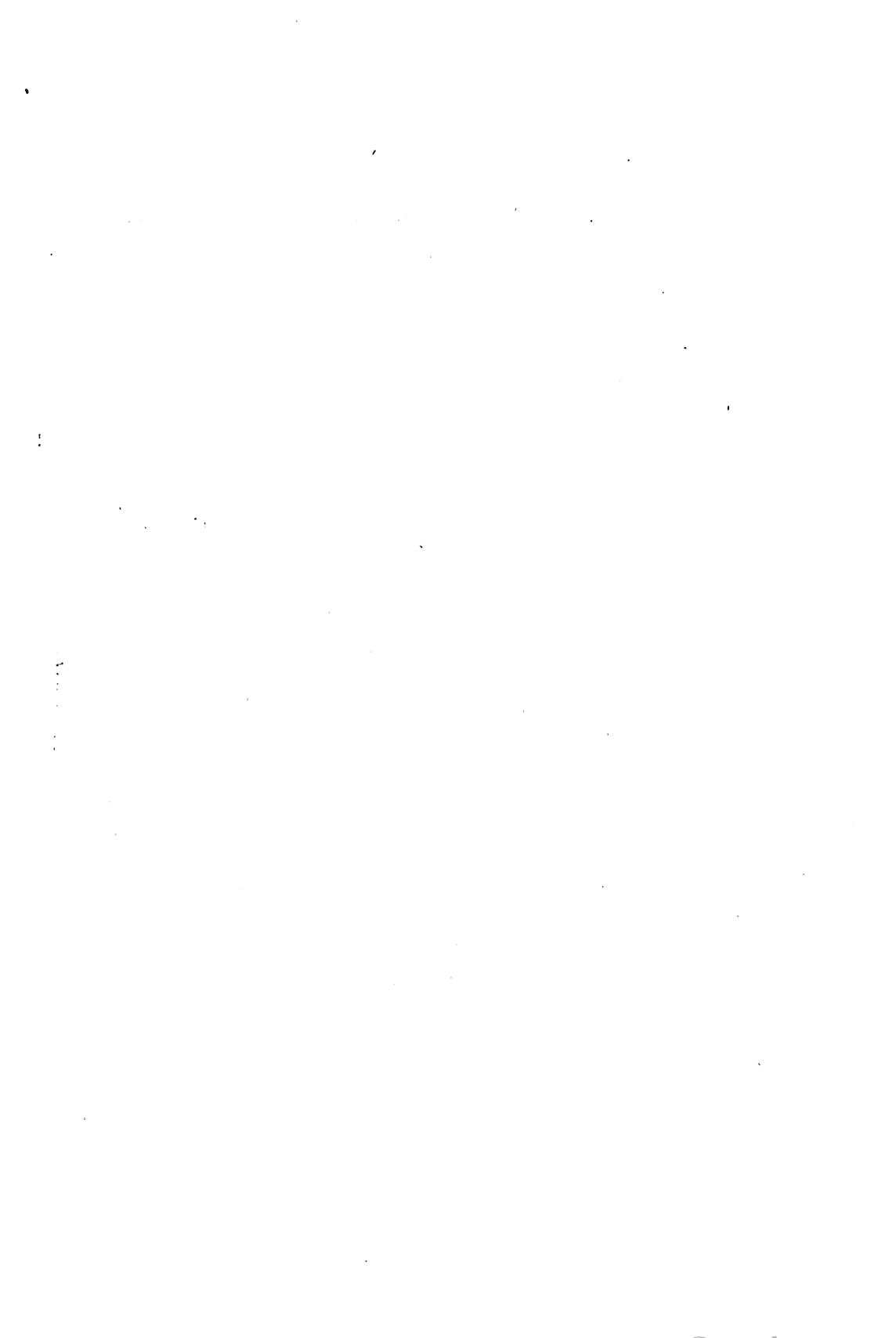
"I am Donald Gordon, traveller for Flockhart and Co. of Glasgow. If you winna believe it without seeing me, I'll away to the door and answer whatever you may speir."

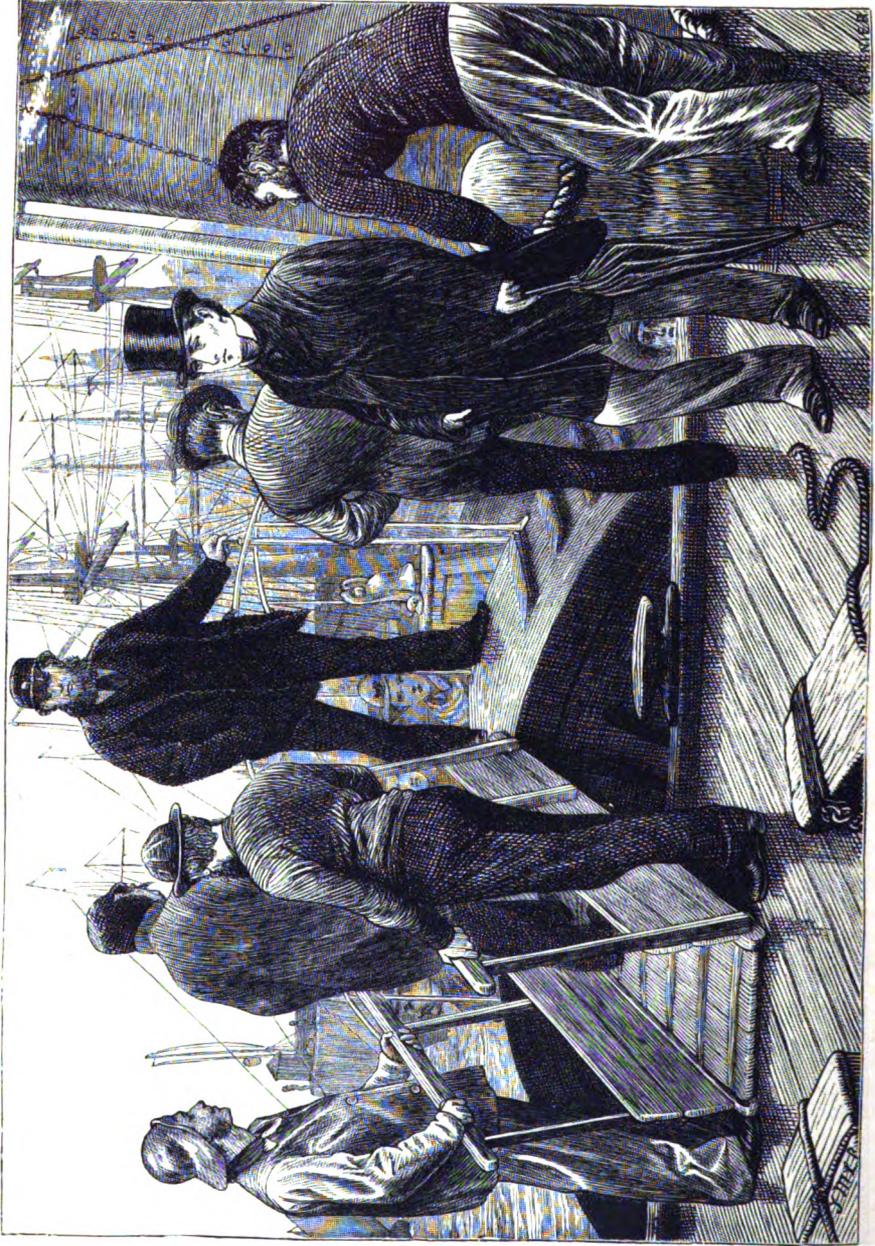
"Thank you, I won't trouble you, I am quite convinced," said David. "Pardon me for disturbing you all."

"There ain't another house for miles," interrupted mine host; "hadn't you better come in and put up till morning? It ain't a night for a dog to be out."

"Many thanks," said David; "but it will take me all my speed to get back to Harwich by the time I must be there." And so he swiftly retraced his steps, not at all disheartened by the failure, for he had prepared himself for disappointment, and kept up a strong faith in the German boat.

The rain ceased and the wind went down before the first peep of dawn. But the raw, yellow calm seemed colder and damper and more cruel than the tempest. There is all difference between the wrestle for life in the shipwreck, and the dull waiting for rescue on a desert island. While nature struggles, man struggles too, and the contest seems equal. But when she sits down and bides her time, his heart drops within him like lead. Her





"CROOKED PLACES."

time is so long, his days are so short! David did not sing on his way into Harwich town.

He hurried down to the quay. The German boat lay alongside, and there were several people standing about. Nobody had gone on board yet, the sailors said. There were very few passengers, they informed him, and as the steamer would soon be off, he would not have to wait long.

Presently the first instalment settled themselves on board—a young lady and gentleman, palpably “a honeymoon pair.” The next party was a German family, whose father wore spectacles, and whose mother presently began to knit. After that, the passengers went on thick and fast, tourists, commercial travellers, “Herr Professors,” and scholastic “Frauleins,” navvies, and seafaring men. Then the cries and shouts grew deafening, and moorings began to slacken, and one more spectacled Herr Professor rushed breathless on board, and returned the captain an innocent “thank you,” for the curse he bestowed upon him. And then the other mooring was loosened, and last words were shouted, and handkerchiefs began to wave. And the *Rhineland* went on her ocean way.

But no Fergus Laurie.

This was when David's heart began to sink, and he began to think to himself that within easy distance of the little easy-going town there must be many and many a little creek which might keep any ghostly secret committed to its care, for many and many a month,—nay, for many a year. And his heart ached for Millicent,—for one so tried, so long patient, ay, and so ready to forgive, yet deceived and goaded into a wrath that might be a life-long pain to her soul.

All that he could do, was to go about the town again, renewing his inquiries at all the hotels and livery stables. A desperate sense of the puerility and feebleness of his endeavours grew upon him. He was tired within an inch of his life, he was wet through, he was hungry and comfortless, and yet he was unsuccessful, where a London detective would doubtless have succeeded, without the expenditure of a tithe of his vital force. He could only reassure himself by the recollection, that a detective's success would probably have been more fatal to their real wishes than even his own failure.

The town fully woke up at last, the shops were opened, and other people besides fishers and passengers by early boats, began to move about. Presently, coming out of a large house in one of the quiet, old-fashioned

streets, David saw a figure which made his heart leap. It was at some little distance from the spot where he stood, yet he could have been quite sure it was Fergus, but for the fact—which seemed to him to throw doubt on it—that he was not alone, but in the company of an old gentleman, and a young lady in a severely elegant morning costume. David hastily followed them at a discreet distance, every moment growing more convinced that it was really his missing man. The three walked together down two or three streets, then the old gentleman and the young lady shook hands very cordially with their companion, and went off in another direction, while he very leisurely took the road to the railway station. Now was David's time. He overtook him, and laying his hand kindly on his shoulder, asked breathlessly—

“Where have you been, Laurie? We have been searching for you. Where are you going?”

The other gave his shoulder a hasty shrug, which did not shake off David's touch, and stood quite still. He stared at David for a moment, and answered coolly—

“I have been taking a breathing time and a blow of salt air. I am going back to London now. The train does not start for half an hour, so you needn't be afraid of hindering me.”

David put his arm through his. “Why have you done this, Fergus?” he pleaded. “You might have explained yourself clearly. You have given every one a fearful shock.”

“It is quite refreshing to hear that anything one does can do that,” said Fergus, with a sneer. “It is really quite worth while to withdraw oneself for a time to find out how one is valued.”

“I don't think there is anything remarkable in one's sudden and accounted absence alarming one's mother and sister,” said David plainly.

“I have always had to take care of myself, and of them too, ever since I was a boy,” Fergus returned. “I should think they might trust me perfectly by this time. Is Robina in a fit?”

“No, indeed; at least, not that I know of,” said David. “I thought she took it very calmly, wonderfully calmly in one way, for she was most assiduous in keeping appearances all right. But, oh, Fergus, when you knew how things were, and how agitated we might naturally suppose you to be, how could you go away like this?”

“I don't wonder that you should suppose

I would be agitated," said Fergus, "seeing you knew how you had badgered and deserted me in my day of difficulty; but I am thankful to say I can rise superior to such treatment, and build new hopes on the old disappointments. Go and tell Miss Harvey so, if you like. Was it a fearful shock to her? I daresay she was very much afraid that something would happen to make a public story of her insulting ingratitude. It would not have made a pretty chapter in her life."

"God knows what passed between you and Millicent Harvey," pleaded David, "I do not. I only know the message you promised to carry to her, and that you could have only carried half of it, for that she thought you still a prosperous man, and stung and passionate, spoke sharp words to you. What you said, and what she said, I do not know. But I do know, that she is here now, Fergus—in this very town—watching an opportunity to tell you that she would not have spoken so, had she known the truth, and to ask you to let us be your friends again, as we used to be."

They had wandered on to the esplanade while they talked, and just here, Fergus stood still and gazed out to sea. Not all his defiant self-command could control the spasm that passed over his face. She knew—the woman whose high opinion his better nature had valued above all other—she knew what a base, weak, mean man he was! In the face of that crowning ignominy, it did not much matter to him how close she kept her secret—nay, he hated her for doing it. He could deny to himself that he was base, or weak, or mean, but the very screen her pitiful silence threw over his fall, showed how low she felt it to be.

"It is too bad—too bad!" he cried passionately, struggling in the net of humiliation, where his own sins had caught him. "Let her go her way and leave me to go mine. I will not see her. I never wish to see her again."

"Oh, Fergus," said David, "all these petty interests are so short and small, but Love and Life are for ever and for ever. Do not defile the immortal with the mire of a stormy hour."

"Love!" he said, with a sneer so false and bitter that David's face flushed as if he himself had uttered a lie. "What love was, is, or ever can be between me and Millicent Harvey? Let us go our different ways. I never want to see her again in this life or the next. Tell her so."

They were walking on again, and they were silent for awhile, then David said—

"You are going back to town. What do you mean to do?"

"Oh, everything is settled very comfortably," Fergus answered, with a sudden return to that cool, light tone which made David's heart heavier even than the fiery outburst. "I am a man of too many resources to be easily ruined. I found that my chief creditor was staying down here, and I came away to consult him, and he is going to take everything off my hands. He sees quite well that by putting forth capital into my concern, he will soon gain an immense return. He will pay everybody and be his own sole creditor, and with his resources, that will soon be most profitable to him. We have never had an American agency—of course, with our means the idea was ridiculous—but I suggested it to him, and he grasped it eagerly. I am to be his agent out in New York. I can assure you I shall be very glad to get away from this worn-out old country, with its narrow ideas and sulky prejudices. You need not trouble yourself about me, Mr. Maxwell. I only hope that you may find yourself satisfied with the arrangements of your new masters. For the sake of old times, I have tried to forget your recent mistrustfulness and have spoken up for you, and I think with some effect, still it will be very different for you, from what it would have been, if I had prospered. I am sorry for you. You will repent that you did not make your interests identical with mine, even in such a paltry matter as the money you preferred to pay to Miss Harvey."

"I did make my interests identical with yours," said David quietly. "You will see it some day."

"It is time I went towards the station," Fergus remarked. "You need not come with me. I think we have nothing more to say to each other. Good-bye; I daresay we shall not meet again at the office, for I have business in all parts of London for the next day or two, and then I shall go to Liverpool. Of course, I shall take my household to America, but in the first instance I must go out and secure them a comfortable and suitable residence. I should not like them to be exposed to any hardship, or to have those wretched homeless feelings that any change brings to those who are not accustomed to it. So, I daresay I may not see you again. If you have any business communication to make, the best way will be, to address a note to the firm formally, and then

it will get attended to in due course. Good-bye. Give my compliments to Miss Harvey."

"Good-bye, Fergus," said David simply. He could add no word of blessing or commendation to God. Such would have sounded so like a curse.

And Fergus went one way and David took the other. And as he went along, he looked out over the sea, and said to himself—

"O God, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, have pity on that poor soul! Whither can it go from Thy Spirit, whither can it flee from Thy presence? Though it say, Surely the darkness shall cover me, yet the darkness hideth not from Thee. And Thou remainest holy, O Thou worship of Israel—the Rock that standeth steadfast while the tide comes in and out."

CHAPTER XXI.—UNDER THE CORMORANTS.

MILLICENT was no fiery young girl, ready to snatch a flash of excitement from her anxieties like a bright foxglove from a covert of thorns. That night she went to the window for a moment and saw the rain beating on the pane, and heard the wind roaring outside in the darkness. But though she sat a little later than she used at home, she did not dream of spending the night in pacing her chamber, or voluntarily listening to the storm. She might not be able to sleep, but she would go to bed. She had gone past the age when life concentrates itself on points, and we see nothing beyond. Let not youth in its hasty scorn imagine this means that the fine power of suffering is lost. It is when the fever is over that the wound is felt.

She had a little sleep before the morning. And she dreamed that she and Hatty and Hatty's old lover, Harry Westbrook, were walking somewhere in a wood, and that Hatty suddenly began to sing the *Magnificat*. It seemed as if the singing awoke her. She had to make a strong effort to remember where she was, and what had brought her there. The room looked a little different since the night before: she felt sure that somebody had entered and gone out again, without awaking her. She rose quickly and drew up the blind. The sea was still high with the fury of the late storm, but the wind was down, and the sky was clear and bright, with a tender, tearful lustre.

She had neglected to wind her watch on the previous day, so that she could not guess the hour; but the number of people stirring on the shore below, convinced her that it was late. While she was hastily dressing,

she heard somebody open the door very softly. It was only the landlady.

"You'll excuse my boldness, miss," she said, "but I've been in before and you were sleeping, and the gentleman bade me not disturb you till you woke of yourself. It's only the gentleman that brought you last night, and he's not been waiting more than half an hour. The young gentleman's all right, bless ye, miss, you needn't trouble about him. He took his breakfast as ours was going in the kitchen, like the real gentleman he is, and went off with my master in the boat to the bathing. I've got your breakfast-tray outside, ready to bring in the minute you're ready, for the gentleman below said you were to take that before you were bothered about any business. He looks as if he had been sore worried himself, but as if it were kind of all over now."

Millicent felt that the best acknowledgment of David's thoughtfulness was to obey it, so hastily swallowed a cup of tea and a scrap of toast, and hurried down-stairs. David heard her step on the stairs, and came to the parlour-door to meet her, and the moment she saw his eyes, she knew that all was lost.

"He is not dead?" she cried.

"No, he is not dead; he is on his way back to London. We must give him up to God's patience, Miss Harvey."

"Why did he go away? Where has he been, and what has he been doing?" Millicent asked.

"He came here to make arrangements with his chief creditor, who is staying here. He spent last night in his house," said David.

"He is a selfish, heartless wretch!" cried Millicent.

"Ah, but you see he did not start for this till he had spent one dreadful unaccounted-for night," said David. "Good and bad angels fought over him that night, surely, and the wrong ones conquered."

"Because he was on their side," remarked Millicent bitterly.

"If there had only been something to turn the scale!" said David, "such little things can do it. Such little things have done it for me sometimes."

"Did he speak of me?" Millicent forced herself to ask.

"Yes, he did; and he could not disguise that he felt very strongly about you. It was the only emotion he showed. I think it will be a witness within him which he will never silence. He knew you were here. Miss

Milly, you were ready to forgive him. Forgive him still. He wants it more than ever. He wants it so much that he has gone past caring for it!"

"And what is to become of him?" Millicent asked, without any response to David's pleading.

"He is going to America. His chief creditor seems to have consented to take the

business with all its responsibilities and profits, and Fergus is to be his agent in the States. If he has only learned a few lessons, he may do well yet," said David.

"The better he does for this world, the worse he will do for the next," remarked Millicent. "If God means to let him alone, He will let him prosper."

"That is true so far; but we must not be



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too sure about outward prosperities," said David. "A life may lie in prosperity like a corpse in a cloth of gold. Men look at the money-bags, but God sees the heart. A man may prosper, and prosper, and prosper, till he reaches the summit, and sees all around but 'vanity of vanities,' and he may turn to God from it, Miss Millicent. Some go home to the Father after eating husks among the

swine; but others go after sitting appetiteless among dainties. But I think the Father is always waiting at the gate for either. And I think the elder brothers should be waiting there too."

There was something in his tone which made Millicent look up at him, not as a mere messenger from Fergus, a lay figure in this tableau of her life, but as himself, David

Maxwell. And the moment she did so, she was conscious of a loosening of the tension at her heart—that kind of relief from a great pain or a great care, that is afforded by a smaller pang or a petty anxiety. Somebody else had been wounded beside herself.

It was only likely that he should look worn and weary. A good meal and a night's sleep might put all that away. But Millicent saw something more than that—a strange, new youthfulness about a face that had never lost its youth, a spiritual life as of one who, still standing in the temple's outer court, catches a glimpse of the Holy of Holies, it may be as another's desecrating hand disturbs the awful veil. Millicent felt this even instantly, as we all feel it sometimes, though we can only say, as Millicent said—

"Mr. Maxwell, you have worn yourself out. Are you quite sure you have had a good breakfast?"

David started as if he had to travel a long way back to recollection of himself.

"Oh, I had supper quite late last night," he said; "and the morning is not very far on yet."

"That means that you have had none at all!" she answered. "Oh, Mr. Maxwell, it was really wrong of you."

"I forgot all about it till you spoke," he said, with a smile. It was thoroughly true. There was nobody's sake for whom he was bound to remember himself.

"And yet remembered to have my breakfast sent up to me before you would see me," said Millicent reproachfully, as she went off to give orders that the strongest of tea, and the most savoury of steaks, should be sent in immediately.

Young Robert Harvey came in fresh and ruddy from his sea bath, and not at all unprepared for a supplemental breakfast. The three sat down together. It was a charmed meal for David. To be sitting with Millicent, cared for by her. To know that the gentleness in her voice, and the solicitude of her eyes were actually for him, was enough. It did not matter that he knew quite well that his aching head and dazed manner explained her attentive kindness. That only seemed to make it sweeter. He thought within himself that it was like passing through a beautiful country, with a light mist hanging over it. Odder fancy still, for one tasting a brief happiness out of an old sorrow and a present pain, he thought that he felt something like one looking down from heaven upon the fulfilment of an old wish! Poor fellow, was he feverish?

They made their plans while they sat at table. David would go back to town instantly—Millicent and her nephew would follow later in the day. David suggested that they should stay a while by the sea, and make holiday, and Robert Harvey was certain that would be an excellent plan. But Millicent would not hear of it.

"I want to be at home, and to settle to my work," she said. "I have lost so much time already." She spoke and thought of her wasted hours and days of late, but it was really with the weight of lost years that her heart was heavy.

Millicent could gather from such slight conversation as passed between her nephew and David Maxwell, that David had been out in the severe weather of the previous night, but that he had spent the whole night in the storm she did not guess. Still there was something about him which told of a severe strain—some mysterious hint of a coming change.

"Will you take a note from me to my sister-in-law?" she asked. "It is best to let her know that her boy will be home again to-day. You need not trouble to call on my mother. It is farther out of your way, and Christian will send her a message in her turn."

This was the note she wrote:—

"We shall be home this evening. We have done what we could, and our part has come to nothing, but all is right with Mr. Laurie. I am afraid Mr. Maxwell has nearly worn himself out. If he is ill, I shall know what caused it. I suppose somebody's wickedness is at the bottom of most illnesses."

And then David went away. And Millicent and Robert went out together, and had a walk on the esplanade, and about the town. They stayed there till evening. Robert did not find his aunt a dull companion. For Millicent had not now to learn how to be a brave woman and a proud one.

In the sunset, they again took their journey. And Millicent found that the change and the bitterness seemed harder to bear, when she passed out of sight of the broad rich meadows and grey sea-line which had been the scene of the crisis, back into the rows of streets, and the reek of the great city where the old, easy, happy past had been lived. It grew harder and harder as the two walked into Hackney—past the end of Acre Way, past the old church—where it almost seemed as if the ghost of the old sweeper—her first model—was standing, so vividly did the old man's figure rise be-

fore her eye. Hardest of all, when she stood under her own clematis-covered porch, at just the same hour and in just the same light as on that evening when Fergus had stopped to tell her of the great discovery. The clock chimed half-past nine as she stood there. It had chimed so then.

If Fergus Laurie's way of life had only gone apart from hers, if he had died, nay, if having once loved him, she could feel in her secret heart that she loved him still, Millicent knew that it would be better for her. Loss and pain are treasures, albeit they may strain the poor human hand that bears them. But what are waste and emptiness? Those who have a past have a future too; the dullest lake reflects the hills that stand around it. But poor Millicent had walked through her mirage, and there seemed only sands beyond.

"It is hard for David too," she thought to herself, and drained the refreshment of that drop of sympathy, as a thirsty traveller drains the bitter water which he has procured at the cost of his last camel. It had been but a mirage, poor Millicent, but henceforth there would be no friend for her like him, who had seen the mirage too! Each would have tones and turns of thought which each other would understand. The secret of many friendships lies just there.

It was Mrs. Harvey herself who opened the door. And she put her hand on her grandson's arms, as with one hasty kiss he turned to run off to "his own home."

"You are to stay here to-night, my dear," she said; "while Mr. Maxwell was calling at your house to-day, he was taken very ill. He will have to stay there—till—he is better."

"I thought there was something the matter," said Millicent. "Is he really very ill?"

"Very ill," answered the old lady. "The doctors say—well, they told the truth, because they thought there was nobody who cared much, as he is a lonely man. It is a return of the old complaint he had when he was a teacher in his youth. They say they do not think he has enough strength to get over it now."

Like the doctors, Mrs. Harvey spoke plainly, because she thought he was a dearer friend to all the family than to Millicent.

"Fergus Laurie has killed him!" said Millicent. And then her mother, looking into her face, knew that her daughter was desolate with a desolation beyond that of her own uncomforted widowhood.

CHAPTER XXII.—A SECRET.

AND so it came to pass that David Maxwell laid him down to die, not—according to the sorrowful vision which had sometimes crossed even his cheerfulness—in his lonely house, with nobody near but his poor old faithful Phœbe. Nay, Phœbe was not even the watcher in his dying chamber. She could come in and smile brightly, and speak cheerfully, but then she had to rush out, and hide her face in her apron and weep. She could not keep a serene countenance, as Christian Harvey could. Therefore it was Christian who was the watcher.

Miss Brook was there to render what help she could. Old as she was, she was still a strong, spirited woman, one of those who are never "put out," and who hold that "what one's got to do one can do." She presided at George's table in his wife's absence, and guided the ticklish invalid-cooking ostensibly in Phœbe's eager but not too skilful hands. Christian knew that the secret of a peaceful, well-managed sick-room is efficient help from outside.

"One nurse within and two without," she said.

And so the queer old maid and the strong-tempered widow sat together over their pestles and pannikins. One called her companion "Ma'am," and the other addressed hers as "Phœbe;" but the two were on that genuine equality where all sound hearts meet at such sacred times. And they talked and talked,—yes, reader, as somebody will some day sit and talk about me and about you. Well, indeed, for us if they are such kindly talkers, and if they only have such kindly things to say!

"Says the chip of a milk gal to me this morning," Phœbe narrated, aggrieved, "'This about your master is a bad job for you. I don't wonder you're cut up: you are not very young for a new service.' I was crying when she said it, but that dried me up at once't. You've no right to cry unless you've got your 'tificate of relationship."

"Ah," said Miss Brook, "it's my belief that in heaven we'll be related according to how we love. The good Samaritan will be the fellow-countryman of the wounded Jew instead of the priest and the Levite."

"Well, there's likely to be a many things more wonderful than that," assented Phœbe. "And if so be, then Master David, that's belonged to nobody, as one may say, in this world, will be one in a rare large family there. Master David has been one of the

quiet ones,—nobody ever knew what he gave away, and done, and he didn't know himself, an' he let it seem such a pleasure to him, that there were those that were not backward in coming forward to give him that same. There's some people that, I b'lieve, it's kindness when you give 'em a trifle, to make a mow, and tell 'em not to come again. Any-way, that was my mite towards Mr. David's charities, often an' often. There's some things I can't stand. I can't stand a great fat woman tellin' one she hasn't tasted a bite for two days, or that she's lived on three shillings a week reg'lar for the last six months. Many a one that's told me that, I've answered that if they've thrived so well on it, I'd advise 'em to go on, an' I'd be glad o' their receipt myself. I know what clemming is. Many an' many a time I've set down to a dry bit o' pudding with two or three raisins in it calling out to each other, 'Where are you? here am I.' I've had to save my appetite till I got my money a deal oftener than to save my money till I got my appetite; but there's folks in the world that can't save anything. I've lived on the fat o' the land these many years now, and not been allowed to save in anything, 'cept my clothes, an' I've had to keep my hand in wi' them! Whenever Mr. David didn't dine at home, he always asked me what I'd had, for fear I'd put off with cheese or eggs. An' there never was a puddin' that a share didn't come back for me, an' if a visitor came unexpected, Mr. David 'ud leave his own. It wasn't the way in Blenheim House, where butter was always running short, an' me to finish up wi' dripping. 'It's as good as you get in any home of your own,' the missus would say, drat her! 'It's as good as I'd wish there,' I'd throw her back; 'but I ain't a grumblin',—if I chooses to make you a present of half my keep, that's my own affair.'

"Phoebe, I think old servants could be as saucy as any young ones," said Miss Brook.

"I wasn't her servant; I'd engaged wi' the master, when she worn't in the bargain," Phoebe rejoined triumphantly. "Of course, you know, she wasn't Mr. David's own mother. Reckon she won't be even his stepmother in the next world—if she gets there at all. She'd an immortal soul, I 'spose, but I lunno know what she'll do with it, where here's no eating or drinking or dress. Why, that woman would ha' been quite enough excuse for any other boy a-going straight to the bad. He's been a miracle, has Master David. What mightn't he ha' been, if he'd

took after his father or his poor mother too, for that matter?"

"Ah, God's grace is not hereditary," said Miss Brook. "It's some little time since Ezekiel taught us that. And if it's a law of nature that we should take after somebody of our race, there are few families that haven't a good wide pick of fools and sages, and saints and sinners. Did you know anything of Mr. David's own mother, Phoebe?"

"Well, yes," said Phoebe, almost evasively. "But I know nothing that it's much use saying after the way she went off wi' that man. When a girl does that sort o' thing, it's poor talk, and seems half wicked, to say she were pretty, and lively, and obliging. She'd no mother, poor thing, an' she'd a sister that maybe wasn't the best kind of sister for her. She meant well, but she were that foolish fond of July's pretty face and ways, that she'd be wiled into going without a good shawl for herself, that July might have a new bonnet, and yet she were half afraid for her, an' if she let her too loose at one time, she pulled her up real hard at others, and she'd a sharp, biting tongue. But July knowed her sister, good and bad. She knowed she might come back to her when she was sorry for the wrong she'd done. There was nobody to give her a nay, for her sister was a widow by that time, not that her husband would have had a hard word for poor July when once the sin was away and the sorrow left. And July comed back—comed through a snow-storm in an open waggon, though she were that far gone when she got there that she could only say, 'I'd have come long before, but for the boy.' And says her sister to her, 'July, I'll stick by your boy through thick and thin.' And she looked up in her sister's arms an' smiled. She knowed she could trust her old Phoebe! An' she died that night!"

Miss Brook looked up sharply as the secret of Phoebe's life dropped out. But Phoebe noticed neither her own slip nor her companion's glance. She was crying too bitterly.

"Well, I suppose Master David got a better bringing up, one way, than his poor mother's son had any right to," she went on. "But it wasn't his father that giv' him any start in life. He had to feel that out for himself, an' got some hard knocks while he was a-doing it. An' he might ha' had a nice profession of his own, and bin a doctor, an' a good one, for he's often near cured my tooth-ache by just looking at me, if his father had been an ordinary decent man, and not put a nasty idea into people's heads, that shut his poor son out of the small beginnings that

people has to make at first. It wasn't likely that doctors would take up wi' a lad whose father had evened himself with resurrection men. There isn't a secret thing that isn't laid open, that I do believe now, for if I thought anything was secret that was, and poor old Mr. Maxwell himself, he thought so too, for he was always dreadful frightened of it's coming out, as people as ain't frightened of doing things generally is."

"Then you knew it before his death, Phœbe?" asked Miss Brook.

"Yes, I knew it. That was how it was I could say my say in his house, an' no fear o' being turned out. I knew it years an' years before, but I thought he were done with it. He was an awful man, ma'am. I could tell you things that would make your hair stand up."

And poor old Phœbe, standing in that comfortable kitchen, carefully skimming beef-tea, had in her memory a scene tragic enough for poem or picture. A dimly moonlit churchyard and two men stealthily digging at a new-made grave, with a young surgeon who had directed their attention to the death and burial of one of his own patients standing by, out of his sheer, brutal inclination for wickedness, soiling the still night air with low, vile laughter and miserable jest. The poem of the tragedy lay in another figure—a woman's—her own—watching the dreadful scene, restraining her own boiling indignation, all that she might have a power over this degraded man—a power that should enable her to serve and save his infant son—her own sister's nameless orphan.

"You should have spoken out, Phœbe," said Miss Brook; "there's no kindness in hiding a sin that isn't repented of."

"Ay, ma'am, an' Master David said just so, though he didn't know the rights of what he was talking about, poor boy. I'm sure I did it for his own self's sake, God bless him, an' he did own he was a bit the better for me."

"Why, he could have been only a baby when you entered the Maxwells' service," Miss Brook observed, with interest, and not without intent to develop the knowledge she had acquired so accidentally.

"And can't you do aught for a baby's sake, ma'am?" said Phœbe. "Ah, you've never been married, miss, more's the pity for the man that's missed you. You've never had no baby crowing in your arms. No more ain't I, ma'am. But me and my husband, we had to bury a bit o' a wee wax angel that had never looked up at either of us. It was a

rare cuttin' up for my poor man; and he laid it that it happened through some sore troubles I'd had. He seemed to feel it more than me at first. But it's queer—I've never see a baby since that hasn't seemed as if my still-born beauty were somehow in it. They may be fatter or thinner, or fairer or darker, but I always feel to myself, if it wasn't just for that difference, they would be her very picter! An' after that, ye'll own a baby's sake may be as much as any other body's, more especial one that was born the very day mine was buried—and that was—that was—" and here Phœbe threw her apron over her head, and sobbed outright—"that was like another baby that you'd nussed and dragged about when you were little more than a baby yourself."

"I aint a good one to make things plain," Phœbe went on presently, "I can't speak right out: there's some things I won't say even while I want to, and I can't set it all plain while I'm a holding something back, as some folks can."

"Well, Phœbe," said Miss Brook, "keep something fresh to tell in heaven. We needn't be afraid of having a secret, if it's one we shall be able to speak out there."

"Master David's taking one or two such secrets with him," said Phœbe tearfully, "and may be, he'll hear one or two in his turn."

"Maybe, he won't hear them just yet," Miss Brook interrupted, rather fiercely. "Maybe, he's not going to die now, after all. I was given over by doctors twice before I was twenty, and here I am now, and believe I shall be till I'm a hundred."

"The Lord grant you're right," said poor Phœbe, "only I lose heart because he's grown so like—somebody—that I saw die years ago. I'd like to go first, and let him bury me. Many's the time I've told him so."

"Well, Phœbe," said Miss Brook, "if you are to stay behind, depend on't there's a reason for it. The withering leaves hold to the tree longer than the blossoms, that they may take care of them till the last."

"Ay, and that's so," Phœbe cried, with a light of battle kindling in her eye. "There's one or two things that I'll be even glad to stay behind, just for to say! That impident Betsey, the parlour girl at Acre Hall, had been telling over her lies to the laundress, who told me. Miss Devon was in calling at the Hall, an' she asked how Mr. Maxwell was, thinking they'd be sure to know, and says Miss Robina, 'O we want to hear nothing about him now: my brother picked him

out of the gutter, and he proved ungrateful : that is all our connection with him.' But I know who lent Mr. Fergus the first money he got hold of! They two young men talked as free as could be before me, coming in an' out o' Blenheim House parlour. If Miss Robina don't mind what she's saying, I'll astonish her! Phœbe Winter won't hide the truth and encourage the devil a second time in her life! Picked out of the gutter, indeed! For that matter, howsomever, her brother picked Miss Robina hersel' out o' the gutter, and she'll smell of it to the end of her days. But don't let them tell no lies about my master—especially if he's taken, and can't any longer be a smoothing me down as he could and did. I'll die an old vinegar-vixen yet, I believe, if I'm left to myself." And Phœbe carried the beef-tea up-stairs, and wept so bitterly that she had to leave it at David's chamber door, and lost one of her few remaining "sights" of him.

CHAPTER XXIII.—THE END OF MILLICENT'S ROMANCE.

HEARTS might be aching, and fierce passions still throbbing all around. But in the chamber of death there was peace—the peace that passeth all understanding.

David knew that he was dying. He said so himself, and only added in a whisper, "It is so strange." And there came upon his face a look as of one who in a beautiful silence, listens for a burst of still more beautiful music.

He named Fergus Laurie once—only once. And fearful lest he might be repressing a wish that he thought would not be approved, Christian forced herself to ask if he would like to see him.

"No," he said. "Don't send for him, for perhaps he would not come, and then he would be sorry afterwards."

The nature of his illness as well as its great weakness, forbade him speaking often, or ever above whispers. He lay for hours with his eyes closed, and would then smilingly whisper to Christian that he was "dull company."

He liked her to read to him—especially from Isaiah, and the Psalms and Revelation. And as he lay with shut eyes, there were verses which she heard him saying softly to himself.

"They shall not hunger nor thirst : neither shall the heat nor sun smite them ; for He that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall He guide them."

"And they shall build the old wastes, they

shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations."

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes ; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain."

"Delight thyself in the Lord ; and He shall give thee the desire of thine heart."

He said that twice, and then opened his eyes, and whispered, "Yes, He does, except when we desire a stone, and then He gives us bread."

Another time he said, "What a pity I didn't contrive to take better care of myself last week, and remember to eat my meals and to keep myself from worrying! Because this happening afterwards makes Phœbe think things that make her bitter. I wish she would see that I did nothing but what thousands do every day, and that I am dying because I am not worth life."

"I knew I had a very uncertain life by the rate I had to pay to insure an annuity for Phœbe. She don't know I did it. She'd have made a fuss, and opposed it. But when it's all over, I think it will be a pleasant surprise to find it out."

"I made my will years and years ago, and there is now but little more than the definite sum that is definitely disposed of there. That little goes also to Phœbe, and so, of course, does my furniture. If she takes a boarder, in my place, as it were, I think she may be very comfortable. You may recommend any one to her care. You may, really, on my word."

"But there are two or three little remembrances I should like to leave."

"I will write them down," said Christian, "and then your own words will go with them, and make them so much more precious."

"I want you to take my desk. It is only an old, old desk, that used to be in Blenheim House, but my hand had got so used to it, that I never cared to get another. It is not worth giving, only there are a lot of papers inside, and you are so kind, that I am sure you will look over them for me, and burn what ought to be burned. Will you?"

"I will," said Christian.

"I am afraid I have nothing fit to leave your husband, or even Robert. My watch is only silver, and I should like to give that to the lad who helped me in the laboratory. He has none at all, and it would be useful to him, for it keeps good time. Ah, but I have a little gold locket. You will find it in a drawer in my desk. I bought it years ago.

I don't know what made me buy it. It has A. E. I. engraved on it. Give that to your husband, and tell him he is to put your portrait inside. Ay, and there is the engraving from that picture of the men who went into church to scoff, but 'remained to pray.' Give that to Robert, with my best wishes. It will be a contribution towards his own furnishing," added the dying man playfully, thinking, with a smile, of the probable bright lines of the healthy young life that had touched his own so nearly just at its close.

"Give Mr. and Mrs. Webber that set of 'The Rake's Progress.' I remember hearing her say that she enjoyed Hogarth. So do I. One can dare to look at the gloom of the world, when one knows God sees it too."

"I won't ask you to give anything to Fergus Laurie. He might fancy it was only a kind of reproach. It's no use showing goodwill, when it is likely to raise bad will. Poor Fergus, he don't know himself just now. But if ever—if it should happen—that you should see him, and that he should mention me as if he didn't quite hate me, I should like you to give him my Prayer-Book, and to say that I asked you to do so whenever he should speak about me—but not before. Tell him I thought it might pain him to send him a dying gift in the middle of his angry thoughts. But that I wanted him to have this remembrance the moment he could think of me less bitterly, and forgive whatever he doesn't understand."

"And now"—and a pale, pale flush flitted over the sunken face, and there was a rail perceptible even in the almost voiceless voice—"and now, I should like to give my Bible to Miss Millicent. We have worked with each other so long, and been through so much together, you see. She won't mind my leaving it to her, do you think?"

"It will be a pleasure to Millicent—ay, and a blessing too," said Christian frankly.

"Then if you will hand me the book and a pen, I think I can write her name in it."

Christian obeyed.

The weak hand was long in obeying the loving will, and as Christian took back the volume, she glanced at its new inscription. It was only "Millicent Harvey." Nothing more. A life's love might lie between the failing letters, but only angels could read it.

"I have enjoyed nothing so much as those grapes Miss Millicent brought me," said David, faintly turning his face aside upon his pillow.

"I will tell her so," answered Christian, "and then she will bring some more."

For Millicent had called at her brother's house twice, and even thrice a day to ask after David. She had left clusters of grapes and bunches of flowers. That was all she could do. She had no right to do more. She had not been David's friend as Christian had. Nay, when without the slightest improvement, he still lingered till Christian needed a relief-guard for her watches by night, Hatty Webber had come. Even Hatty had been far more David's friend than Millicent Harvey.

After the exertion and excitement of expressing these last wishes, the dying man lay silent and motionless for hours. Christian did not know whether he slept. He did not stir when her tea was brought up to her. She, too, sat motionless, thinking and dreaming of those half-forgotten things which come back upon us in all their freshness when we watch in death chambers—looks, and smiles, and words of those who have gone before, and who seem not so far away then, but as though they had come down to their other shore to welcome the boat which we are watching drift away from ours, and perhaps to ask tidings of us.

The sunlight faded from the room, and the grey shadows of twilight had crept over it, before David spoke again. Then he startled his watcher from her reverie by a clearer tone than she had heard for days.

"I am getting so rested! I think I shall go into heaven quite fresh. I've heard some people say that they hoped heaven would give them a rest, and others that it would give them more strength for work. I think I understand now. Each will get what he is fit for. I think Jesus Christ will welcome each one—and to some He will say, 'Go first and take the sleep of my beloved,' and to others, 'Come at once and sit with me at our Father's table.' It will be just like going home after a long journey. If we had a rest by the way, we go in ready for work, but if not, we must take a slumber when we get there. But home is home, either way, and heaven is heaven."

"What a comfort it is to be sure that one is going to heaven, because it is nothing to do with one's self, but all with Jesus!"

"Dear friend, who have been so good to me! Has Miss Millicent been here yet this evening? If not, I want to see her when she comes, and Phoebe too, please."

"It will be too much for you. You will have a bad night afterwards," Christian reasoned.

"It will make no difference at all," he

answered, and looked at her, with a strong light returned to his dim eyes, which told her he was right.

He did not speak again till Millicent came. Even when he heard her ring at the street-door, he only silently turned his face to watch for her entrance.

She and Phœbe came in together. He stretched his thin hand towards them, and smiled. Voice was far too precious to be used in any common greeting.

"It is different since we parted," he gasped to Millicent.

"It is well to be you, and go away," she said; with one tearless sob.

"And it is as well to be you, and stay," he smiled. "I should like to stay—for some reasons. But it is best for me to go. You'll never say that it was not, Miss Millicent? I am so sorry about Fergus—so are you, aren't you? We shall be so glad when he comes to his right mind again, shan't we? That is one of the things I should like to stay to see!"

"I shall be glad for your sake," sobbed Millicent, whose tears were coming fast now.

"Ah, you'll really be more glad for his own sake, though you mayn't own it, or know it, till you are lying as I am now. Good-bye, Miss Millicent, and give my kindest remembrances to your mother."

"Good-bye, dear old Phœbe," he said fondly. "But oh, Phœbe, I do wish I'd heard something about my mother."

"I'll tell you the best news you can hear of her now, Master David," cried the old woman. "She were a sinner that wanted pardon, and got it; and she'll tell you all the rest hersel'. She'd ha' told you hersel' if she'd lived, and I warn't agoin' to do it when she wasn't there to put in a word between, and kiss ye, an' take yer kiss at the end o' the story."

"Mother!" said the dying man, as he might have said it if he had seen her bending over him, with his image mirrored in her eyes. He kept hold of Phœbe's hand for a moment, and then let it drop, and Christian gently put the two weeping women from the chamber.

Millicent did not go home. She spent the night sitting in the parlour with Phœbe and Miss Brook, neither of whom went to bed.

When she left her brother's house next morning, all the blinds were down, and she went home with David's Bible in her hand.

"He is just gone," she said to her mother, and went straight up to her own room, and

sat down and wept as she had not wept for years and years; and cried to God as she had never before cried in her life.

"Father, forgive me that I am not able to forgive! O Father, Father, I do want to forgive! O Father, I am outside Thy kingdom still, but do not shut Thy door! Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those that sin against us! O Father, there is no entrance there for me! Unless Thou help me to forgive, I cannot. I have tried, and my forgiveness has been thrown back to me, and lies in my own heart till it corrupts to bitterer hatred."

And a voice came into her heart and said, "I will help thee to forgive. See what a poor creature thou art. There was one of my saints beside thee, and thou didst not know him for a saint. There was self-righteousness in thy heart, which is the proof of unforgiven sin, yet thou thought thyself a Christian. It needed something to show thee these things. Thou seest them by the flaming ruin of another life. Henceforth thou owest something to that poor ruin. It has lit thee from a precipice—it has revealed to thee a hidden crystal. Canst not thou pity its own desolation?—canst not thou be prepared, if the day of its rebuilding comes, to carry a stone to its foundation, or a carving to its cornice? It might have been thy life instead of that life. Thou wast as far from God as that was. Who makest thee to differ?"

And Millicent rose up and faced the emptied life in which she had found her Redeemer. As Hatty had met Him in the spring morning sunlight of life, and George in the summer's noontide heat—so Millicent met him in the grey and sultry autumn afternoon. Nobody knew of the meeting. When the great Books of Life are opened, nothing will be more astonishing than some of the dates therein. Henceforth Millicent was not "her own," but "Christ's." And there was joy in heaven over a sinner that repented. It is strange how that sweet sentence has grown distorted on the minds of men. They cannot understand Christ's beautiful irony. All must feel sinners, and repent, before they can be forgiven, and the "just persons who need no repentance" are simply those lost ones who cause that mysterious undershade of divine sorrow which is cast by the yearning arms of divine love.

David was buried. They carried him out into the country, and laid him under an old Norman tower, in a grave that nobody else would ever share. And on his tombstone

they did not carve the name that had darkened his life—that had been but the haunting ghost of sin and shame and sorrow—they simply put—

TO THE MEMORY OF
DAVID,
A SERVANT OF GOD.

And there they left him. And Millicent went back to her work and to her duties. Oh how she wished that she had known him and loved him with a long, constant, familiar knowledge and love! Had it been so, her heart, now so poor, would have been rich with a treasure safe in heaven. Instead of which she had stored where moth and rust had verily corrupted it, till at last a thief had entered and stolen even the last remains!

It so happened that the Sunday after David's funeral Millicent went to church alone. The weather was stormy, and her mother was not very strong, and Miss Brook had a cold. Even the sacred service was trying to the lonely heart, left with blighted fields in its harvest time. There was com-

fort in the chosen text, "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever." Yet it was stern comfort, which braced for endurance rather than soothed into hope. It made her leave the church, when all was over, feeling strong enough to bear her own sense of loss and waste, and to face the long sterile prospect of the future without fancying a single flower to soften it. She went lonely down the churchyard path. There was no familiar group about her now to give sweet human meanings to the divine message. Brother and sister were now to other groups what her mother had been to them, and she had kept no place for herself in those groups, but they must be rent, as it were, however lovingly, to let her in. There was no Fergus watching to give greeting. There was no David marking the text for his Sunday-scholars, or holding the gate open for poor old women. No, of all MILLICENT'S ROMANCE, there remained but the Bible of the dead in her hand, and in her heart a burning pain of pity for the living.

SEVENTY YEARS.

AND is this age? There's wrinkle o'er her brow,
And snow has fallen on the nut-brown hair,
The rose is faded too—but where are now
The strain of struggle, and the stamp of care?

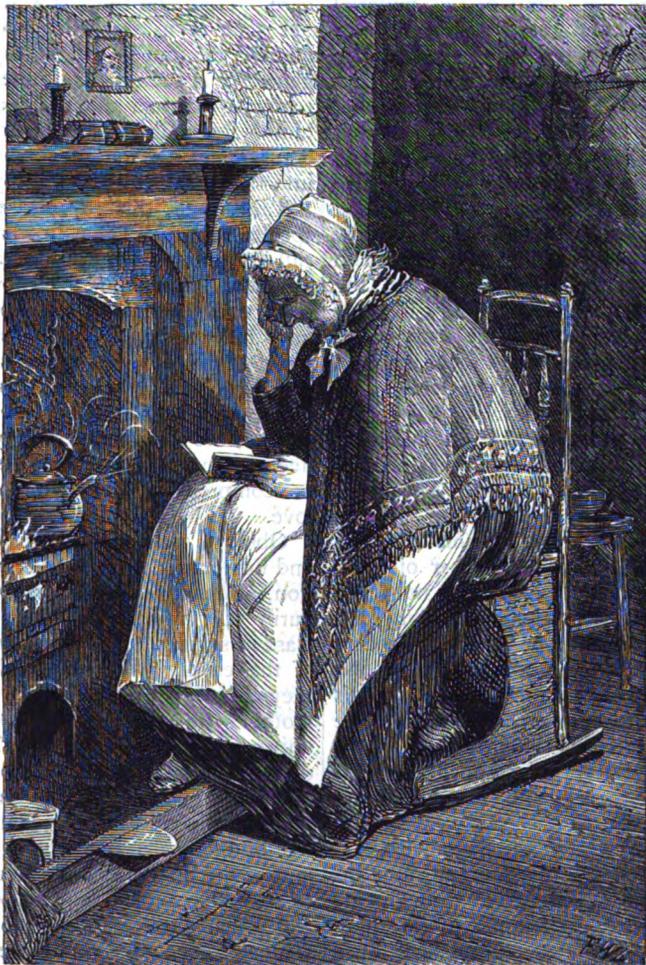
All gone. Her struggle's past, her care is dead.
Her only labour is to rest and wait.
And need one envy girlhood's restless joy,
Who sits and watches close at Heaven's gate?

Where is the love that cheered her youthful days?
Where all the faces that she used to see?
Ay, where, the darlings of her later age,
The child that learned to pray beside her knee?

All gone before her. Yet she is content.
Her pleasures now bloom freshly every day.
She's happy when her neighbour's linnets sing,
She's happy when her neighbour's children play.

She grieves (for with no pain, there is no peace),
She grieves o'er sorrows that are not her own.
She used to watch two brothers pass to school—
She sighs to see the elder pass alone !

And thus she sits and waits at Heaven's gates :
There's but one thought that ever shades her brow :
She had one son she lost before he died :
Long, long before—but he is buried now.



Yet, having seen much sorrow and much joy,
She has seen nothing that need breed Despair ;
So, when she thinks of Heaven's golden street,
She hopes to meet her missing darling there !

ISABELLA FVIE MAYO.

“THE JOY OF BIRTH.”

“Joy that a man is born into the world.”—JOHN xvi. 21.

HERE is mention of an event as constant, and as common, as any that occurs in human homes. Yet, while one of the commonest events in the world, it is also, by universal consent, and in the universal feeling, one of the most profoundly interesting. Nothing can compete with it, unless it be death, which, truly regarded and worthily reached, is a second birth—deliverance from the womb of this material world into ampler and freer worlds of the sky.

Born! The child is born! A little son or daughter, a little brother or sister, has come, and has come to stay! What other news could be so welcome? What other “joy” has in it the wide and varied human interest which is connected with the joy of birth? Among all the myriads of human homes where this event is transpiring, how very few are there in which it is the occasion of sadness or disappointment! Even the poor man who already has “God’s blessing in the way of children,” as the story saith, cannot easily frame his heart to feel that one too many has been sent. If he feels so in moments of care and weariness, before the birth, as soon as that royal event has happened in his cottage, his care is lightened, his apprehensions laid to rest. The event explains, defends itself. “There will be room for this one also!” is his thought. “The great Father of all is Father of each. We need not be anxious; we need not fear.” No herald is needed to prepare the way, nor any religious instruction or counsel to secure the young entrant a proper welcome and provision. The infant’s wail, the infant’s murmur, are quite enough to cast down the little mountains of apprehension, to fill up the valleys of anxiety, to establish the right to live, and be loved, and cared for, and nourished like the rest. Away, mistrustful thoughts! Be quiet, over-anxious heart! A very king has begun his journey, and his “way,” be it long or short, through the desert of time will be “prepared” for him. Easily, sweetly prepared. See, the little monarch is opening his eye; and that look, although far abroad and not easily fixed, is a look of command. All in the house are in turn its servitors. He is waving his little dimpled arm—no doubt in a very aimless manner—but an invisible sceptre is in the hand that can grasp nothing else, and all willingly bow to it.

“The joy of birth” rises highest in the mother’s heart. In her case it is preceded by “anguish,” which of course naturally heightens the joy. Her “sorrow” leaves no marks or memories. It ebbs far back “like waters which pass away,” to make room for the great tide of joy which now fills and purifies her heart. “A man has been born into the world!” We must not overstate the case. Here and there is a Rachel who, “as her soul is in departing,” calls her son’s name “Ben-oni”—son of my sorrow. But generally in such a case there is some Jacob ready to baptize the child afresh, and call him “Benjamin”—son of my right hand. Thus many a “son of sorrow” is yet born into the world of hope and joy.

Take, then, this joy of birth in its most specific form. Take it in what we may truly call its fountain-head, or, at any rate, in its fountain fulness, in the mother’s heart,—what does it mean? We may well inquire into this wonderful phenomenon. We may well stand beside this fountain-head of love and joy which is opened in every young mother’s heart, and consider;—until, perchance, we shall be led to yet higher and deeper fountains, and feel that we and ours are comprehended in a yet vaster and purer love.

Observe well, the emotion is instinctive and universal. It is not the result of education, although education may augment and purify it. It is not confined to any select class in society, or to any particular nations of the earth. Wherever children are born they are grasped and held in the arms of a mother’s joy. What is thus instinctive and universal is divine. We have here no merely derived, complex emotion, composed of the elements of civilisation, and refined by human culture. We evidently come upon one of the primary and unsophisticated feelings of the human heart. Here is one spring of life which sin has touched less than others, and which is less affected by outward circumstances, for all social and even all religious advantages do not much enhance or improve it in its primordial condition; and, on the other hand, the darkest gloom of heathenism, and all the rudeness of savage life, do by no means extinguish it,—in many instances hardly even modify or repress it. Now, just as we say that conscience is divine, men everywhere having that moral faculty or

sense in them which points to an eternal and unchangeable right and wrong; so, in its own place and measure does this universal motherly joy justly claim to be divine, and, as a divine thing, to teach its own lessons. Some of these lessons we shall find by examining the feeling as far as we may, and resolving it, as far as we can, into its constituent parts. First principles are the strongest of any. Instinctive emotions, although we are not in the habit of examining them narrowly, will be found, when analyzed, to have the deepest and widest basis of truth and fact. They lie close upon, and, indeed, flow out of the infinite and unchangeable emotions of God. Why, then, does the young mother rejoice?

1. She rejoices in life. A new life is begun. Another stream has issued from the eternal fountain. As yet it is but a tiny rill, trickling, tinkling softly as it flows; but who knows what volume it may acquire, how deep and broad it may become as it flows on through interminable time? Another light has been kindled. It is indeed at first but a low flickering flame, which would soon be blown out if set and left in the open air of the world; but, shielded and nourished, that little flame, that dim rushlight in the corner of the house, that glimmering glow-worm of the dell that can guide no wayfarer's steps, may grow and brighten into a great steady light by which ships on the ocean and travellers on the land will direct their way, may at length become a very star in the firmament, set high, and for ever, above earthly mutations. At any rate, this is life, and there is joy among the living, on account of the more life that has come.

God loves life, as this teeming world bears witness in all her soils, through all her seas; and all who live truly, love life like God. Even those who live far from truly, have in them the ineradicable passion which flames out when occasion is given, and which, so far as it goes, lifts them out of isolation and death. Thus, alike in God the maker of life, and in men who receive and cherish it, joyfully, there is witness borne to its transcendent value. The way out of all this world's immeasurable difficulty, out of all its sin and misery—what is it? The stopping of the process of continuity? the burning of the world itself with all its seeds and springs of reproductive energy? Nay, just the opposite. The troubles of life are to be cured, instrumentally, by increase of life. God has no fear, for He still creates. The world's motherhood, which is one of the world's

most sacred things, has no fear, for it still rejoices when the child is born. The unworn freshness of every infant's face, the rocking of every cradle, the chime of every nurse's song, and the quiet singing joy of every mother's heart tell, all, the same tale of hopefulness and confidence, and point on to a future of triumph, fulfilment, order, and peace. 'Tis true there are myriads of fathers and mothers who have no thought of this, in their own personal intelligence, and no purpose to promote it in their own or their children's lives; but not the less, in some sense all the more, is this the meaning and the teaching of this world-wide parental joy.

2. Again. To branch out the thought, is it too much to say that this joy in birth is the adoption, it may be unconsciously, of the principle of continuity by a line of succession which undoubtedly obtains in the manifestation and history of the human life on earth? Men are "born into the world"—to die. The little sleeper in the cradle will soon be wrapped in a deeper sleep in the coffin. It may be one year; or ten; or seventy—and that deeper sleep will have come. The difference between the one and the other is but little in the annals of eternity; but little even in the history of the race. The well-known emblems which signify the brevity of life are still true. It is "a vapour vanishing away;" a sound, dying in the air; "a flower," cut down or withering; "a tale" which at any moment may be all "told." Thousands of meditative men have surveyed and considered this process, until their very souls have been full of shadow and sadness. No serious person, however cheerful in temperament, can altogether surmount the gloom, and there are moments when it deepens into night. Man seems "walking in a vain show." The devouring grave is never full: hungry death is never satisfied. Brightest things fade the soonest. Fairest blossoms are the first to wither. Disappointed hope, swift disaster, unexpected sorrow for which the poor heart is in no way ready, and wrongs unrighted, and virtues unrewarded, and endeavours which miss the mark, and soaring aspirations which rise but a little way, and then fall back into the yearning bosom which sent them forth—these are the elements of which this human life is made. Why do men, knowing and seeing all this, keep up the stir? Why do they build cities and cover the ocean with their ships? Why do they not at once acknowledge that there is nothing to register but one long failure and defeat; and, casting aside the pen, the plough, the

hammer, forgetting the lover's tale, and forsaking the marriage altar, resolve that the fleeting mockery at last shall end? Instead of this, what do we see? We see the newcomers, as they emerge out of nothingness, received with unusual joy. And although they are personally so helpless that they can for a while do literally nothing for themselves and would certainly perish, one by one, if they were not watched and cared for through almost every hour of the day, the care and watchfulness necessary are cheerfully given. No doubt there are neglected infants, who, in consequence, die, and get away to the summer world, where they will be nourished by the angels. But the rule is, among men, that the tenderest and most complete ministrations are habitually extended to the youngest and the most helpless. "Can the mother forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb?" Can a father feel that he bears in his arms but so much moulded clay? When an infant is brought into the centre of a group of little children, will they all look at something else?—why, every eye beams on the little wonder, and plaything and story are dropped for the time, that one and another may try the weight, and bear the precious burden, and by some miracle of youthful skill draw a smile from the chubby face. You might set a little tottering infant on the crowded street, and if you left it there, I believe it would be safer than you yourself would be in the same situation. The hurrying passenger would pause and give a hand. The reckless driver would draw the rein. Every one within view would feel a personal interest, such as subjects feel when their king is in jeopardy, and would watch until the little king of human hearts was rescued and set in safety. Now, my brethren, what is all this but a universal human protest, instinctively given, against those gloomy and depressing views of our life and destiny, which serious observation and meditation of the facts of human life are so apt of themselves to bring?

It still is true, of course, that life is short—that each is born to die—that all the living in ceaseless procession are marching into the grave. Yet those who know all this, and feel it sometimes to pain, hail the children when they come, and keep them and prepare the way before them, not as if they were mere shadows in a phantom procession, but as if they were, what indeed they are—creatures of God, who have their part and place assigned in the stupendous evolution of his

providence, and who when they have served their generation according to the will of God, will, like their fathers, "fall on sleep." Thus while our fears protest against death, our instincts and affections do involuntary homage to God's method of continuity and succession. We mourn by the graves of our kindred, and we pensively anticipate our own decline; but we also rejoice when "a man is born into the world." The young mother represents us all. Her joy is the joy of humanity. It is as fresh now as when children first were born. It is the heart's deep assent to God's method of peopling and ruling the world, and clearly points to a time when death shall be swallowed up of life.

3. But, thirdly, what of the individual? Human life in continuity, the generations succeeding each other like the links in a chain, with a view to a grand future result, is a magnificent process and spectacle, if we can believe that all who thus have part in the process may be sharers in the joy and glory of the result when it is attained. But surely the whole interest of the process would be immeasurably diminished and saddened if we must regard the individuals and the generations as made up of individuals—as literally perishing on the way to it. If there is no personal immortality, what other immortality can there be? If still through every future age the individual must die, and never live again, no possible splendour of human achievement, no perfectness of human society could ever compensate for so stupendous a sacrifice. Say that perfection is reached at length—that sin is vanquished—that the reign of eternal peace begins, and yet that death still holds sway, and the grave still draws, no longer weariness, and sorrow, and sin, but brightness now, and virtue and every form of unselfish human love into the realm of eternal silence, "what have we gained?" Still "every man walketh in a vain show." Every man and all the world "at its best state is altogether vanity." The mockery of such a condition of things would be even more bitter and unendurable than the mockery of these sinful days. Justification of the divine goodness in such a case would be impossible, just as it would be impossible to say one good word for the policy of a commander who should sacrifice every soldier in his army, and every citizen and subject of the kingdom for which he fights, all his enemies perishing too, in order to attain an ideal victory. Nor can we worthily conceive of any refined selected part of the race raised to immortal existence by the sacrifice of innumerable

generations. The thought of such amazing loss would poison all their felicity. All history would be to them a grave.

Immortality then is, and must be, the immortality of the individual, and our joy in the birth of children may be expected to have, more or less consciously, some reference to so great a destiny. I believe it is even so. It is not a little plaything the mother welcomes when the infant, newly-born, is put into her desiring arms, but a very child of God, into which He has breathed the breath of life, and which has thus "become a living soul." Her travail of body and spirit becomes nobler than the pangs of brute creatures only when she can think that something is born not to die. It is an awful while a blessed "heritage" which she thus receives "of the Lord." Well may her heart tremble with softest pity, and glow with a sacred "joy," when such a gift is put into her hands. Well may the whole house be hushed in reverence and full of gladness when it is said, "Unto us a child is born: unto us a son is given." Not in vain are we born when we know, or may know, that we shall never die.

4. It is this immortal life which is put into our hands for training, and in the joy that welcomes the new-born, there is, probably, some sensible appreciation of the greatness of this trust. "Lo, children are an heritage from the Lord." It is impossible for those who receive it, in any worthy manner, to evade the sense of responsibility which must come with it. It is a heritage to be kept, cultivated, improved, as long as it is in hand. "Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Let the "sons" be "plants," green and freshly growing. Let the "daughters" be "corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace." There is, however, in most cases, probably no desire to evade the sense of responsibility in general, which comes, in connection inseparable, with so great a gift. Every great gift is a trust, and is felt to be so, and the feeling is pleasant. If there be a gift which can only be received and laid past, or quickly used and ended—which can neither be increased nor diminished, it will be simply impossible to have the same feeling about it which arises instinctively in connection with the reception of a gift which comes to us in trust. "Here is something I am to care for, watch over, nourish, defend, improve, increase. This is the gift that wins my heart!" Within the whole sphere of human action no instance of care and self-sacrifice can be found more complete, and perhaps none on the whole so touching and

beautiful as that which is so common—the unmeasured and uncalculating love of the mother to the child. She watches, cares, suffers, gives—"to the uttermost." Why? No doubt in part because mother is mother and child is child—because the law of love is instinctive and does not wait for reasons and justifications; but in part also, surely, because there is a feeling in the mind, as deep and true as any instinct, that there comes with the little infant a great and solemn stewardship, of which account shall be given hereafter. It is this which dignifies the countless little cares and services which attend cot and cradle, and run through the years of nursing, which makes a mother's patience interminable, and her faith and hope unconquerable. She has an innate and abiding sense of the greatness of the trust committed to her. She cannot help comporting herself like one high in office. It is not her own child alone who is in her hands for nurture; it is the child of the King as well—one for whom a crown and kingdom are in preparation, and who must one day either come into joyful possession, or suffer ignominious forfeiture. But the true maternal conviction is, that there need be no failure—that this solemn trust may be so borne and discharged that there will be joy in giving account of it, even as there is joy in receiving it when "a man is born unto the world."

That there may be failure and disaster is, alas! too certain. Every bad man and woman living once slept an infant's sleep of innocence. Most of them were welcomed with joy, and had omens and auspices of a hopeful kind hovering about them in their first years. Now all is dark. The life is stained and broken, and apparently crumbling into final ruin. How sad the change! How bitter the disappointment! Therefore it cannot be denied that failure is possible; nor that it may be, in its circumstances, inexpressibly sad. Fathers and mothers know this; and yet they rejoice when their children are born; and the joy over the last is in its kind the same, and generally as great as over the first. All which, surely we may say, imports this much, that there is a conviction, more or less conscious, in the parental mind, that the duties of the relation may be, through divine grace, effectually discharged; and that where they are so, we may confidently look for a good result. There are many things which go to corroborate this wholesome conviction—as that all seeming failure is not real failure, gracious growing going on amid many imperfections; that real failure is

often retrieved; that ruins are built up by the wonder-working power of God; that, in last days of life there is sometimes a change, the storm becomes a calm, and the barque with broken masts and rent sails and leaking timbers, driven by a heaven-sent breeze, glides into the haven. But, at any rate, the conviction exists. Partly by a kind of instinct, and partly by inference and reason, there is deeply and broadly fixed in the human breast what we have called a wholesome condition, that for all relations into which we are brought, and for all duties required at our hands, there are full and adequate supplies of wisdom and strength; and that therefore that gift which, of all gifts, is among the most precious, that trust which, of all trusts, is the most solemn, should be accepted, while with solicitude and fear, yet also with great thankfulness and "joy."

Such, then, as it seems to me, are at least some of the elements of this joy in birth,

which is universal, but which has its chief fountain-head in the mother's heart. It means love of life—like that of God to his children and his creatures—life as a good thing. It means compliance with God's method of bringing the human life into this world by succession of ages and generations in a chain of unbroken continuity. It expresses faith in a personal immortality. It is the acceptance of a trust, which while it is felt to be solemn and responsible, is felt at the same time to dignify those who receive it, and to bring with it the needful grace wherewith it may be safely borne and fully discharged.

By these, and such-like considerations, this joy in birth is explained and justified. It is not only a natural, but a legitimate, feeling. It is a true and bright prophecy. It is an echo, almost a forthflowing of the joy of God.

ALEXANDER RALEIGH.

THE WORD OF CHRIST.

"And He laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last."—REV. I. 17.

AS the mighty winds of heaven in their calm effect contest—
As the sound of many waters in a unity of rest—
So, beyond my plan or guidance, tossed upon an awful sea,
Softly amid reckless currents came the word of Christ to me.

Then with strength of tender meaning wind and wave my heart drew near,
In the boldness of their power owning that I need not fear.
And with his right hand upon me all their will I bade them do,
For these stern unbending forces are my Saviour's servants too.

They obey a gentle order in the worst their fury dares,
Sent to manifest the glory of a life that is not theirs.
Things that may not spare their portion leave the breathing soul in peace;
It will yield and live for ever—they can but prevail and cease.

And they shall prevail unhindered in a way they cannot heed,
Where destruction must deliver and the life is life indeed,
Where they lead the captive spirit under care beyond their scan
To the everlasting triumph of a joy in God for man.

Let the tyranny that passes have me at its own command,
In the circle of Thy greatness, in the shelter of Thy hand!
Thou Eternal, Thou Almighty, wilt the blessed secret see
That is with Thy human creature in this word of Christ to me.

A. L. W.

CUSTOMS AND CURIOSITIES OF MADAGASCAR.

PART III.

THE funeral customs are not the same throughout the island. In the centre of the island they build stone tombs, part underground and part above ground. They are very careful about their tombs, the size and beauty of which are in proportion to the position of the family, and unfortunately sometimes out of proportion to their means. They pay far more attention to their tombs than to their houses. The door of the tomb is frequently closed by a large flat, roughly rounded stone, which is rolled up in front so as to close it, or rolled back to open it.

The tomb is always built on the borders of the family possessions, and the ground on which the tomb stands cannot be alienated. They never rent land to build a tomb on, it must be their own possession. This puts us in mind of Abraham's purchasing from the sons of Heth a burying-place for Sarah, given in Genesis, which to my mind, is the most beautiful and thrilling picture of patriarchal life to be found anywhere—beautiful, simple, pathetic, yet grand—perfect, both as regards the subject and the execution.

“And Abraham stood up from before his dead, and spake unto the sons of Heth, saying, I am a stranger and a sojourner with you: give me a possession of a burying-place with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight. And the children of Heth answered Abraham, saying unto him, Hear us, my lord: thou art a mighty prince among us; in the choice of our sepulchres bury thy dead; none of us shall withhold from thee his sepulchre, but that thou mayest bury thy dead. . . . And he communed with them, saying, If it be your mind that I should bury my dead out of my sight; hear me, and entreat for me to Ephron the son of Zohar, that he may give me the cave of Machpelah, which he hath, which is in the end of his field; for as much money as it is worth, he shall give it me for a possession of a burying-place amongst you.” . . . Ephron said, “Nay, my lord, hear me: the field give I thee, and the cave that is therein, I give it thee; in the presence of the sons of my people, give I it thee: bury thy dead. And Abraham bowed down himself before the people of the land. And he spake unto Ephron in the audience of the people of the land, saying, But if thou wilt give it, I pray thee, hear me: I will give thee money for the field; take it of me, and I will bury my dead there.”

Not to be buried in the family tomb is reckoned a greater calamity than death itself. When the soldier or any other one dies in a distant district, his bones are brought back to be laid with his fathers. I have seen them carefully preserve an amputated limb in order to place it in the family grave. The first patient supplied with a wooden leg in Madagascar died a few years afterwards of fever. I wished to preserve the article as a curiosity—the first wooden leg in Madagascar, designed and constructed for me by Mr. Parrett, the printer; for although a surgical-instrument maker in England might not much admire the article, we looked upon it with no little admiration. After I heard that my former patient had ceased to require it, I promptly sent for it. I was put off in a polite way until after the funeral, when I was told that it was considered a part of the body of the deceased, and that they had buried it with him.

The Tanala, who live in the forest to the south-east of the capital, have a different way of disposing of their dead. They do not build tombs, but make a large box—often a tree hollowed out. This they place at a distance in the forest, and in this they place the body, previously wrapped up in mats. The Belsileo, again, more nearly resemble the Hovahs in their mode of burial. They build cenotaphs pretty much like the tombs we have described, but they dig a winding subterranean passage, somewhere near the cenotaph, in the further end of which they cut ledges upon which they place the corpse. The most singular practice, however, in connection with funeral rites, is that followed in the case of the Andriana or Princes of the Belsileo. No sooner does an Andriana die, than they kill bullocks and cut off their skin into stripes, and with these they tie up the body to one of the pillars of the house; at the same time they make incisions in the soles of the feet, and tightening the skin-cords daily they squeeze out in this way a good deal of the fluids of the body, which they collect in an earthen pot placed beneath the feet. They say that this process goes on until a worm-like creature, which they call *fanano*, appears. They kill a bullock and give some of the blood as an offering to this *fanano*, which they say contains the spirit of the departed. The body, by this time probably pretty well mummified, is then laid in the family tomb.

Amongst all the tribes it is customary to kill a number of bullocks at a death. There was some sort of idea that the spirits of the bullocks accompanied the owner into the next world. This ceremony was called *Manao Afana*. When the party deceased was rich, this was often ostentatiously shown by transfixing the heads of the bullocks on poles, and placing these near the tomb. Probably from some fancy that articles buried with the body might be of some service to the dead, they often deposited in the tomb those articles which had been most valued by the person while he was alive.

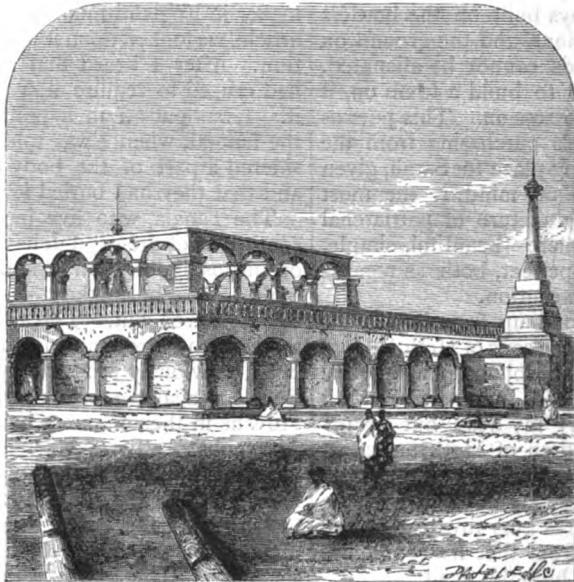
When Rasoahery died 11,000 dollars, besides much valuable property, was placed in her tomb, while the coffin itself was made of solid silver, constructed somewhat in the shape of a canoe, to form which they melted down no fewer than 22,000 dollars.

The Malagasy practise circumcision. It is not performed at any stated age, as amongst the Jews, but in some districts it is performed at any time that may be considered convenient. For the sake of doing it with greater *éclat* and have a general rejoicing, a whole village will agree to have it done at one time. In Imerina (the central province) it is performed every five or seven years by order of the sovereign. What it may have been originally I do not know, but it does not seem now to be looked upon as a religious rite. In May and June, 1869, while I was at the capital, I witnessed the observance of this ceremony, and indeed had to take a very active part in it, so far as the surgical procedure was concerned. It is a period of great rejoicing and extravagance. It was formerly a prolonged saturnalia, during which profligacy of every kind was not only practised but

sanctioned. Although Christianity has not abolished the rite, it has wholesomely restrained this licentiousness.

In making agreements or bargains involving important interests, these were done publicly before the chief men of the city, and the parties concerned then proceeded to ratify them by presenting *hasina*, but since writing has been introduced, agreements of importance are generally written. Covenants of blood were solemn engagements between two or more persons to stand by each other in some emergency. The covenanting parties cut the skin over the region of the heart; each of them then tasted the blood of the

other, repeating a formula containing terrible imprecations in case of unfaithfulness. Those who thus make a covenant by blood are considered to be under greater mutual obligations to friendship and service than those related by the nearest ties of nature. And so sacred is this held, that even the children of the covenanting parties feel themselves bound by the same obligations to befriend and help each



Prime Minister's Family Tomb, near the Capital.

other. We may observe that this custom is not peculiar to Madagascar, for the Dyaks in Borneo have the same way of ratifying covenants.

In many of the South Sea Islands a practice exists called the *taboo*. Certain things ordinarily common are restricted to private use by affixing certain arbitrary marks upon them. Something similar to this prevails in Madagascar: a bunch of grass tied to a pole, is placed at the entrance of a field or of a house or of a road, to notify that entrance is forbidden. The sign so stuck up is called a *kiady* or protector, and is looked upon as a mark of restriction, reservation, or private right, and is generally respected.

The mission history of Madagascar is of unequalled interest. Little more than fifty years ago, this country was entirely heathen, the people were superstitious and ignorant. They had no written language, and this fact itself pretty well indicates their position. They were not entirely ignorant of the primary arts of civilisation, such as working in iron, weaving, carpentry, and such-like; but they had not made much progress in these handicrafts. While by no means so debased, morally, as some heathen nations, they were licentious and deceitful. Purity and truth were neither generally practised nor much valued. Chastity, indeed, in unmarried persons was scarcely looked upon as a virtue.

Their superstitions were at once dark, degrading, and cruel. Thousands of infants born during an unlucky period were exposed, and perished. It was calculated that several thousands died every year by the ordeal poison called the *tang-na*, which was given in order to ascertain whether or not a suspected person had been guilty of witchcraft. They were really without

God, and without hope. Madagascar, favourably as it contrasted with many heathen countries, was no exception to the truth of the saying, "The dark places of the earth are the habitations of cruelty."

This was the state of things fifty years ago, and what is the condition of Madagascar now?

To-day there are little under half a million of professing Christians; there are about twenty thousand scholars attending the schools, and between six and seven hundred churches. The Bible has been translated, and many other books have been written in this language, and in one year above a hundred and fifty thousand different Malagasy publications were

sold. The Christians maintain a hundred and twenty native evangelists to work in the remoter districts of the central province. It ought always to be remembered that these churches were built, and are maintained entirely by the native Christians.

Taking the whole Protestant mission field throughout the world, close upon a third of it (as regards numbers) is to be found in Madagascar. We may well ask by what means such results have been brought about.

Madagascar contrasts remarkably with most mission fields in this, that the results having been out of all proportion to the means employed. In China, for example, where there are

about two hundred missionaries, representing no fewer than thirty different societies, the number of converts is under ten thousand. In Madagascar, with about one-seventh of that number of missionaries, the number of Christians is nearly fifty times greater. It would seem as if the religious education of the Malagasy has been, so to speak, taken by God out of the hands of man, and conducted by himself.



Village of Inawoka, in the midst of the Forest.

In the year 1820, missionaries settled in Antananarivo, by permission of Radama I. An attempt made a short time before to settle on the sea-coast, had proved a fatal failure; five out of the six who composed that party died of fever within the space of a few months.

The great aim of Radama, in encouraging missionaries to settle at the capital, was, the education, civilisation, and political aggrandisement of Hovahs. He desired to extend his authority over the whole island, and to effect this, he knew that his people required instruction. He had no desire to have them taught the truths of the Christian religion. The idea that his people would embrace the new religion did not seem very distinctly to have

occurred to him. For the first few years the missionaries were occupied with the preliminary work of acquiring the language, and reducing it to writing, the compilation of dictionaries, grammars, and other educational works. They had not long begun the more direct mission work of preaching when Radama died, in the year 1828, and in him the missionaries lost their friend and protector. He was succeeded by Ranavalona II., who, although she seemed to promise well for a time, soon began to look with suspicion upon the progress of Christianity. Her known sentiments deterred the people generally from attending the mission services; but the mission schools were in the meantime encouraged, and were conducted successfully. The work of translating the Scriptures was vigorously proceeded with. Thus the whole Bible was translated into the Malagasy, and printed by the missionaries and put into the hands of the people, many thousands of whom had been taught to read it in the schools. In addition to all this, about two hundred persons had professed the faith of Christ. The work which God had intended the missionaries to accomplish was now done; and they were compelled by the government to leave the country. And now began one of the bitterest persecutions which we read of in history, a persecution, remarkable alike for its barbarity and its long duration. The Queen saw clearly that Christianity meant *revolution*; that it was incompatible with the old superstitions, and with many of the customs and habits of the people. She believed that the very foundations upon which the throne and government rested would be overthrown were the new religion accepted, but she did not see that it would afford a firmer, because truer basis for these. Christianity was regarded as rebellion. Having been unknown to their ancestors, it was treated as an innovation. Inasmuch as it was taught by foreigners it was regarded as unpatriotic. It changed the customs of their ancestors, it ignored the idols which they believed rendered their kings sacred, it taught that divination was a folly, the worship of the graves of the Vazimba, a sin, the trial by ordeal, murder.

Christianity was prohibited; baptism was declared unlawful. To partake of the Lord's Supper was to be guilty of rebellion. The Christian assemblies were forbidden, and the schools were shut up. The missionaries were expelled. But the word of God remained—it went with them into slavery and exile, comforting them for the loss of earthly honours and goods, and consoling them, and

keeping alive their faith on the way to martyrdom.

This persecution endured, with one or two lulls, for the long period of twenty-five years. Every sort of punishment that malignity could devise and despotism inflict, was visited upon the Christians. They were crucified, speared, beheaded, sawn asunder, thrown over the rocks, burnt at the stake, put foremost into pits and boiling water poured over them; many perished by the tangena poison, others died miserably in chains which were as literally, as poetically named *Be-rano-maso*,—many tears. Loss of honours, slavery, floggings, and fines, were the minor punishments inflicted upon those who had shown favour to the hated Christians. But the old adage proved true, 'The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.'

The Queen determined to stamp out Christianity. Little did she know what she had undertaken. So far from accomplishing her end, *it actually grew and spread during persecution*. While at the beginning of this persecution only two hundred had made any profession of Christianity, during the next twenty-five years above a hundred openly laid down their lives for the testimony of Christ, several hundreds indirectly suffered death for his sake, and at least two thousand more had suffered exile, chains, or loss of property, for their love to Jesus. And at the end of that period, so far from Christianity having been extinguished or stamped out, it was found that there were nearly seven thousand professing Christians when toleration was proclaimed. The work was of God, and could not be brought to nought. To relate the particulars of this persecution is impossible in a short paper like this. But the subject is deserving the study of all who doubt the living power of our most holy faith in our own day. It is not the dead, effete system that some suppose. The parting promise has never been forgotten or broken, "Lo I am with you always, even to the end of the world." It was his presence with his poor persecuted ones, One like unto the Son of man, walking with them in the furnace, which upheld and cheered them, so that they were enabled to sing the praises of God, even from the midst of the flames, and unitedly to pray for their murderers. Striking, indeed, is the testimony of an eyewitness to the sustaining power of this presence, with the four nobles who perished at the stake, on the 28th of March, 1849. "They prayed as long as they had any life, then they died,—but softly and gently. Indeed, *gently* was the going-forth of their life, and

all the people were astonished who beheld the burning of them there."

When the Head of the Church takes his people through such a discipline, gives them the cross to bear, and so triumphantly carries them through, it is not unreasonable to suppose that He has some work for that people to do, and in this light we need not marvel at the victories which Christianity has recently achieved in that island.

We shall now briefly inquire to what extent the changed relation of the government to Christianity has influenced, and may be expected to influence, the religious, social, and political life of the country and the neighbouring continent.

It will readily be understood that during the time of the persecution the Church remained pure. Few, if any, were willing to associate themselves with a proscribed society. Those who joined the Church in these days were those who had become acquainted with its doctrines, and had come under their power. Every temporal consideration tended to keep the world apart from the Church. The almost-persuaded remained in their proper place. Those who entered into Christian fellowship were those who had counted the cost—who felt that any day they might be called upon to seal their testimony with their blood. This devotion was required to sustain them in the conflict, and this moral force led to their ultimate victory. The struggle of a quarter of a century ended in the toleration of what the people called, and still call, "*the praying*," and ten years of toleration resulted in the public abandonment of idolatry. Now for the results of this. It often happens, we may rather say it *always* happens, that a victory of this kind is not without loss to the victors. In such circumstances, if the cause of Christianity gains in one way it loses in another. Its growth and expansion is accompanied by a certain loss of vigour and activity. In the enjoyment of peace it becomes less aggressive. If the victory of the Church effects the comparative elevation of the whole society, it can hardly fail to result, to some extent, in the degradation of the Church. While the new life transfusing the old body politic quickens and purifies it, the converse action also goes on to some extent, sometimes indeed *pari passu*—the introduction of the world into the Church deadening and corrupting it. The very success which makes it more comprehensive and inclusive renders it less pure. Worldly motives bring many into its membership whom in days of trial the same motives kept apart from it. So

of course it has been found in Madagascar, many now make a profession of Christianity simply because such profession is popular and profitable. We must accept all this as the necessary result of the new circumstances in which the Church has been placed, and there is reason to believe much care is being exercised to prevent the indiscriminate admission of applicants into church fellowship.

Another subject which necessarily crops up is the relation of the Church to the State. It is remarkable how closely the history of early Christianity has repeated itself in Madagascar. Christianity entered unobserved, and grew for a time unnoticed. When it was discovered to be a living thing, capable of leavening society, efforts were made to destroy it. When persecution failed it was tolerated, and finally the government felt themselves compelled to adopt the religion that they had failed to stamp out. This is just an epitome of the history of the Church from its foundation to the days of Constantine.

It is hardly necessary to say that the public acceptance of Christianity in a country like Madagascar almost inevitably leads to some kind of State Churchism. It is difficult to suppose that the Church and State can long remain friendly, separate, and independent in a country where the government is still absolute—almost patriarchal. What form the connection may ultimately assume, and with what results to the Church on the one hand, and to the State on the other, remains to be seen. In making these statements we do not mean to pronounce any opinion upon this much-disputed point in the abstract, nor upon the desirability, or otherwise, of such an alliance in the case of Madagascar. There are some who rejoice in the prospect of the infant church there being placed under the care and guidance of kind nursing fathers and nursing mothers. Others, again, who have the best interests of the country at heart deplore the prospect of state control, if they do not abjure the advantages of state support and countenance. Apart from any theoretical views upon this subject, it is doubtful if the State will permit the Church to remain permanently in the position of a simple voluntary association.

It must be remembered, also, that it has now become as much a political consideration for the government of the country to suppress as it formerly was to uphold idolatry. The kindly genius of the new faith will no doubt effectually prevent the grosser manifestations of intolerance, but we can scarcely suppose

that the more distant tribes will be long permitted to continue in the practice of idolatry. We can observe here in our own day an illustration of the way in which some parts of heathen Europe were brought within the fold.

We have all read of northern kings, who, after having themselves become impressed with the truth, carried their rude followers along with them, by means which it is difficult for us nowadays either to understand or altogether justify. We often forget, however, that our tender respect for the conscientious convictions and prejudices of others is the outcome of ages of Christian culture—the ripe fruit of Christian civilisation—the growth of which, among ourselves, has been specially favoured by our political circumstances. In Madagascar, a certain kind of political pressure has been exercised to hasten the reconstruction of society on the new basis; but it is very remarkable to what a small extent other than moral means have been had recourse to in order to induce the people to fall in with the new order of things. The paragraph in the coronation speech of the present sovereign referring to religion, as sententious as sensible, grounds toleration upon the widest of all principles—“As to the *praying* there is no hindrance and no compulsion, *for God made us.*” This is certainly a noble argument upon which to base religious freedom. It was a good thing for Madagascar that the work began as it did among the middle and humbler classes, and that it was only accepted by the government after it had made its way and established itself among the people. It will be seen that a new task, and one of vast difficulty and magnitude, now falls to the Malagasy Church to perform. This is nothing less than the work of elevating and educating nearly half a million who have recently been brought within her bosom, as well as acting upon several millions as yet outside her pale. In proceeding with this task, she will have to encounter many of those difficulties that other sections of the Church have had to grapple with; and who can fail to be interested in observing the way in which she will deal with them? There is the question already alluded to of the relation of Church and State; the pressing question of education and evangelization; the delicate subject of domestic slavery. Several social difficul-

ties have already been successfully dealt with, notably polygamy and divorce. Ten years ago polygamy, with all its attendant evils, prevailed throughout the length and breadth of the land. It is now virtually abolished in the central province. There is thus much in the present state of the country exceedingly hopeful, while there are doubtless other elements which lead us to look with some degree of concern upon the future.

The influence of Christianity cannot be restricted to the religious and social life of the people. It must tell, and that very powerfully, upon the political condition of the nation.

The Church organizations established over a considerable portion of the land are training the people in the art of self-government. The people being brought together in their assemblies are taught the habits of order connected with church-going and Sunday rest. They are being accustomed to united action, and encouraged to mutual confidence. They are trained in the selection of their own office-bearers and pastors, and in the discussion and management of their own business. They are habituated to submit to authorities who rule by moral means, and appeal to moral motives. They come to understand the principle of representation as illustrated in their assemblies; above all, a healthy public opinion is developed, and finds a means of manifesting itself, and of making itself respected. In these and numerous other ways Christianity is indirectly but powerfully working towards the political regeneration of the country.

These movements in Madagascar may be reasonably expected to have important bearings upon the neighbouring continent. The late Mr. Douglas, of Cavers, remarked many years ago upon the important relation which Madagascar bears to Africa, and pointed out that it might yet possibly form a centre from which the light of the Gospel and civilisation might spread to that long-benighted land. In speculating upon the future of Africa, we cannot overlook the existence in Madagascar of an intelligent, energetic race like the Hovahs making advances in civilisation. It certainly seems one of the providential coincidences with which history abounds that the opening up of that vast continent by Livingstone should be heralded by a great religious and social revolution in Madagascar.

ANDREW DAVIDSON.

THE PROPHET HOSEA.

BY THE REV. PROFESSOR STANLEY LEATHES.

"Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein."—HOSEA xiv. 9.

IT is much to be feared that the writings of the twelve minor prophets are a portion of Holy Scripture but little known, and still less understood, and certainly the writings of the Prophet Hosea can hardly constitute an exception. But is it possible that people can be brought in large numbers to take an interest in lectures on Social Science at St. Paul's, and that a select and intelligent few cannot be found to countenance and take an interest in or derive benefit from a series of discourses on Sunday, which shall aim at giving a general, a popular, an interesting, an intelligent, and intelligible account and treatment of the writings of an ancient prophet? Surely there is no reason why Biblical studies should not be carried on in church, and form the subject of discourses from the pulpit, just as in the present day lectures are accepted as an ordinary and appropriate means of conveying instruction in and promoting the study of any subject or any science whatsoever. There is only one reason why not, and that is because people have acquired the habit of attending church for the purpose of gratifying some taste of ear or sense or sound, and not of being built up and edified in the knowledge of themselves, or of Scripture, or of duty, or of the Divine Mind as expressed in revelation, or in history, or in nature.

It is hard to swim against the current, or to strike out a new line, or to arouse an interest in a new subject; but I will try to do so to-day, and will look to God for the result.

Now, who was the Prophet Hosea? We know very little about him, if persons and places and names and dates make up the sum and substance of human life. We cannot tell where he was born, nor when he was born, nor who his parents were, nor where he was educated, nor where he lived, nor where or when he died, nor how he died. These things, for the most part, we know nothing about, and can never hope to discover them; and yet, after all, we do know a good deal about *him*, as I shall endeavour to show, for it is not these things that make up man's life. In this sense we can write no biography of Hosea; but just as our Lord said a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth, so it is not the

multitude or variety of incidents that happen in a lifetime that make up life, but the relation in which the man stands to them and to the God from whom they come. For character is life, and these things affect life according as they influence character, and the character may be formed independently and in spite of them, as it certainly can be estimated apart from them, and remains in its distinctive impress when the memory of them has passed away.

Hosea was the son of Beerli. Who he was we know not, but the Jews have a tradition that when the father of a prophet is mentioned by name, it is an indication that he was himself a prophet. This may or may not be the case, but the tradition is not usually considered to be of much value. There is mention made in 1 Chronicles v. 6, of a certain Beerah whom Tilgath-Pilneser carried away captive, who was prince of the Reubenites. It is just possible, setting aside the slight variation of name, that this man may have been the Prophet Hosea's father, whose extreme old age was thus clouded and embittered by captivity. There is, however, no other reason for thinking so than the barely possible agreement in point of time.

It is surely, however, something more than fancy if we suppose an intentional significance in the prophet's name. Standing, as it does, in a relation so near to Joshua on the one hand, and to Jesus on the other, and expressing in some form or manner the idea of *saving* or *salvation*, it can hardly be that in the Divine providence and intention there was not some allusion to his calling and mission in his very name. Oftentimes we know that names were expressly given that they might witness to moral truths. Our Lord's own name was expressly so called because He should save his people from their sins, and we at least may detect an appropriate if not a designed fitness between the name by which the prophet was known and the message which he bore.

But though we know so little of the prophet's life, we know a good deal of the time when he lived. This was in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam, the son of Joash, king of Israel. That is to say, Hosea was contemporary with the great

Prophet Isaiah, who saw his "vision concerning Judah and Jerusalem," in the days of the same kings of Judah, and, also, he was for a time contemporary with Micah, who prophesied in the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, but not in that of Uzziah. In addition to the period of time extending from the reign of Uzziah to that of Hezekiah, which can scarcely be counted as less than forty years, since Jotham and Ahaz each reigned sixteen years, we have to reckon also the reign of Jeroboam II., the great grandson of Jehu, king of Israel, who died some five-and-twenty years before the death of Uzziah. Consequently, as Hosea prophesied in the days of Jeroboam as well as Uzziah, he must have begun to prophesy nearly thirty years at least before the death of Uzziah, which gives us the date of 785 B.C. on an average, if not on the lowest computation for the commencement of Hosea's prophetic mission.

Let us then try to estimate this epoch by comparing it with some of the dates and incidents with which we are more familiar.

And first, within some twenty years or so it was as long before the Christian era as we are now since the Norman conquest. All of what is commonly called English history has happened in that time. The long roll of our kings and queens has been filled up, our constitution has been formed, our laws have been framed, our national life has been developed and chequered with civil wars, and dynastic changes and continental struggles and intestine revolutions and convulsive reformations; and the interval which we survey in looking back through the long ages to the battle of Hastings, is only longer by about a quarter of a century than that interval of time which lay between the commencement of Hosea's mission and the birth of Christ.

But further, when the word of the Lord first came to the prophet, the foundation of Rome was not yet laid, nor was it for thirty years or more afterwards. All that we know, therefore, is, that Roman history has been developed and wrought out since the prophet's burning words were first spoken.

But more than this, the standard era of Grecian history to which its events are commonly referred is the first Olympiad, and the date of the first Olympiad is 776. So the Greeks did not begin to count their Olympiads for some nine or ten years after Hosea began to prophesy; but all the great names and incidents of Grecian history were then buried deep in the womb of time. Draco flourished in the thirty-ninth Olympiad, Solon

in the forty-sixth. The first Messenian war was fought 743; the battle of Marathon two centuries and a half later, in 490 B.C. These contemporary landmarks will serve to give some idea of the vast antiquity of this prophet; while Herodotus, Thucydides, the Persian war, the Peloponnesian war, the Attic poets, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and the other glories of Greece and Grecian literature, were centuries later than Hosea.

Now let us pause for one moment to consider where we are. We are very far back in the eighth century before Christ, in fact, only some fifteen years from the commencement of the ninth. And about this era we are perfectly certain; it may be varied by a year or two, but it cannot be placed much later. We can calculate backwards by a succession of sure and certain steps, till we are brought without any reasonable cause for doubt to 785 B.C. We have in our hands the veritable writings of a man who began his prophetic career before aught of Greek or Roman history, properly so called, commenced. Surely, then, the wonder is not that we know so little, but that we know so much; not that the prophet is obscure, but that he is at all intelligible.

His ministerial life was a long one. Beginning as we must at 785 B.C., in order to embrace the close of Jeroboam's reign, when the prophet tells us he began to prophesy, and going down as far as the fifth or sixth year, say, of Hezekiah's reign, which is the other and lower limit, we are brought to the year 720 B.C., which gives us an interval of some sixty-five years. The actual period of his career may have been even longer, it cannot well have been much less. Supposing, then, that he was but twenty when his mission began, and the Lord does speak oftentimes by the young as well as by the old, he must have attained the age of eighty-five or ninety before he was called to his rest. There is, of course, nothing improbable in this age. We all of us have known persons who have attained or surpassed it, and we remember the words of Polycarp: "Eighty and six years have I served Him, and He hath done me no harm." The long life and mission of the prophet Hosea, then, affords a striking contrast to the brevity of his writings and the fewness of his words. But few and short as they are, they are of priceless value, as I shall hope to be able to show. They are, we may suppose, but the substance of many burdens, specimens of the topics on which the prophet dwelt, and of the manner in which he handled them. There can be no

question but that at that early age the function of the prophet was discharged principally in speaking and acting, not in writing. That his words were written was an accident, not a necessity. Nothing remains to us of Elijah or Elisha, and yet the work of Elijah in his own day was very important. And so writing was not the medium by which Hosea worked. He doubtless spoke and preached and prophesied, and his written book is the substance of his words during a long period, which we know was spread over the reigns of no less than five kings.

The mission of Hosea seems to have been chiefly directed to Israel. He does, indeed, occasionally mention Judah, but it is rather in an indirect manner; whereas Israel, Ephraim, Samaria, are exposed to the full brunt of his vehement indignation and reproof. While he was delivering the Lord's message against Israel the political fortunes of that kingdom were hastening to their final catastrophe. The genius of Jeroboam II. had raised his throne to a higher eminence of power and splendour than had been attained by any former monarch, and he contended successfully with the strength of Syria on the north, and rectified the national frontier; but he was unable to consolidate his power. A period of confusion and anarchy followed upon his death, and his dynasty came to an end in the person of his son, in marked fulfilment of the promise to Jehu, that his children of the fourth but not the fifth generation should sit upon his throne. Then came there more troublous times for Israel. A powerful adversary appeared on the horizon of the north-east in the person of the king of Assyria. He was bought off with a heavy subsidy by the king of Israel, "to confirm the kingdom in his hand." It was a dangerous expedient, adopted in the spirit of Louis XIV., "After me the deluge," and consequently, in the next generation the king of Israel was conspired against, and slain by one of his own generals, who in his turn suffered a like fate at the hands of the last monarch who sat on the throne of the divided kingdom, as the representative of Jeroboam the son of Nebat who made Israel to sin. But this was not before another invasion from Assyria, under Tiglath-Pileser, had overrun "Gilead and Galilee, and all the land of Naphtali, and carried them captive to Assyria." Hosea, then, lived through all this period of national disaster, and must have witnessed the first great deportation of his countrymen, even if in his own family he was not a sufferer by it. Twenty years later came the final

blow. The armies of Shalmaneser besieged Samaria, and Israel was no more a people, nor has her place been known again in history till the present hour. Thus, notwithstanding the long period that has elapsed since then, it seems as though there were still one link of association between the prophet and ourselves, inasmuch as in the particular line of his nation's history there is nothing but one unbroken waste between us.

Hosea stood not alone. In his own country the herdsman Amos had probably preceded him, and certainly, for some time during the reign of Uzziah, was his contemporary. Then in the kingdom of Judah came Isaiah, some five-and-twenty years after Hosea's mission commenced, and a little later still came Micah. Thus the old age of the prophet was cheered and his faith sustained by the knowledge that the same work in which his own life was passed was being carried on by others elsewhere. He may or may not have held intercourse with Isaiah and with Micah—we cannot tell—he can scarcely have been ignorant of their mission and work, while they must have honoured him as a noble servant of the Lord, who in his old age and in the midst of overwhelming national calamities was not ashamed to stand up alone in the alien kingdom and rebuke the vices of apostate Israel, and bear the same witness to the truth and righteousness of God that they bore in Judah.

And what was the message of that witness as we have heard it read to-day? "O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God, for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity." The old message of six-and-twenty centuries ago is the same as now. The latest and the newest can be none other. The cause of disaster and distress, whether national or personal, can be none other, and be it what it may the invitation is still the same, "Return." "Take with you words, and turn to the Lord, say unto Him" (these are the words), "Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously, so will we render the calves of our lips," the sacrifices and vows we are so ready to promise, so loth to pay. "Asshur shall not save us," though we have exhausted our treasury to confirm the kingdom, lavished our wealth and our substance in the vain hope of peace. "We will not ride upon horses, neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods, for in Thee the fatherless findeth mercy," and the one mark of the true God is mercy, as indeed his own words testify, "I will heal their backslidings, I will love them freely, for mine anger is turned

away from him, and I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall grow as the lily and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow shall return," and find their home evermore with Him, their rest and refuge with his God. "They shall revive as the corn and grow as the vine, and the scent thereof" and the memory thereof, "shall be as that of the wine of Lebanon." And then shall "Ephraim say, What have I to do any more with idols?" But the Lord saith, "I have heard him and observed him,"

crying in his self-complacency, "I am like a green fir-tree," wide-spreading, fair, and lofty, but still fruitless. O Israel, "from me is thy fruit found." From me alone, and from union with me is the regenerate nature which bringeth forth fruit. It is not in thyself, or in thy fair professions, or in thy natural strength, but in me, to whom thou shouldst look, and to whom thou must return to find new life. "Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein."

A KINDLY DEED.

I.

A KINDLY deed
Is a little seed,
That groweth all unseen;
And lo, when none
Do look thereon,
Anew it springeth green!

II.

A friendly look
Is a better book
For precept, than you'll find
'Mong the sages wise,
Or the libraries,
With their priceless wealth of mind.

III.

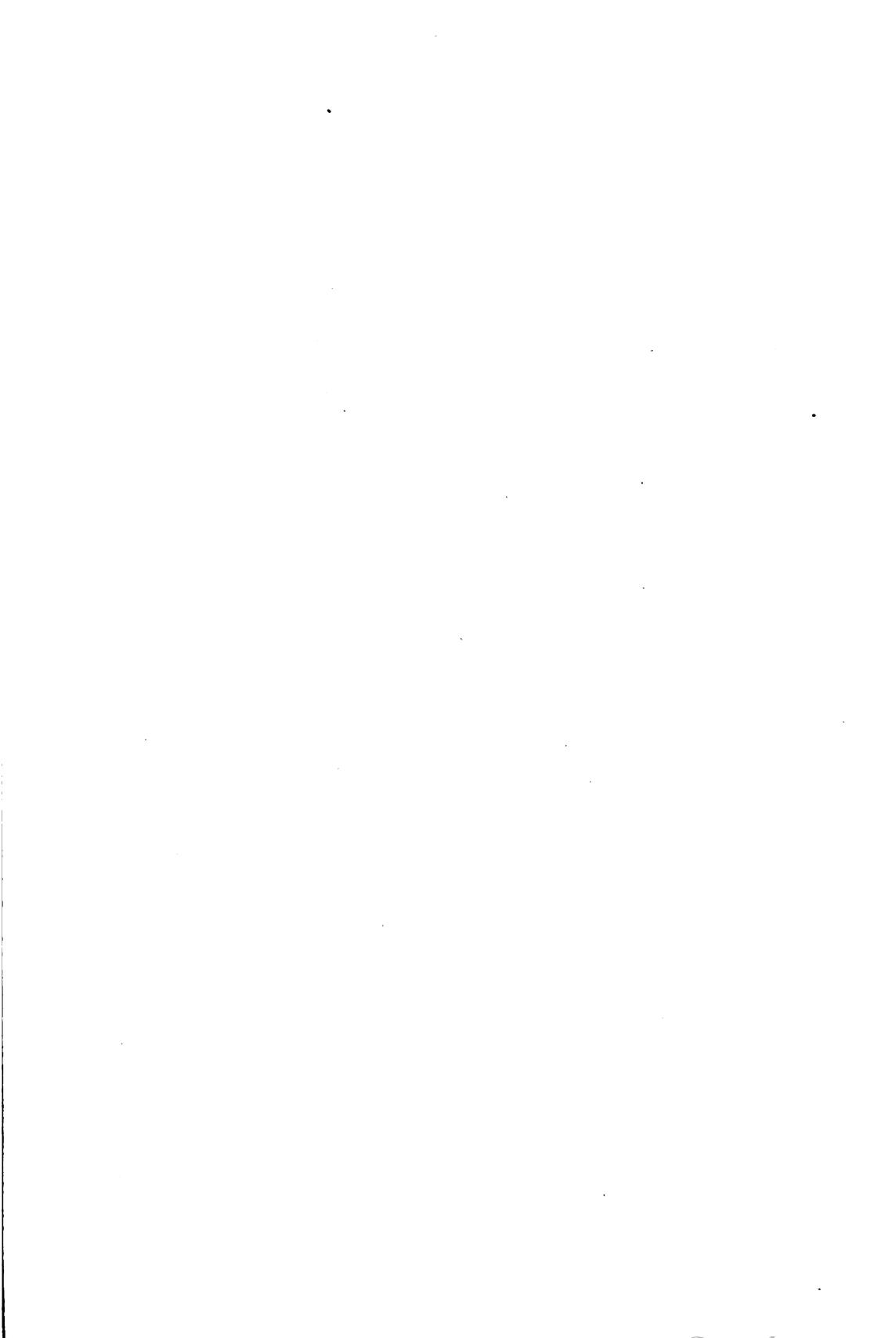
The little dole
Of a humble soul,
In all sincereness given,
Is like the wings
Of the lark, as it springs,
Singing clear, to the gate of heaven.

ALICE HAY JENNER.





"A KINDLY DEED."



AGAINST THE STREAM:

The Story of an Heroic Age in England.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE SCHONBERG-COTTA FAMILY."

CHAPTER XXX.

THUS Piers went out, it seemed to me, into the bracing air, and the morning sunshine, and I turned back to the dusk and the chill.

Such a dimness and chill fell on everything when he was gone! Such fears came for him, for England, for the slaves, for Amice, for our little Sunday-school, for everything! And indeed those winter days early in 1803 were dark months for England; and for Abbot's Weir; chill and chaotic—full of uncertainties and indecisions for us all.

In February England was thrilled to her remotest bounds by one of those great common impulses which now and then prove the living unity of national existence, and in proving quicken and raise the national life.

The trial of Peltier was going on in the Court of Queen's Bench. The prosecutor, our Attorney-general, on behalf of Napoleon Buonaparte; the defendant, an obscure Royalist emigré; the accusation, libel against a friendly government; the advocate, Sir James Mackintosh. In reality, England felt, and millions in silenced Europe felt, it was Liberty that was on her trial in her last asylum; the accuser, Despotism embodied in the First Consul; the advocate the last country in the world in which the press remained free.

Mackintosh's eloquent words vibrated throughout the land. England was quite capable of being simultaneously electrified to her remotest towns, villages, and homesteads, before the electric telegraph came into being; simultaneously, for all working purposes.

We make too much, I think, sometimes of these material inventions. Eager groups awaited the little badly-printed reports of the trial, and news from the passengers, at every inn-door, as the lumbering coaches passed through. Slow communications, clumsy reports; yet the heart of the old country beat warm and fast enough.

Mackintosh called on his countrymen to "pause before the earthquake swallowed up the last refuge of liberty. Switzerland and Holland once had a free press. Switzerland and Holland (two of Buonaparte's *misérables bagatelles*) existed no more. Since the prosecutions had begun, fifty old imperial free German cities had vanished. England's

free press can only fall under the ruins of the British Empire. Her free government cannot engage in dangerous wars without the free and hearty support of her people. A King of England who in such circumstances should conspire against the free press of the country would silence the trumpet which is to call his people around his standard."

The verdict was given by the reluctant jury, as a matter of law, against Peltier. But the defence was translated into every European language (into French by Madame de Staël); and the challenge of England was virtually thrown down to Napoleon.

For in those months England was "drifting" into war, alone, without one nation in the world to stand by her, and without a hand she trusted at the helm.

Rumours reached us of insults offered to our Ambassador, Lord Whitworth, at the Court—they began to call it a Court—of the First Consul; insults borne by England with the kind of easy patience of large creatures, which so often misleads other creatures to provoke that large and careless tolerance beyond its limits. Remonstrances against Buonaparte's aggressions, met with a contemptuous sarcasm.

War was declared, or rather accepted. Two French privateers were captured. And in one of the dramatic rages with which he cowed the rest of the world, the First Consul, in revenge, seized ten thousand British subjects, who happened to be peacefully travelling in France; the ten thousand "*détenus*," who throughout the campaigns of Nelson and Wellington had to linger out the weary years in French prisons, or, at least, in a society which to them was all one prison.

And among them was our own Piers.

We refused to believe it for a long time. Piers, we said to each other, could speak French so well, he was sure to escape when others would be detected. But then, acting, or any kind of stratagem or disguise were so foreign to his nature; and his whole bearing was "so English," Claire said, despondingly, though far from disparagingly. But then, she added, there were sure to be kind souls ready to help a stranger in France; had not they found it so in England? and would her compatriots be outdone?

In March I had received a letter from

Piers, quite long for him. He had made his way to two of the Marquise's former estates. He had looked for the Curé, but in vain. One hundred and fifty priests were in prison in the diocese of Paris, for refusing to take the oaths required by the government. "And yet," wrote Piers, "his Highness has placed the bust of Brutus in the Tuileries, to convince every one that liberty is as dear to him and to France as ever."

He did not find the peasants miserable. Mr. Arthur Young had said before the Revolution that more than half of the land of France already belonged to the peasants, only burdened by compulsory service (in making and repairing roads, for instance), and by other oppressive burdens. The Revolution abolished the burdens. Piers supposed it was so on this estate of Madame's. Her peasants affectionately remembered the Seigneur's family, spoke most cordially of them, asked for Madame and the little Demoiselle; but did not exactly wish to have the burdens re-imposed. The Department now made the roads and paid for having them made. And they had more to eat and drink, and better clothes to wear; at least they would have, were it not for the war and the conscription. They wished England would be tranquil, and the *émigrés* nobles would not excite her to combat, as it was reported they did. Then Madame might come back to live among them,—if not exactly as before—the château had unfortunately been burnt—yet to such wealth as was compatible with a republic.

Another of the Des Ormes estates had been purchased by the former Intendant for a nominal sum, and he and his aged wife listened with tearful interest to all Piers could relate of Madame and Claire. The old man regarded himself as only manager of the property, as of old, and looked forward to restore it one day to Madame. But he entreated that she would come back without delay. For, he privately told Piers, "he had a great nephew, his heir, brought up in the atmosphere of the new *régime*, if *régime* it could be called, and he could not be sure of his loyalty to any one or anything. He was a fine young man, however, and his mother a lady of the fallen noblesse—the petite noblesse certainly, not such a house as the Des Ormes. But he had sometimes thought whether an alliance might be possible?" Piers had seen the great nephew privately, and thought him an intolerable dandy and upstart. He could scarcely bear to write the words of the Intendant, but the old man had insisted, and as an envoy he thought himself

bound to yield. In a fortnight, or less now, he hoped himself to be with us again.

He wished to say something cheering to Madame. But it was difficult. I must judge how much to mention to her. Ten years was a long time anywhere. In ten years babies grew into youths, children into men, young men into thrifty fathers of families. It was a very long period in a country which could not count ten years from its new era, in which an institution which had lasted a twelvemonth seemed almost antique. To come back to old England he felt would be like stepping from a raft, just lashed together out of broken pieces of the ship, to *terra firma*. He only trusted Madame might feel the same. England was perhaps a rocky, chill, cheerless region compared with her sunny France. But it *was* a rock. And just now the seas seemed very stormy. He felt he should have a little storm to weather in getting home. People's minds seemed excited by the news from across the Channel. Something about the conquest of Malta; and an *émigré* pamphleteer who had been libelling the First Consul. He hoped England would stand firm. George Crichton was returning that very day, and would bring the letter, so that, at least, was safe. He had one more journey to find the Curé Madame had wished him to see: and then, home.

George Crichton was all safe certainly, and returned home; and Clapham seemed to me a little self-satisfied as to its usual prudence and sagacity in keeping out of scrapes. George had warned Piers, he wrote to us, of the danger of lingering. But that one commission Piers had said he must execute. And so the fatal day overtook him. And he was detained, it seemed probable, near Madame's former home, not far from Port Royal des Champs, whither he had gone to make one more search for the Curé, who might, it was thought, be in hiding with some of the faithful among the peasantry.

Madame was, at first, much incensed at the proposition of her Intendant with regard to Claire.

"Poor man!" she said, "to such a degree have these whirlwinds turned the best brains and bewildered the most loyal hearts. But the great-nephew, insufferable young man! I suppose he would think it a condensation to endow my daughter with the remnant of the property of which they have despoiled our house."

"But, Maman," said Claire, "it is not said that the young man entertains the thought: at least let us exonerate him!"

"What can you know, my innocent child? Of course I do not suspect any young persons of taking such an affair into their own hands. This at least, the duty of parents to provide marriages for their children, the Revolution has not changed. From such disorganization France is yet preserved."

Yet, now and then she returned to the intendant's scheme.

"Perhaps pride is after all the sin which has brought down our order," she said one day to Claire. "M. l'Intendant seems to have spoken deferentially and loyally; and, as you say, the young man is not to be blamed. And if his mother were, indeed, of good blood! The poor great-uncle is fond, no doubt; but he says the young man is beautiful, let us hope also good. The family were always devout."

But, at this point, Claire, regardless of consistency, entirely abandoned the defence of the "beautiful" young man.

"M. Piers writes that he is an upstart, a 'dandy,'" said she.

"Ah, my child! the English have ideas a little different from ours. Those fine manners which we used to cultivate are not to their taste. And now, they say, they are not cultivated even in France. How could they, the root being cut away? On the whole, perhaps, it does not speak badly for a young man that he should in these republican days have manners an Englishman might think too elaborate."

"My mother!" Claire replied, "I think M. Piers would judge well of manners."

"No doubt, my child. For England, the Danescobes have excellent manners. And what has my poor child known better? I have been unjust to thee, my Claire. I should have accepted the Countess of Abbot's Weir's invitation for thee; then thou wouldst have seen the world. What should have been *thy* world; as far indeed as that can exist anywhere out of France; anywhere in the world, now."

"Unjust to me!" said Claire, "my mother! Never. Would I have left thee? But let us not be unjust to any who have been good to us. M. Piers went—is detained—for us, mother."

"It is true, my child; I weep for him, I pray for him, night and day. The most generous heart! But, for thee? I cannot always be with thee. Sometimes I feel as if every day were breaking some of the few threads that keep my body here. And before I go, I would fain do my duty for thee, if I knew it. M. l'Intendant was a brave and

loyal servant always. I spoke hastily of him. God forgive me. I have failed in so much!"

And then the little tender veil of concealment for a moment was laid aside, and the two wept in one other's arms.

For a little shadow was falling on Claire—a little shadow from one human form; yet, within that shadow, an eclipse of the sun would, to her, have added little darkness. Slowly, imperceptibly, decay and ruin were creeping on all that made her home, on all that made the world home to her; ruin beside which, when it came, the crash of falling nations would for her have added little tumult.

No longer now so very slowly, or imperceptibly, the stages of declining strength were measured.

From the chair to the couch, from the couch to the bed, from helplessness to helplessness. The steps we all have to tread, unless for us the last descent which leads to the shining upward way, is a precipice.

And then came the keen March winds, penetrating irresistibly through the carefully guarded windows. And then a few days of bewilderment and anguish. And then the difficult way was over; and the mother was perplexed about her duties no more, or the duties of others.

She had been led at last "by the right way to the city of habitation." She received the last sacraments of her Church. There was no time for last words or last directions. Bequests there were none to make. Madame had nothing to leave to the world but her Claire, and scarcely anything to leave to Claire but her blessing.

She left her child to God. And as she breathed out this her last blessing and bequest in one, she smiled at Léontine, and then she looked with a wistful gaze at Loveday and me.

Then Claire pressed the crucifix to her lips, and breathing the one Name, which is above every name, the only Name for dying lips, the patient chastened spirit passed away.

We thought there was a light on her countenance, as of eyes that had met other eyes, long sought, and in one glance had understood all that had perplexed.

We knew that the patient, mourning, lowly, purified spirit was blessed at last with all the beatitudes, comforted, satisfied, seeing God.

Satisfied also for us, even for her child. And now, Claire also had to learn the old lesson of my childhood, to follow the motherly eyes "up to His face." And being sweeter and more trustful than I, she learned her lesson sooner and better. She was dif-

ferent from me; more reasonable, more disciplined, and also more able to take comfort in little things, refusing no crumb of comfort, no ray of light, from any side.

Sometimes I wondered.

To me the feeling in sorrow was,—

“My feast of joy has been swept away. I will not refuse the crumbs under the table as sustenance. That would be suicide. But to give thanks at the empty table for the crumbs, and pretend to say grace as for the feast, that would be servile, false. And I will not try. I will mingle ashes with my bread, and my drink with weeping. God is a Father, my Father, the Father. He will understand.”

But Claire, even in this sorrow which cleft her tender heart, as well I knew, was still like a guest at a king's table. It seemed to me as if the old habits of her high-breeding went through her soul, and pervaded her religion.

She would not fail in any gracious form of courtesy because her heart was breaking, any more than her mother when her life was ebbing; not even, if I may say so, with God.

She opened her windows literally and symbolically to the sunshine. She spread the little white tables with the primroses her mother had delighted in. She kept the room fair and pleasant, as if her mother were on a journey, and she had expected her home. And yet her dear brown eyes were often dim and red with weeping.

“The good God thought it worth while to make the primroses this spring,” said she, “and should I fail to show Him I see, and care, and am grateful? And then *she* cared, Bride. She cared so much! although she has so much that is fairer and better to care for now.”

“When I can give thanks, Bride, and be a little glad, I know I am feeling a little as she is feeling now. But,” she added, with a sudden burst of weeping, “I cannot; I cannot always! Only then I hope God is making something deeper in my heart, that by-and-by there may be more room, and I may be able to feel even more as she is feeling, yes, always more and more.”

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE seizure of the ten thousand English in France roused the nation from John o' Groat's House to the Land's End. At last England set herself resolutely against the stream, regardless who piled with her.

From that time till the end of the war twelve years afterwards, whatever some factious men might write about the futility of

opposing Buonaparte and his “invincibles,” and however a feeble policy might reduce the war to “neat and ineffective expeditions,” the nation went heart and soul into the conflict, her spirit keeping firm in victory, and rising with defeat. For twelve years we felt ourselves, every inch of us, one Nation, and a nation standing alone, for all nations, for all the kingdoms of the world against one devouring Universal Empire. As long as England stood, Napoleon could not assume the coveted title of “Emperor of the West.”

It is difficult even at this distance, even for us who remember, to revive in our minds the preternatural terror that surrounded the name of Buonaparte. Why should it be deemed incredible that he should attain any height of power, the Corsican lawyer's son, the young artillery officer, whom emperors had become proud to call brother, who disposed of thrones to his kindred or his generals?

How could it be deemed incredible that he should commit any crime, who, as we all believed, had murdered the young Duc d'Enghien at midnight; who had caused Pichegru to be strangled in one prison, and Toussaint L'Ouverture to be starved with cold and hunger in another; who massacred his prisoners in Syria, and shot six thousand Russians kneeling helpless on the ice; who, when thousands of his own men fell, shuddered a little at the blood-stains on the white uniform they happened to be wearing, and as a remedy commanded “only blue uniforms” in future; who never hesitated at a falsehood or a slaughter; and for what object? The glory of France? He was not even a Frenchman. His own supremacy? No man disputed it. It was little wonder if to some he seemed an incarnation of some preternatural power without heart or conscience.

Three successive Augusts he fixed his camp at Boulogne, gazing menacingly across at our white cliffs,—and gathering his hundred thousand around him to cross the sea and assail us.

In the first August, 1803, England answered him by enrolling her three hundred thousand volunteers, to avenge her ten thousand *detenus*, and to meet the hundred and twenty thousand veterans at Boulogne.

We laughed at ourselves and our voluntary Defenders, freely, as the custom of our country is. Every town had its jokes against itself and its citizen soldiers (the old butt of wits from time immemorial), the cut of their uniforms, or the handling of their arms; and Abbot's Weir was not behind the rest. I remember well old stories of the heroic valour

with which our gallant volunteers went forth with fife and drum to encounter a reported outbreak of prisoners of war, and finding the enemy to be nothing but certain white stones set to mark the road across the moors, returned safe but inglorious. And again, how on occasion of a review by some distinguished officer of the line, the manœuvres signally failed in consequence of the bugleman having blown a quid of tobacco into his bugle.

We laughed at each other, and grumbled at the powers that be, as our wont is; believing in each other and obeying the powers that be all the time, in that inconsistent manner which amuses us, and perplexes and sometimes misleads our neighbours not a little.

Not a groat did the Government pay, or would any Englishmen accept for uniforms, arms, or time.

Meantime, Mr. Pitt, still kept out of what most of us felt was his place at the head of the nation, was living at Walmer, commanding volunteers. Great drillings were going on throughout the land, in town market-houses, on village greens. Dibdin's songs were sung, and old Scotch ballads were revived.

It was an uneasy time for Quakers. To be a man of peace meant to most of us little less than to be a traitor.

How much did it all mean?

Disciplined, and under able leadership, it meant something at Trafalgar, in the Peninsular War, and at Waterloo.

Buonaparte never obtained a chance to prove what it would have meant on our own shores. It meant, at least, that the nation felt herself a nation; and that every atom of the body politic had become for the time an atom multiplied by the sum of the whole. It meant that we all knew there was something worth infinitely more than money; and, many of us, that there is something worth more than life.

On the 2nd of August, 1804, when Buonaparte came to threaten us the second time from Boulogne with his myriads, and his flat-bottomed boats, the pomp of his ceremonial was more splendid than at first. He had been decreed to be Emperor by the Senate on the 18th of May; and his Josephine was Empress. In form, nothing was wanting to the dramatic representation of the Roman invasion. The Imperial throne was set up on the coast, the legions paid homage around.

But on that same 18th of May, the Englishman we acknowledged as our chief had his hand once more on the helm.

William Pitt was Prime Minister of England once more.

Our little world at Abbot's Weir, indeed, had its separate shadows and eclipses. But hope was strong in us. We had a conviction, Claire and I, that the world must brighten again, simply because we were young. And I always thought Pitt and Nelson were about to finish the war, and set Piers free.

In one respect Claire and I had drawn nearer each other.

After much thought Claire had decided to attend our church. She thought the religion which made England what it was, must be stronger and truer than that which had either made or left France what it was; that the church which fearlessly gave the Bible to the people, and the faith which laid hold throughout the land, not only on the hearts of gentle women to sweeten them, but of rough men, to change and save them, which made freedom and loyalty possible together, could not have wandered far from their divine source. Perhaps, also, Léontine and her Huguenot faith had unconsciously influenced her, and that century of persecution which had robbed France of her noblest; certainly, Loveday and all she had seen in her. However it came about, so it was, that one Sunday morning she walked quietly across the market-place with Léontine, and asked if she might sit in our pew. And that Easter she received the Sacrament, kneeling between my father and me under the old altar window.

"If this is indeed the best I could do," she said to me afterwards, as we walked across the pleasant Leas where Piers and I used to stroll on Sunday afternoons, "my mother and yours would be glad, Bride. And I think it is. And I think they are."

She had always a strange sense, for one so buoyant, of the transitoriness of this life, and its continuity with the next. Perhaps her old Catholic training had helped her to it, linking the living and the dead, by more unbroken ties, than some forms of Protestantism. Perhaps, also, the convulsions which had desolated her country and her home. I always felt that to me life was in some sense more solid, to her more liquid; to me as the firm land which could only be parted by earthquakes, to her as the waves of the sea for ever heaving and parting, whilst bearing us on to the invisible shore.

She spoke of death more easily than I could; more as one of "the incidents of life," as one of its separations, and not always the worst.

Now and then little letters came to us from Piers, quite cheerful, insisting that he was not wasting his time, that he was well treated, was

earning his living, and gaining experience. In the first he sent a message to Madame, very reticent and deferential, but not very bright as to the state of her property, although the *ci-devant* intendant was preparing, he hoped, to send her some remittances.

In the second, having heard of Madame's death, all his reticence was gone. He poured out all his heart to me about Claire. If I thought there was any chance of her caring for him, I was to tell her now; inferior in rank and position, in everything, as he was, he loved her. He was sure I must know; he almost thought she must know. He almost feared she must know so well that she could not care for him, or he should have known that she did. And if she did not, could not ever care, I was not to breathe a word, but to be as a sister to her always. He was sure our father would care for her as a child. But if only there *could* be the *right* to do it, &c., &c.

And I told our father; and quite simply he went to Claire. And so the perplexities and uncertainties were over. And Claire became our very own, and wrote, herself, a few words to Piers, only a few, because it was so doubtful if they would reach him. She said it was for her he had become a prisoner, and it was but his due. But the little letter did reach him, and seemed to be as satisfactory to him as a volume.

Thenceforth they corresponded, and those letters which I never saw wonderfully lightened the separation, even to me; they made Claire so happy, that the reflected light gave me faith in its source, through all the darkness of absence. Probably, moreover, the separation by seas and continents lightened the other separation between the brother and sister, which must have come for me, when, however the love might continue, the whole weight of his heart's confidence and care came to rest on another. I seemed to gain a sister in Claire before I parted with anything of a brother to Piers's bride.

Moreover, this betrothal, which my father wished to be known at once, had an unforeseen effect on the relations between Amice and her grandmother.

One morning when I was tying sweet-peas on the upper terrace of our garden, to my wonder and joy, Amice herself came out from the Aladdin's-lamp-like door of the little subterranean passage, and walked up the steep slope. I was too surprised even to run and meet her. The "honour due," as I knew Amice felt, to Madam Glanvil, had so sealed

my lips, and made me shrink from anything like a clandestine interview.

We shook hands and kissed, without any extra demonstrations, as if we had only parted yesterday. Indeed we had lived together all the time, although it was a year since we had met; because I knew always what Amice was thinking and feeling about it. And Amice was at all times rather like a boy, as Piers used to say, or rather like her grandmother, as to demonstration of feeling.

"Granny sent me!" said she with a smile. "She said to me this morning at breakfast, when Cato and Cæsar had left us,—

"Child! with all your patience and submission, you are as proud as any Glanvil of them all; and that is the only excuse for you. If you had been humble enough to fret, and cry, and rage a little like other girls, it would all have been over months ago. I feel for Bride Danescombe. Why have you shut her out from Court all this time? Of course you might have known I did not mean it."

"Of course I made no apology or self-defence. And she continued,—

"I hope you are the better for the silence. I believe I am. But some one must begin to speak. And as I am deaf, and most used to speaking, I suppose it must be me. What is this about Piers Danescombe?"

"I told her of the engagement with Claire.

"Very ridiculous," she said, but she looked pleased. "The boy a prisoner, and the girl a beggar. However, it is better than your poor great aunt Prothesea and her Elder. If one is to fight any one, or love any one, but an Englishman, it had better be a Frenchman. It seems more natural. One's ancestors hundreds of years ago might have done the same. Besides it is rather a chance we Glanvils did not stay in Normandy, and then we might all unfortunately have been French. There are only two nations, after all, of really old family, the French and ourselves. The rest of them are children, parvenus, savages just civilised. Who had ever heard of Russia when the Glanvils came over with the Conqueror, or of Prussia, or even of Austria? Then, besides, I don't like this partition of Poland. Not that I think much of the Poles. But we got over our little pilferings in the dusk, before history began, we old nations and old families. It is discreditable to be caught doing these things in the daylight."

"I suggested that the Hohenstaufen and the Hohenzollern were not altogether of new blood, and that the Holy Roman Empire was rather ancient.

"Hohenstuff and Holy Roman nonsense," said Granny irreverently, not believing in history or in foreign languages, "that little French thing is not a Roman, at all events, I am glad to see by her coming every Sunday to church. You may have her here with Bride Danescombe."

"But Grannie," I said, "do not talk to her about things Roman, or English and French."

"Do you think that I do not know how to talk to young women in love? I was in love myself once, and am not such a monster after all," said Grannie; "and," she added parenthetically, as she rose from table, "by the way, I have been thinking a good deal. And as to packing the negroes in ships, perhaps John Wesley was right. Not that I think any better of the blacks," she concluded, "not a bit of it; nor of the Methodists. An idle, incorrigible, chattering set, all of them. They may do each other what good or harm they can for me."

"Which was Grannie's form of adhesion to the abolition of the slave-trade, and the toleration of missionaries in the plantations?"

"Claire always said 'the discipline of silence' would work well," I said, "and it certainly has."

"So," said Amice, with her little dropping of laughter, "I have lost my only chance of 'the red rose' of martyrdom, Bride, and am obliged to be as prosperous as your friends at Clapham, and do all my good works to the music of silver trumpets, in the sunshine. At least until I can get to my poor negroes myself. But oh, Bride," she said, her eyes moistening and her whole dear face radiant, "all this means so much, so much, for Granny! And do you know she told me I might have the servants in for family prayer. 'And a chapter from the Bible, or a Psalm, if you like,' she said. 'Not too long, and take care that it is out of the Lessons. I will not have any separatist rambling about the Bible wherever you choose. And a prayer out of a book. One or two of the collects will do.' And she concluded by saying, 'I think we might have the Confession. The Confession is very suitable. I have been saying it over often lately, and I hope it has done me a little good.'"

CHAPTER XXXII.

FOR two years our island was islanded as it had scarcely been before. The Continent was closed to our travellers. Few foreigners entered England, except reluctantly, as exiles or prisoners of war. Yet it so happened that our little world of Abbot's Weir was widened instead of being narrowed by the exclusion.

One of the prisons of war was placed among the bleak moorlands not far from us, where bogs and wild ranges of lonely hills made approach difficult, and escape, for a foreigner, almost impossible.

Our hearts ached often for the men torn from pleasant France to drone away the prime of life within those cheerless walls.

The Latin inscription over the gates,

"PARCERE SUBJECTIS,"

must have read like a mockery to many who entered them.

However, with the buoyancy of their race, the French prisoners made the best of their circumstances, kept up each other's spirits by tale and chanson, carved delicate toys out of bones, twisted chains, bracelets, and ornaments out of hair, thought it worth while even in that depth and darkness to make the depth and darkness as light and as tolerable as they could.

With the Americans, men of our own race, who were brought there afterwards, it was different. They drank the cup to the dregs, as those of our race are apt to do, scorning small alleviations, refusing comfort.

Some of us console ourselves by saying that it is the nobler animals, to which freedom is as the breath of life, which beat their wings against the cage and break their hearts against the inevitable; that it is the very energy which makes our race strong against remediable ills, which renders them desperate beneath the irremediable. Yet the creatures who sing in their cages have surely also their merit and their strength. It takes at least as much courage to sing away despair, as to beat against the prison-bars.

Patience has its manly heroism as well as its feminine beauty, is a "virtue" as well as a grace; and certainly it takes a larger weight of Christianity to make us patient than some of our neighbours. Claire naturally made the French prison her "parish;" she and Léontine knitting and sewing warm clothes, and doing what was more difficult to her, making "quêtes" in all directions for money to help her compatriots.

In this work she found a fervent supporter in a young French naval officer, Captain Godefroy, who was taken in one of the earliest engagements, and sent to Abbot's Weir on parole.

I cannot say the French officers were admitted without precautions into our homes. Military men in general were in matrimonial respects not popular among our townfolks. And French soldiers were certainly not regarded as the least perilous to feminine hearts.

But Captain Godefroy was altogether an exception. In the first place he was not a soldier but a sailor, which in itself was something of a passport to our insular natures; in the second he was not a "Papist" but a Protestant; in the third, he was not gay, or debonnaire, or fascinating, or "French," according to any type we recognised. In the last place, (really in the last,) he was a man of some property, and had remittances, and paid his debts most rigidly. And so he became soon quite domiciled among us.

Even Madam Glanvil invited him. I was

at Court when she first mentioned him. She had seen him at church on Sunday.

"Who is that fine, sad-looking man," said she to Amice, "in a French naval uniform, who sat in the free seats yesterday? He ought not to sit in the free seats. He is a gentleman. Ask him into ours. Or stay! the vicar might have him. I will speak to the vicar. He was quite an example, so grave and devout, never looked at any one, quite an example, especially as of course he could not understand a word of what was going on."



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But Amice said hastily, "He does understand English."

"What is his name?" asked Madam.

Amice did not know.

"Very strange you should know he knows English, and yet not know his name," said her grandmother.

"I know he understands English, because he asked me a question at our gate, and understood my answer. But of course I had no necessity or right to ask his name."

"What did he ask?" said Madam Glanvil, "and at which gate?"

"The gate at the end of the wood, Granny," said Amice, "on the road to the moor. You know it is the limit of the parole for the French prisoners."

"I know no such thing. A very accommodating rule for us!" said Madam Glanvil, grimly. "I should recommend the French prisoners, as a rule, to walk the other way. There are three other roads. And I have no desire to have foreigners prowling about our cottages, among the maidens and the hens. Frenchmen eat eggs by the dozen, and no doubt think all fair in love and war."

Amice laughed, but her colour rose a little. She was not given to "flush and blush" as her grandmother accused me of doing.

"If you wish him to sit in our pew, Granny," said she, "you had better clear your mind first as to the eggs, or perhaps you might not enjoy saying the responses to the Commandments together."

"But you have never told me what he asked. Why cannot you tell plainly at once?"

"I can and will," said Amice. "There is hardly anything to tell. It is a very short story. I was coming up out of the wood, and he stood at the gate with one of Honor Rosekelly's grandchildren on his shoulder. He took off his hat, and, with a very serious look, begged my pardon for speaking. The little creature looked quite at home with him. And the grave, sad look went out of his face when he spoke to her. He said he had found the little maid crying bitterly in the road for mammy; she seemed to have lost her way, and could only point up the lane beyond the gate, "which," he said, with a slight momentary smile, "involved him in a case of conscience, the gate being the furthest limit permitted to his parole."

"Well, what did you do?"

"What could I do, Granny, but take the child from him, and carry it to old Honor's cottage myself?"

"No, poor fellow! You were very clever to understand him," said Madam Glanvil. "No doubt he has a wife and children of his own at home. Those sailors always marry early. I will invite the vicar, and Mr. Danescombe and his wife, and ask him to meet them. You should write at once, if I could only find out the name. And you can ask the little French girl. She will be somebody for him to speak to," concluded Madam Glanvil, unmoved as to her conviction of the impossibility of a foreigner speaking English in any intelligible manner:

"His name is Godefroy," I said, "Captain Hervé Godefroy. His family is from Normandy."

"Normandy!" said Madam Glanvil. Almost as good as a cousin. I have no doubt his forefathers fought side by side with ours. Poor fellow! pity they did not come over with us. His wife and children must be very sorry now, that they stayed behind."

And so Madam Glanvil, having provided Captain Godefroy with suitable domestic ties, and almost proved to her own satisfaction that he was scarcely a Frenchman at all, broke down her usual rule; and the young French officer obtained the *entrée* to Court.

And so, as my selfish heart cried out at first, my Amice was stolen away from me. And so, as love learned in the end, our Amice found the fulfilment of her life, and gave us Hervé Godefroy, and he gave her back to us worth tenfold all she had been before.

Madam Glanvil herself fell straightway into grandmotherly love for the young man.

He had a grave and tender deference for her, which brought out all the high breeding that belonged of right to her gentle blood. With him her manners took a sweet, old-fashioned, stately courtesy which surprised those who did not know that her eccentricities were but a crust underneath which lay, not only a generous heart, but a fine old polish, inwrought, as in her old oaken furniture, from the use of centuries. It was a pleasant sight to see him kiss her hand, the tender gravity with which he paid, and the lofty yet half shy grace with which she received the homage. The first time, I remember a faint blush came on the fine, fair, proud, old face, and gave one a vision of what it must have been before the strong lines of age, and of habitual care and command had stamped it. She said Captain Godefroy had evidently had a gentleman for his father, and a gentlewoman for his mother. Her courtesy entirely checked, as regarded him, the peremptory inquisition to which she subjected most people. She did not even ask him about the wife and children with whom she had endowed him. She thought it might be too painful for him to speak of them.

Indeed there was a kind of gravity and loftiness about the young French officer which prevented Abbot's Weir in general from gratifying its curiosity by direct questioning, and left a large margin around him for legends and myths on which any light thrown by casual revelations of his own, was welcomed, and multiplied into a hundred prisms.

Not that he made any mysteries about himself. No man could be more frank and straightforward. Intrusive curiosity he was certainly capable of baffling. But in general he was simply unaware that people cared to know about him. Reticent he naturally was. It had, moreover, not been the habit of the men of the "religion" in France to talk much about themselves.

The Protestants of France had passed through a two hundred years' "discipline of silence," living all that time deprived of utterance in public assemblies or in books,—by their very firesides watched by spies and invaded by dragonnades. The discipline had not been without fruit. It had not deprived them of the rapid and acute eloquence which

belongs to their nation; but it had pruned from them the habit of boastful and superfluous speech. There had been little temptation to them to speak of what were their true glories, the gibbet, the stake, the wheel, the galleys, the massacred congregations, the violated hearth, encountered for truth and God.

My father from the first had taken greatly to him. They had had many hopes and many *désillusionnements* in common. And to Madam Glanvil he spoke freely. To all aged people his manner had a deference which was much more than manner. He believed in the venerableness of old age. And there was a clear ring in his rich tenor voice, and a distinctness in his measured and slightly foreign accent which always made his words intelligible to a deafness, as we knew of old, always a little arbitrary and discriminating.

And Amice, during these dialogues, took in a highly feminine way to knitting; now and then interposing with a low word in response to an appeal of his, and always constituting to him the chief part of the audience.

And I sat sometimes, and listened too, and watched my darling—my heroine's heart being won; at first, as it seemed, from me, but afterwards, as I learned, for me and for all.

His father was of an old family of Norman gentlemen. Not sixty years before, in Normandy, six hundred Protestants of the generation of his father and grandfather had escaped from a fresh outburst of persecution, happily the last on a national scale. Their homes had been broken into at night by officers of the king's archers accompanied by the curés of the parish, and their children, especially their young daughters, seized from them with cruel sabre-cuts and blasphemies, to be thrust into convents, there to be taught the Roman Catholic religion at the expense of their parents. Happily that district was near the sea coast, and the midday of the eighteenth century was nearly reached; and so the last large emigration of Protestant refugees escaped better than most of their forefathers.

"Pity," Madam Glanvil said, "your father had not been among those exiles, you would then have been fighting on our side."

Captain Godefroy's mother was a Guiton;—a descendant of the family of the brave Mayor Guiton, who held starving La Rochelle so long against the king's forces.

"Ah!" Madam Glanvil admitted, "I have always been sorry at my heart for that business of La Rochelle. I have often heard of it. One of my own ancestors was an officer of the fleet sent out with the succours which never reached the besieged; I fear were never

meant to reach. A bad business. His Majesty had bad advisers, and but too faithful servants. It nearly drove our family over to the wrong side. If it had not been for the civil wars and Oliver Cromwell, and the martyrdom of King Charles, I doubt whether we should have held our politics."

"It was a sad affair for us," Captain Godefroy replied. "It was among our nursery tales how the starving citizens of La Rochelle three times saw, with unutterable grief, the English fleet in the offing, and three times saw—what we had been used to think incredible—England baffled and driven back."

Amice looked up with one of her bright flashes of intelligence and sympathy.

"Your nursery tales must have been of a high order," she said.

"We had certainly no need to turn to stories of loup-garous and witches' caldrons for horrors," he said.

"And little need to turn to Greece and Rome for heroes," she replied.

He smiled one of those rare smiles of his, which came from sources as deep as his sorrows and the courage which bore them.

"We ought to have gained some spiritual muscle," he said, "in pulling two hundred years against the stream."

"You can understand, Madame," he continued, "since you care for our history, how the Revolution, which has proved in many ways such a desolation, seemed to us a deliverance."

This was certainly a little difficult for Madam Glanvil to admit. Except for the amends she felt due for the miscarriage of her ancestors' expedition at La Rochelle, she could scarcely have let it pass.

"Time was beginning to set things right before the Jacobins took it in hand," she said, grimly. "And some of your forefathers were not altogether without turbulence."

"For a hundred years," he replied, "we had many rich, and many noble among us, and we fought for our rights. Would you have had it otherwise?" he asked, not without stratagem, for Madam Glanvil would certainly not have done otherwise. If her theories were for non-resistance, her sympathies were undoubtedly with those who resisted.

"Little good came of it," she said, evasively, applying to her snuffbox.

"So, many of us felt," he replied. "After 1685, the year of the Revocation, we were poor, and for the most part of lowly station, like the Apostles. Our rich men had escaped to enrich England and Germany. Our nobles were exiles. Some of them, Madame, did fight,

not ignobly, in your armies. Our congregations assembled in deserts and caves, at the risk of fusillades. Our pastors were consecrated, as they knew, to the 'vocation of martyrdom.' But our pastors preached submission, and our people, for the most part, to the utmost limit of endurance (the rising of the Cevennes being ended), practised it."

Amice had laid aside her work, and was gazing far away.

"I weary you with my old histories," he said softly.

"No," she said; "I was only thinking of the West Indian slaves. If some of your people could have taught them the lessons of patience, they would have come with force from such lips."

He paused.

"You have West Indian property?" he said earnestly. "In St. Vincent a plantation was left to me. Once I wished to take charge of it, and prevent some of the evils there; and afterwards I often regretted I had not. I thought I had missed my vocation. But scarcely lately," he added, as if to himself.

This little interlude took place in very rapid words, whilst Madam Glanvil was expressing her divided state of mind by vigorously poking the fire.

"You should have kept to the old track," she said at last. "The pasteurs were wiser than the democrats. Revolution could do nothing for you."

"Not quite nothing," he demurred; "but it promised much. You will remember it is not forty years since in the Catholic churches at Toulouse they celebrated with pomp the anniversary of the St. Bartholomew of the South. It is not forty years since the Pasteur Rochette was hanged, and three gentlemen of Languedoc were beheaded at Toulouse for religion, or since poor old Calas, by long-since-disproved calumny—accused of the murder of his son for turning Catholic—was broken on the wheel, and took two hours dying. 'I die innocent,' he said. 'Jesus Christ, innocent itself, willed to die by torments yet more cruel.' The Catholic priests who attended him on the scaffold confessed, 'Thus in old times died our martyrs.' Voltaire pleaded for his memory. In three years the sentence was annulled, and fanaticism to that extent was never possible again. At least," he added sadly, "fanaticism upheld by the Church and the law. The fanaticism of mobs is a hurricane no one can provide against."

"Léontine says always that all our people die well," interposed Claire, who happened to

be present. "Of our king also, and Madame Elizabeth, may it not be said, 'Thus in old times died our martyrs?'"

"Ah, Mademoiselle," he replied, "if you could know how eagerly we, who have been so long accustomed to be banished outside our national history as proscribed outlaws, take up and claim the heroic traditions we have in common with all our countrymen! To be exiled *in France*, as we were, was in some respects harder than to be exiled *from* it. To understand our isolation," he continued, "you must remember it is not thirty years since one of our pastors died in prison for religion, in La Brie. And it is not fifteen years," he concluded, his voice dropping to its deepest tones, and tremulous with feeling, "since all professions were closed to us and all means of livelihood except trade, or farming; since our marriages were illegal, our children unrecognised as lawful, the rites of Christian burial of our dead forbidden to us. It was only in 1787 that marriage and burial were permitted us. Was it wonderful that we welcomed the dawn of the Revolution?"

"Ah, monsieur," said tender-hearted Claire, breaking down into tears, "I wonder at nothing in our poor France. My mother taught me that. Only I like to think that we, of the Catholic noblesse, and our king, did a little to help you before we fell. In 1787, when these your wrongs were redressed, France had still a king and a nobility."

"Nobody doubts that your King Louis was a saint, or fit to be one," Madam Glanvil said; "if he was not a sage."

Madam Glanvil was a little impatient with tears. Amice had not used her to them. Their race was of the kind from which wrong does not draw tears, but strikes fire.

A little storm was gathering.

Captain Godefroy dispersed it.

"Mademoiselle," he said to Claire, "it was a happy moment for us when the aged Paul Rabaud preached the first sermon in the first temple granted us, at Nismes; when the women who had faded from youth to grey hairs, in the prisons of Aigues Mortes were set free. It was a proud moment for us Protestants when Rabaud St. Etienne, himself ordained, at twenty, a pastor of the persecuted Church, grandson of our noble Paul Rabaud, who had been from youth to past middle age a hunted *Pasteur du Désert*, was nominated President of the General Assembly of France, and said there to all the nation, 'My country is free. Let her show herself worthy of liberty by declaring that the very word *tolerance* shall be proscribed—that unjust

word which represents religious differences as crimes.' But it was a moment which touched a deeper chord when the grandson of the persecuted pleaded for the life of the great-grandson of the persecutor. We could not silence the clamours which drowned the dying words of our king. We could only thank God for him that he died patient, calm, and believing as any of those forefathers of our religion, whose dying words had been similarly silenced long before."

"For me," he resumed, "I have, indeed, hoped too much, from every direction. I hoped from the National Assembly, with Rabaud St. Etienne at its head; I hoped from the Republic; did it not proclaim liberty and brotherhood? I hoped from Napoleon Buonaparte; did he not declare that 'the empire of the law ceases where the empire of conscience begins?' I hoped the old hatreds were to die out between class and class, between faith and faith, between nation and nation. My politics, therefore, are little worth any one's attending to."

"Yet," said Amice softly, "you would not wish to have hoped less."

"No!" he said; "to hope all and lose all is better, infinitely better, than to hope nothing and lose nothing. Is not hope itself something?"

So in many a talk by the fireside, in garden and woodland walks, the summers and winters wore on towards 1805. And all the while Amice's life and mine were separating and gathering around different centres.

More and more, the conversation, when we were all together, used to be between Captain Godefroy and Madam Glanvil. With Amice he had reached a certainty of understanding that needed little direct speech.

The different types of their religion, as of their characters, fulfilled each other wonderfully. With her religion meant forgiveness, love, the forgiving Father, the Incarnate and atoning Son; the loving, healing, softening Spirit; the reconciled, happy, obedient child. With him it meant power, majesty, truth, justice, the Sovereign to Whom the profoundest loyalty, unlimited self-sacrifice, and unhesitating obedience were due; at Whose lips we were to question nothing, from Whose hand we were to submit to everything, in Whose heart-searching presence a lie was impossible, on Whose awful altar of truth life was a light offering; the soldier sworn, to die at his post; the subject ready, to seal his loyalty with life.

His hereditary faith was that masculine Calvinism which has been the religion of so

many strong intellects, of so many free nations, and of so many heroic hearts; the faith in a Supreme Will, unalterably just, which must conquer all wills, must be accepted, at whatever cost to reason or heart, must be obeyed, at whatever cost to heart or life; the faith which in men has combined as much of daring and duty; in women, of devoutness and heroism; in nations, of law and liberty, as any in the world.

Amice's faith was rather in the Supreme Love which must conquer all hearts.

Both met, and fulfilled each other's faith in that redeeming Cross where the Divine Love suffered to the utmost for man, and the human will gave itself to the utmost to God.

Both met and fulfilled each other's life in that lifelong service of the oppressed, to which they devoted themselves; every act and sacrifice of which, God, in giving them to each other, made for them, step after step, from light into fuller light, on and on, as we believe, for ever.

I cannot think or speak of that deep, perfect, ennobling love of theirs, except with the same gravity and reverence as I think of their religion. There were no misunderstandings, no fluctuations, no flashes of surprise in it. Their hearts were open all through to each other.

And at last, one morning in the winter before the Battle of Trafalgar, Madam Glanvil said to Amice, as Amice was rubbing her chilled feet by her bedroom fire (the old lady went out little now, and grew less arbitrarily deaf, and submitted sometimes to be a little petted and caressed), "I do not think Captain Godefroy has any wife or children, after all."

"I never thought he had, Granny," said Amice.

"I suppose, now, there is no help for it," Madam Glanvil rejoined; "and he may as well continue to come here as before." Which was Madam Glanvil's sanction to Amice's engagement.

And the next day she wore on her finger a chased gold ring, with a sapphire in it, which Captain Godefroy's mother had been used to wear on her wedding finger.

And Captain Godefroy ventured to salute the stately old lady's cheek; whereupon, rising from her high-backed chair (she still scorned an easy-chair), and taking his two hands in hers, she said, "You will understand her better, and be better to her than I have been. She is a good child, but a true Glanvil; perhaps not altogether the worse for that; certainly not the worse for being

something besides. I never thought to have given one of our house to a Frenchman. But, after all, we were all Norman once; and it was a chance that your forefathers did not come over with us, or even your father himself in that emigration of the six hundred only sixty years ago. If they had, or he had, there would have been no difficulty; and I do not know that we ought to let a chance like that keep you apart. At all events, I suppose it is too late," she concluded, with a little dry smile, "for an old woman's word to keep you apart now; you seem to have taken the matter into your own hands. So, I may as well do like the rest of the wise despots, pretend to command by willing what you will."

And so saying, she took Amice's hand also in hers, and held them together one moment, and then, not without some quivering of lips and tottering of limbs, but declining all assistance, she left them together, and went slowly up the old oak stairs alone to her chamber.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

MADAM GLANVIL never walked down that old oak staircase again. Often, afterwards, with the unreasonable self-reproach of love, when death has made love sacred, and unable any more to serve, she would blame herself for not insisting on helping her grandmother up the stairs that night.

"The first time for years and years I had not gone with her, first following as a child, and then, in after years, supporting her, and always waiting for the kiss at the door! Even during the year of our silence—('which was indeed my fault,' she would say, 'all my fault, all my pride, my ungenerous misunderstanding!') And not even to have seen her go up that last evening! In my selfish happiness, taking her at her word, when I ought to have distrusted and disobeyed. She would have been pleased. And I can never do anything to please her more."

Tender trifles of everyday life, little unnoticed habits of love, which at any moment may give a shattering shock to our inmost being, simply by being stopped! And I, not knowing yet the austere sincerity of grief, would vainly try to excuse and comfort her.

But Hervé Godefroy understood grief, and Amice, better; the truthfulness of her nature, and also the terrible truthfulness of sorrow. And he let her grieve, grieving with her. He knew that such pain cannot be stilled, that the wound must have its anguish, if it is not to mortify, and spread the touch of death throughout the whole being; that, so

the anguish may work itself into the whole heart, making it soft and deep and tender, patient and pitiful.

The very night of Amice's betrothal, the blow had come, that direct destruction of power, as if by the benumbing touch of an irresistible hand, without warning or pain, which we call a "stroke."

In the morning, Amice waited some time for her grandmother's appearance (Madam Glanvil having great scorn of aid in her toilet to the last, so that no one ventured to intrude on her privacy until she rang); until, at last she became alarmed, and rushing up the stairs, knocked softly at the chamber door.

An answer came, gentle and faint; and entering, she found her grandmother unable to move, although her speech was happily unaffected.

Dr. Kenton when summoned thought the case very serious; and he hinted that one of the gravest symptoms was the—"might he say?—unnatural gentleness and placability of the patient." But this Amice would not admit. She was persuaded, she told me, though she did not say so to Dr. Kenton, that this gentleness had been growing for some time, and that it was due not to paralysis, but to John Wesley's "Thoughts on Slavery," and to the use of the General Confession.

Yet she was not consistent with herself, for when I acquiesced, she burst into tears, and forgetting the moral source to which she had insisted on attributing Madam Glanvil's softened demeanour, she murmured, "Oh, if I could only hear Granny scold us all heartily once more!"

It was a vain wish.

Madam Glanvil retained to the last her objections to "scenes"—to anything melodramatic; otherwise, I believe, she would have found consolation in summoning all the household (including first of all Cato, and Cæsar, and Chloe), or, indeed, all Abbot's Weir around her bed, and telling them how hasty and proud she felt she had often been, and how, terrible as it had been at first to lie smitten and helpless,—she felt it happy, at last, to submit and lie low beneath the Hand that had brought her down.

But, as it was, she did nothing but be patient, and said little but to thank everyone for every little kindness—or now and then, when she thought herself alone, or alone with Amice, which was just the same—to thank God and ask Him not to let her be impatient—and often to breathe the name of Jesus, and say how much more He had

suffered; Himself once helpless as she was, unable to move hand or foot, but also unable to hide His face from the mocking crowd, while she could still move one arm,—and saw around her nothing but love and reverence.

She took no farewells, except only of poor Chloe. And that was the longest confession she made, of sin, or of faith. Taking Chloe's black hand with the one hand she could use, she looked at Amice and said:—

"You took good care of her. She will take care of you and yours. I am going where people are not divided into black and white, or into slave or free. All free there. Perhaps one day all free here. You will come, and are sure to be welcomed on the right hand. Forgive me for hasty words, and pray that He may forgive, and that I may not be told to depart. *Saviour of all, make us all free, that we may be free indeed.*"

To which poor Chloe could only reply by sobbing protestations of devotion and gratitude, and assurances that missis would get well, or be sure to have some high place in heaven, far above such as she, except for what the blessed Lord had done for all alike.

For Chloe had no objection at all to differences of glory in heaven, and could never quite get over a feeling that white people who, having all they could want, and being able to read and write, were humble enough to become Christians, must have some higher reward by-and-by, than black people, who being slaves, and having nothing that they wanted, naturally fled to the pitiful Saviour, as a hunted animal to its covert.

But when Chloe was led sobbing from the room, she said to Amice,—

"She will never live, missie! Poor dear missis! So like a lamb! so sweet and meek! She sees everything too dim, and too clear. No difference between black and white! Poor dear missis!—and asking me to pray for her! As if the dear Lord could not hear her better than me!—me who talk like a baby, and she who talks like a book."

"God gives the best things to the babes," Amice said; "and Jesus told us to be like the children. So, pray, Chloe! Pray!"

"Do you think, missie, poor Chloe has got to begin now to pray for poor dear missis? When missis called us lazy brutes and uglier still, need to pray, then! But now she so sweet, like a lamb! Nothing to ask, nothing to do, but praise the Lord night and day, and cry like a child."

Madam Glanvil spoke little, but once again she murmured, "*Thou Saviour of all, make us all free, that we may be free indeed.*"

Strangely the simple words struck to Amice's heart; they were the last in those "*Thoughts of John Wesley on slavery,*" which her grandmother had once thrown angrily into the fire.

So, all through that summer and autumn of 1805, the shadow of death lay on the old house at Court, and a high and brave spirit was slowly divesting itself of much that cannot be carried on that lonely journey; having already put away all sense of property, except as a provision for those who are left below, and now laying aside pride, and hard judgment, and much prejudice, that so, when the last step came, nothing might be left but to commend herself, bare and destitute, but redeemed and reconciled, confidently, into the Father's hands.

Following the slowly departing spirit along that silent solemn way, those in the old House had little thought to spare for the tumults in the world around; although, as winds and storms swept and wailed through the woods, and battered and cannonaded the old house with noisy display of force (so feeble compared with the silent foe within), all, except the sufferer, knew too well that a fiercer storm of war and peril was raging around England. The fleets of Nelson and Villeneuve were being tossed and driven by those autumnal gales.

Never, men said, since the Armada threatened England had her peril been as great as now.

Once more, as we all knew (and for the last time, which we knew not), Napoleon Buonaparte was menacing us on the shores of France, and with him the Grand Army, a hundred and thirty thousand men, with transports ready to convey them. "Give me the command of the Channel for twelve hours," he said, "*et l'Angleterre aura vécu.*" And, meantime, Admiral Villeneuve, who was to give him that command, and Nelson, who was to restrain Villeneuve, were wandering, we knew not where, on the high seas. We only knew that the French fleet had gone to the West Indies, and Nelson after it, with a far inferior force, which numerical inferiority, however, in itself gave us little uneasiness.

The first good news we received was that Villeneuve and his ships, driven by Nelson from the West Indies, and then missed by him, had been encountered by Sir Robert Calder, cruising in the Channel, with at least this result of victory, that the French fleets had to abandon the protection of the flotilla intended to transport the invaders, and the Emperor withdrew with the Grand Army to carry on

the war in Germany. For which service England, accustomed to naval victories more undeniable, administered in a lofty way rather rebuke than thanks to Sir Robert Calder.

Napoleon had withdrawn. But we were still in uncertainty as to the destination of the French and Spanish fleets. Nelson, shattered by his harassing pursuit of Villeneuve, was taking his last rest in his country house, when the news reached him that Villeneuve was safe, in a trap, at Cadiz. The irresistible call of patriotism touched his heart once more, he offered his services to the Admiralty, and, on the 22nd of September, arrived at Portsmouth, to take command of the fleet. Exultation and sorrow were strangely blent through England in that departure; as, a few weeks afterwards, when

"Home they brought her warrior, dead."

We heard how the people crowded around him on the shore, not idly gazing, but weeping around him, and even kneeling to implore blessings on him. So he sailed, in the *Victory*, taking his coffin with him, made out of the mast of *L'Orient*.

Two days afterwards Buonaparte left Paris for his campaign against Russia and Austria; and our statesmen began to feel stronger than for many years, believing that they had, at last, secured in the alliance recently concluded with Austria and Russia a powerful coalition against Napoleon. William Pitt was full of hope in this alliance; but the heart of England rested not so much on his alliances, as on himself; on himself, and on Nelson, her two mighty sons; little dreaming that neither of them was to be with us by the new year!

The times were perilous, indeed, for England; but with Pitt and Nelson to think and to fight for us, we felt the world no chaos. Rapidly indeed the thinking and the fighting were wearing out the heart and brain of the two on whom all England was leaning. But this, in those days, we knew not. We had our Atlas and our Hercules; and they did their work cheerily and gallantly, as the heroes do, making little of it; whilst we little thought how heavily the world they bore up was pressing on the shoulders, or that the labours were draining away the life.

On the 21st of October, early in the morning, the long watching by the death-bed at Court was over. The hush of awe had succeeded to the hush of anxious watchfulness.

Amice had sent the weary nurses and

servants to rest, and was left alone for awhile beside her dead.

She opened the window, and listened to the flow of the river, and the sweep of the wind through the autumnal woods, and the song of a few robins, calm, autumnal, full of a quiet content, all rapture of love and hope long past. It was the first time she had looked on the outer world for so long! And now it seemed such a long way off, "altogether the *other* world," she said. "*My* world was the spiritual world, the unseen, where *she* had gone, where the spirit really always dwells, as unseen always as hers now. She was *near*; and God, and our Lord, and the loving Spirit. The woods, the old familiar garden, even the singing birds, were *far away*. I felt it once before, in a measure, when I knelt beside Chloe in the church on the New Year's Eve of the century. The wind, the very sky, so pure and delicate in its morning tints, the birds, flowers, were material, mortal, corruptible. And she and I had always and had still what was incorruptible and faded not away. She has now that *only*. And in those first moments I felt her not *gone*, but brought nearer than ever."

It seemed a time when barriers were broken down, and veils rent from the top to the bottom. The world grew larger and nearer, the struggling, sinning, suffering world, with God loving it. And then two things came before her like visions. The French and English fleets, which Hervé Godefroy said he thought must ere long be joined in battle, the human beings, countrymen of hers and of his, fighting and struggling for the mastery, and dying there; and the slaves in the West Indies, men, and women, and children, too surely driven that very morning to their hard, unbroken work with threats and blows. What a chaos, what an arena of wild beasts it seemed! And Granny was at rest beyond it all. But was God really loving all? English and French, slaves and slaveholders? And was dying, indeed, to go and be with Him, with Christ, Who had seen the world and its battles, not from above only, but from *within*, from *beneath*—borne down in the battle, bruised and smitten?

If then God loved the world, those with Him must love the world, and if He could bear to look at it, having created it, and loved it so much as to give his Son for it; *so could they*.

What makes it possible for any of us to bear the sight of suffering in those dear to us? What could it be but *hope*? Hope of healing and purification through suffering; hope of rescue at any cost for the lost; hope

learned from Him who not only loved the world enough, through all its sinning, to give Himself for it, but hoped for it enough to deem the joy set before Him of saving it from its sin well worth the Cross?

They through hope able to be patient; we through patience learning to hope.

What then are they caring for?

In its measure for every conflict, it seemed to Amice, against wrong, and injustice, and oppression *without*.

Supremely, for every conflict against sin and selfishness *within*.

For this terrible European war, then, in its measure, as far as truth and justice are involved in it.

Surely, for the struggle, through English law, against the great wrong of slavery.

Supremely, for the struggle, through Christ's Gospel, against sin and despair *in the slave, and in the master*.

To this last she had consecrated herself five years before; when that high and prejudiced spirit, latterly so cleared and softened, had been the only obstacle to the service. To this, beside that lifeless form, she consecrated herself again, as, absolutely and without reserve what the softened and lowly spirit which but that morning had departed, must now be caring for most on earth. The only obstacle now in her path was the great love which made life so precious.

Should she let that great gift of God be a hindrance to obeying His call?

She made no vow, she only knelt beside the pale, placid, impassive face, and repeated once more the words she had uttered a few hours before, responded to, then, with that last gaze, that wistful gaze not fixed any longer on her, or on anything on earth.

"Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit; into Thy hands to guide, mould,—into Thy hands, absolutely, without reserve, to do with me what Thou wilt."

Then, rising, she went down-stairs.

It was daylight now, though not in the darkened house. She went into the dining-room, and at sight of the high old empty chair, daily life came back to her, with the new great blank, and the reality of the greater blank and sacrifice before her, yet. She had not been there long when Hervé Godefroy came.

And as he drew her to him, through her tears, she said at once, not daring to delay,—

"The only obstacle duty placed in the way of that great duty you and I have recognised so long is gone. Tell me, what shall I do? You come of a race long used

to give up its best to God. Strengthen me to do what I ought."

It was evidently no new effort to him to measure what that duty might cost.

For, holding both her hands in his, and pressing them against his heart, and looking down into her tearful eyes, he said,—

"The like sacrifices were required of us for generations. But with us it was the women that risked their dearest, and the men only themselves. I see now how much greater their sacrifice than ours."

"You see I must go," she said, "and soon."

Then she led him up into the chamber of death. For a few moments they stood together there. And then, as they stood again together by the fireside beside the stately old empty chair, he said,—

"I see, my love; I know. We will go, in spirit at least, not apart but together. Our life here is but a moment of our life. And, whatever the moment be, the *life* shall be together, for Him and with Him for ever."

They did not speak of her return. That hope was too precious, too precarious to utter.

And thenceforth their only thought was how to lighten the separation to each other.

So that first day of death passed at the old darkened house at Court; not altogether dark; a day of death, but a day of duty fulfilled, of victory won.

And, all the time, that terrible day of victory and of death was wearing away at Trafalgar.

There, Nelson, smitten to death for England, was still inspiring Englishmen to victory. Wounded to death by a shot from a ship his humanity had twice spared, supposing she had struck, his face lighted up through all his agony, as cheer after cheer from his crew announced that another French or Spanish ship had surrendered.

Duty, not glory, was the glorious mark he had set before his men; sacrifice of self for England, let England's recognition of the sacrifice be what it might.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE winter months that followed were dark indeed for us all;—in the world of England, in our little world at Abbot's Weir.

The news of the surrender of the Austrian General Mack at Ulm, with his thirty thousand, had reached England more than a fortnight before that of Nelson's victory at Trafalgar; and had struck the other great Englishman on whom we leaned, to the heart.

Trafalgar seemed to make it yet possible for him to live. He struggled hard for life, and was often sanguine of recovery. But from the tidings of the union of the Russian and Austrian armies with Napoleon's, and of the coalition of Austerlitz he never revived. The fatal news came to him in December, and in little more than a month—on the 23rd of January, 1803—the great Minister, William Pitt, lay dead in his house at Putney. He was scarcely fifty years old. His friend Mr. Wilberforce said, "He died of a broken heart,"—broken for love of England.

The last words we knew him to have uttered—"My country; oh, my country!"—rang like a death-wail throughout the land.

They had done their duty to the death, for England, those two Englishmen. Better loved, the country could never be again; nor more fearlessly and disinterestedly served.

We had great names still,—Collingwood, and Charles Fox; and one we knew not yet, fighting and making order for us, far away in India. But these seemed to most of us in those days of mourning but of the second rank.

The heroes were gone, we thought, as men have thought so often. We had good and brave men left, but those whom we had lost had been something more.

Amice was in London by the end of December. She had gone to stay at Clapham, with her cousins, the Beckford-Glanvils; the present possessors of Court; to consult about arrangements for the property, and about her expedition to the West Indies.

Thus by war, and death, and absence, our little circle had dwindled sadly.

Piers still in that French village near Claire's old home; and for many months not a word of tidings from or about him. Dick Fyford, wounded at Trafalgar, and slowly making his way home; Amice away preparing to go to the West Indies; and Captain Godfrey, certainly not present with us in spirit; there was great need that we should "*serrer les rangs*," thinned as they were, and press closer to each other, if we were to "press forward" at all. Which, while we live, has to be done, and therefore *can* be done—always.

The Sunday-school especially occupied us. My father himself had undertaken Piers's class of boys. He could not bear to see anything Piers had begun languish or fall. He went to his Sunday task very meekly, and with a strong sense of his poverty in didactic power and dogmatic definitions, but as regularly as he went to his daily business.

believe (so strong was the Paganism, lurking under our Christian faith) that we
II. N.S.

should all have felt it ominous if any machinery set in motion by Piers had stopped. Whatever was laid aside, everything connected with him must be made to prosper. How deeply it used to go to my heart to see the dear grey head bending down among the boys; the teacher being quite as much in awe of them as they of him!

My impression was, that, as with us of old, he did not directly inculcate much, but drew out what his scholars thought and felt, making them give shape to many a vague thought, and unfolding many a repressed feeling, leading them unconsciously to plough and water their own ground; and then dropping in seed; very little seed, and often unperceived in its sowing, but none the less taking root, springing up after many years.

And when he felt his poverty deepest, he had recourse to the "Pilgrim's Progress," or occasionally to portions of "Robinson Crusoe," which never failed to interest, and make them children together, teacher and taught.

Claire meanwhile prospered greatly with Amice's infant class.

Moreover, our Sunday-school began to *grow* in many directions; for one, in the direction originally foreseen by the dames. The instruction of the week had to be brought more up to the level of the instruction of the Sundays. And it was seriously in my father's contemplation that Abbot's Weir should have a week-day school on the Lancastrian system, combined with some hints from Pestalozzi.

Thus were the most desponding Cassandras among the Dames justified.

It was quite a serious battle. The French Reign of Terror was little more than a decade behind us. And my father was now proposing a measure even more revolutionary than any which had called forth accusations of sedition and atheism against Mrs. Hannah More. He proposed what she earnestly disclaimed, in a letter to one of her bishops. He actually proposed to teach the youth of Abbot's Weir—the youth of both sexes and all conditions—to *write*.

In vain Mrs. Danescombe warned, and Miss Felicity threatened. "The pen would banish the housemaid's broom, would supersede the spade, the plough, the needle. In the next generation there would be no more maid-servants, washerwomen, laundresses, or sempstresses."

"The men would write love-letters whilst the sheep were straying and the crops unsown; the maids would respond while the kettle was boiling over and the linen in rags. A deluge of correspondence would sweep

away all honest work, and level all social distinctions."

"Mrs. Danescombe and Miss Felicity might not live to see it—they trusted not—nor poor dear Mr. Danescombe, who had opened the dykes,—on him, charity might hope that day of ruin might not dawn. On the one hand, Voltaire and Tom Paine and Jean Jacques Rousseau pouring in, through the sacrilegious breach of reading; on the other, sedition and heresy, envy, malice, hatred, and all uncharitableness,—and 'love-making' pouring out through the breach of writing! Our poor soldiers and sailors might as well give up the contest. Napoleon's army might be recalled from Boulogne, and his fleets lost at Trafalgar. But for England all was over."

Such were some of the murmurs of that stream against which, nevertheless, we pulled, not without success, though certainly not with the result of such a deluge of knowledge and such an universal fury of mental activity as was apprehended.

Uncle Fyford was neutral. The Sunday-school had not been so Jacobinical as he had feared. Mr. Rabbidge was tolerant, but not encouraging. He had not seen any alarming passion for literature result from letters, as he had taught them.

Reuben's comment was reassuring.

"The good Lord," he said, "had mercifully sent the good corn through John Wesley and others, before He set folks on putting up the mills to grind it, or the ovens to bake it. The preaching had come before the teaching, the gospel before the spelling-book, the converting Spirit before the letter; and now the good words were there, the more schools there were to teach them, and the more pens to spread them, the better."

Never was intercourse with Loveday Benbow more strengthening and hopeful than during those years of many changes and many perils. War was to her altogether evil, inhuman, diabolical. To her all victories were darkened, as that one victory of Trafalgar was to all England, by the shadow of death. The roll of glory was written within and without, to her eyes, with lamentation, and mourning, and woe.

Self-sacrifice in dying she could understand to the utmost. Self-sacrifice resulting in killing she would scarcely place higher than a highwayman's generosity.

For Toussaint L'Ouverture starved in the dungeon at Joux, for Andrew Hofer, the patriot betrayed and shot, she could weep. Over Nelson's dying agonies, lighted up by

shouts of victory, she could only shudder. But throughout and underneath the great national conflicts, the old warfare was going on with which her life was identified. On this (however we might, any of us, be turned aside by personal anxieties, or by literal battles on sea or land) Loveday's heart and eyes were steadfastly fixed.

Once more the abolition of the slave-trade had been brought before the House of Commons; and once more, after a large majority on the previous year, it had been thrown out. Yet this defeat did not discourage the best informed among its supporters. At last, experienced eyes began to recognise an uncertainty and division in the enemy's ranks, as if they were on the point of breaking.

Not a few of the West Indian planters themselves began to waver; some, moved by the conviction of the injustice of the trade, and others by a persuasion of its impolicy. Those who were watching closely detected a thousand subtle symptoms that public opinion was veering round. Many hearts were touched to the deepest indignation. Many consciences were aroused, if not to "godly repentance," at least to wholesome fear. The very presence of the whirlwind and the earthquakes of war, of the immeasurable perils threatening the country on so many sides, were like the *guillotine en permanence* before the nations; and many began to ask what accursed thing we might be harbouring amongst us which might be blinding the eyes of our rulers, and weakening the arms of our soldiers.

The two great rival leaders, Pitt and Fox, were altogether one in their desire to redress this wrong. Pitt had supported it from the first; had (Mr. Clarkson said) been "steadfast to the anti-slavery cause from the beginning"; he had "vainly sought to enlist France for it in 1788," he had "fostered it in its infancy." Unable, Mr. Clarkson believed, from "insuperable difficulties which could not be mentioned," to do more; he had given the weight of his eloquence to it again and again, and had at least "kept it from falling."

And now that Pitt had died without effecting the abolition, Mr. Fox took up the work more untrammelled than his predecessor, and determined to make its accomplishment one of the foremost objects of his policy.

What Nelson's battles were to England, every turn of the anti-slavery debates in Parliament was to Loveday. She felt sure that the days when fifty thousand helpless captives could be kidnapped year by year in Africa

and as many of them as survived the horrors of the voyage sold to fresh cruelties in the West Indies, were drawing to a close.

The very fervency of hope with which she looked forward to the approaching deliverance seemed too much for her sensitive and feeble frame. We had noticed with anxiety the gradual failing of her strength, the increase of the worn, hollow look, the reluctant abandonment of one little work after another. We scarcely dared to speak of these things to each other, or to her.

Miss Felicity, absorbed in her brother, did not seem to observe these downward steps at all. Physical, like moral infirmity, was to her a stain on the family honour, to be ignored as far as possible in adults, and to be rigorously repressed in the young. She would have held it an insult for any one to inquire for her own health; she was doing strictly as she would have others do to her, in never prying into Loveday's. Having abandoned the struggle to make her well, the only remaining course was to let her alone, to be an invalid, in peace. If you could not fulfil your duty to your neighbour by being well, the less said about it the better.

Loveday had accepted the practice, and in part the theory. She never mentioned her own ailments; and I believe she looked on her weakness as a humiliation, and in some way a wrong, which she inflicted on her father and on her aunt. She accepted her couch of pain and helplessness as a very low place in the kingdom. She felt, I believe, that there must be some especially bad possibilities in her, from which God mercifully had saved her through chastenings which He never willingly inflicted; and she acted as if she could never do enough for her father and Miss Felicity and the world in general, to make up for being such a burden.

Once, I remember, she said to me, during those dark months of 1805:—

"How can I ever repay Aunt Felicity for all her care of my father, for doing all I ought to have done? My heart and mind have been free to take up the burden of the slaves. But she has been a slave all her life or me and mine. And that," she added, "is what makes true Church History so absolutely impossible. The deaths of martyrs and the deeds of philanthropists are seen and heard, and can be told; but who can tell the anguish of the homes from which the martyrs came, or the sacrifices of those whose quiet work at home made the public work possible?"

"Who, indeed," I said, "can count the

secret fountains? Many may speak of our Amice by-and-by. But what would Amice, or any of us, have been without this little couch and all we have learnt here?"

Which observation, to avoid controversy, I had to follow up instantly by presenting her with a letter from Amice.

Amice was more enthusiastic about Clapham than I expected; not certainly about her cousins, the Beckford-Glanvils, but about mine.

"It does one good all through," she wrote, "to be in such a wind of good words, and such a current of good work. It seems to me all so English, this Clapham world—patient, practical, conservative, reforming, impatient of abuses, patient of precedent in removing them. English in a very high sense, not perhaps the very highest—not exactly the English of Shakspeare, or Bacon, or Milton, or John Howe, or John Wesley; not blind to the value of earthly good things, not at all, yet really holding them not as owners but as stewards,—well-salaried stewards certainly, but faithful. The giving is large; almost large, I think, in proportion to the living. It is certainly not a case of 'no purse, and only one coat;' nor of John Wesley's two silver spoons, and out of an income of thirty pounds a year giving two, and out of an income of one hundred and twenty, ninety-two,—the private expenditure fixed, the *giving* only increasing. That is not the ratio. I do not say it should be. I confess also that sometimes the thousands of pounds subscribed do come out with a grand roll, as if they were equal to the 'two mites,' which, of course, they are not.

"Nor is the heroism so impressive, for instance, as that of the French Huguenots, or of St. Paul. The ships are too well built and victualled to be liable to frequent shipwreck, or to 'hungerings often.' Nor does the literature strike me as likely to be immortal, except perhaps some sayings of Mr. Cecil's. Everything strikes me as being on the second level. No Luther, no Latimer; no genius, no martyrdom; no perils, no glories; no frightful ice-chasms, no dazzling snowpeaks, no spontaneous paradises of flowers among the ice seas.

"After all, are not all second generations apt to be on the second level? Was it different with any of the Religious Orders? Was it different with the earliest Church? Must not the Church always be Protestant before it becomes Catholic? And becoming Catholic, in its midst must not new reformers have continually to rise and protest?"

"But, this granted, on *this second level* work

of the truest, conflict of the noblest, charity of the tenderest; a wide grasp of the evils of the world, and a determination to combat them; a close investigation into evils at home, and patient labour to remove them. Homes pure and tender, full of Christian activity, and of generous charity, and of able, effective helpfulness as could be.

"And your cousins, Bride, are delightful. My heart warms through every time I enter the house. Harriet, 'the Reformer,' has set her heart on accompanying me to the West Indies. And I believe Mr. Crichton will allow it.

"A good, healthy, habitable working zone of the Church it is to live in.

"And yet, and yet, good as I feel the atmosphere to be, and healthy, my ideal is set a little higher and a little lower. You know you always thought me *tropical*. I want a little more sun, and a little more frost; a little more aspiration in thought; a little more poverty in life; a little more up on the heights; a little more down among the sufferers.

"Well, we must have different zones.

"My Moravians, I think, will suit me. They are very 'still,' which gives space for the heart to rise in contemplation, and very 'plain,' which disencumbers for pilgrimage.

"A little band will, I believe, go out with me, a detachment of them, to my father's estate. Mr. Crichton is a little apprehensive as to the 'soundness' of my Moravians. Indeed, a certain section of Clapham does seem to me as if it would be better for a little more of Nelson's childish experience. '*What is fear? I never saw fear.*' It is afraid of so many things—of mysticism, and Methodism, and Moravians, and rationalism, and 'reason,' and science, and society. It sees so many 'dangerous' subjects. It is curious that on one point its courage is almost reckless. It is not at all afraid to encounter the peril of being rich. And yet, on the whole, there seems to me more in the New Testament about the peril of being rich than about the peril of any kind of curious opinions."

This was part of her letter to me. To Loveday she wrote:—

"The talking here is excellent and inspiring, but rather incessant. I shall be glad of a little 'stillness.' I want to listen, and look; and I want exceedingly not to be listened to and looked at so much, as if one were something wonderful. You have made me more than half a Quaker,

Loveday, my friend of friends. I want some 'silent meetings.' I want to exercise myself by a good pull against the stream. Here one seems borne on the current. And I am afraid of merely drifting.

"The hour of deliverance from the slave-trade is, they say, fast approaching. I shall scarcely see it in England. But you will. And I shall feel it among my 'black mankind.' And we shall rejoice together."

I noticed that Loveday's eyes moistened, and her voice quivered, as she read aloud that last sentence.

"We shall certainly all feel it somewhere," she said; "and we shall certainly rejoice together. God knows where. And He knows best."

And in February Amice wrote me another letter:—

"I have seen the two great funerals," she said; "the mourners, all England. Not solemnity only and reverent silence was there when Nelson was borne through the crowded streets to St. Paul's, but weeping, and sobbing, and bitter lamentation.

"And in Westminster Abbey, little more than a month afterwards, England had to lay the other son in whom she trusted. Mr. Wilberforce, the friend of years, bore the banner before the coffin of William Pitt.

"Both, Nelson and Pitt, so young! In the prime of life! Both worn out for England. What last words they have left echoing through every heart—

'My country, oh, my country!'

And the great motto—

'England expects every man to do his duty.'

What words to nerve and to inspire! *Country* and *duty*; and that '*expect*,' I delight in that. The very highest is but 'that which it was our duty to do.' What seed for heroic work in others!

"And yet, where are they, the heroes, now?

"Mr. Wilberforce is indeed a good soldier in a good fight. And I suppose the real heroes do have that easy, cheery look; not borne down by their labours, but bearing others up. And I suppose age after age has wailed the same death wail when its best were laid in the dust. In God's battles, I know, leaders cannot fail. But for England? Where can she look now?"

She did not know that among the mourners around the grave of Pitt was Arthur Wellesley, just returned from the Mahratta war, and his victories at Assay.

WORK OR PLAY?

“DO tell me,” said a child one day,
“Which God likes best—our work or
play?”

“Which God likes best? How can we
know?”

I answered. “Ask the flowers that grow,
In joy where'er their lot may fall,
Content to make earth sweet to all.
Ask of the happy birds that sing,
When busy building in the spring;
The little streams that fill the river,
Smiling, laughing, dancing ever.
Ask of the waves that sportive bear

Rich freighted ships from far and near.
Ask of the sun, whose smile is given
To every corner under Heaven.
And these I think will straightway tell
What service God approveth well.
A love like His, embracing all
Our fellow-creatures, great and small;
A joy that never waxeth dim,
And bringeth us anigh to Him;
A fervent soul, a deep content,
Whether on work or pleasure bent,
That so our life, a daily grace,
May make the world a happier place.”

M. BETHAM-EDWARDS.

IN REFORMATION TIMES:

Some Glimpses of Life at a Great Era.

BY THE AUTHOR OF “PAPERS FOR THOUGHTFUL GIRLS.”

PART III.—THE BARRETS.

CHAPTER I.—JOYCE BARRET'S RESOLUTION.



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stables, smithy, and barn. Behind the last lay the straw and poultry yards, and over against them, beyond the buildings on the opposite side, were the kitchen garden and the orchard. The outer court, where it was not intersected by the road to the house and offices, was covered by a thick carpet of short, fine turf, sheeted with silvery daisies, and here and there spotted with the pale or vivid gold of primroses, cowslips, and buttercups. Across the moat, bristling betimes with sprouting and budding flags, irises, myrtle-leaved forget-me-nots, and green of the meadow, floated—in a vague yet almost oppressively sweet combination—the perfume of violets, daffodils, and wall-flower, which bordered the flagged inner court.

The sound of the voices of servants came from the open windows of the house above. An under chorus of the babble of children, belonging to the labourers' cottages on the outskirts of the home-buildings, was heard, mingling with the lowing of cows and calves, the bleating of sheep and lambs, and the yelping of dogs; while the crowing of cocks, the cackling of hens, and the cawing of rooks from far and near, filled up the gamut of sound. Every tone was fitted in by Nature's fine adjustment, so that there was nothing harsh in the noise, neither was it so loud as to prevent a lark's song from piercing through and through, and rising as the lark rose, clear above all other sounds. The afternoon shadows were falling on fresh, cheerful life,

Chevehurst was the seat of a country squire, homely, substantial, and slightly fortified, with an outer gateway, and a bridge across a moat, terminating in a postern, which formed the entrance, by a flight of stairs, to an upper and inner court. The low, two-storied timber and plaster quadrangle of the house met the bank of the moat, while the irregular square of the outer court owed its framework to the

and on a surrounding landscape of rich English meadows, sunny pastures, fields of wheat and barley, and belts of waving wood.

Both the old woman and the young would have attracted attention anywhere; but here the two figures fell into the picture with fine effect. The girl wore a green taffetas gown, with a partlet and sleeves embroidered with silver, and a silver netted cap on her head, and turned a pale, restless face to her companion, an old woman, with a white kercher on her head, and a white apron over her comfortable red woollen petticoat. Her aged cheeks were scarlet, streaked with former rosinness, and her figure retained traces of buxomness, even though she rocked herself slightly backwards and forwards on a stout blackthorn stick, and employed her apron to wipe the tears from her round, twinkling eyes.

"It will all come right, dear heart," said she, soothing her young companion; "see an' it don't. An old woman says it to you; and you'll settle yoursen and make t' old squire and t' young happy—ay, and make up for poor Mistress Elisabeth's misfortunes."

"No, dame," answered Joyce Barret, with the weariness of despair. "I've seen enough of marriage. It is not well to marry."

"Eh! hush now, Mistress Joyce," protested the old housekeeper in dismay. "Here is a proper speech for a proper young lady," she added, recovering herself. "An you be not trying to fool an old servant? Besides, it is an unrighteous speech, having to do with the old papistical superstitions, which the king's majesty, the squire, and all honest men have abjured. Didn't a hear with my own ears t' new vicar—him as the squire brought to bear on Mistress Selby—God send her peace, poor soul—dispute with t' old clerk of Chevehurst, and show from Holy Scriptures, beyond mistake, that to forbid to marry was condemned in the Bible, and denounced as a latter-day sin?"

"Spare me," cried out Joyce piteously. "I'm sick of controversies. They have left us neither right nor wrong, neither earth nor heaven. In our parish, Master Nye and reformed doctrines prevail; in the next parish, the people hold by the old religion and the Abbot of Mosely. The very priests do not agree whether the holy sacraments be two or seven. What the one side in our Christian country upholds, the other bans, and strives to overthrow; and the side which is uppermost to-day may be lowest to-morrow. Good lack! What are simple, unlettered folk, who cannot weigh the proofs, to think or do?"

"They can obey, and listen to their masters," suggested Dame Wade readily.

"And change like the wind with some of them," alleged Joyce scornfully. "Let who will study the signs of the times, and trim their sails accordingly, so will not I. I consider that to be the most godless conduct of all. As to marriage, Dame, you know that with the Catholics it is a sacrament, yet every man or woman who has the heart and the purse can buy a dispensation, and put away the lawful wife or husband, and be free to marry another, who is not called unlawful. And with the Protestants marriage is no more than a contract, into which they can enter with all except the nearest kindred, without so much as saying 'By your leave' to Church or Churchman. But to what end this freedom, when, as Catholics pretend, Protestants break their marriage contracts with as much ease as they form them, and do not even need to buy a dispensation, but find it ready made to their hands? I say again, it is not well to marry, for what can a poor woman do to save herself from the double danger?"

"Belike she can wait and trust to her master, Mistress Joyce," repeated the puzzled Dame; but it was to the master on earth that the simple woman, with whom loyalty was a second religion, pointed, and not to the Master of all in his heaven of heavens.

Joyce Barret spoke rebelliously, but she was groping her way darkly to the foundation. She was a reverent, honest-hearted woman. It was because she loved the place where God's honour dwelt, and would fain have loved and respected her fellows, that she had been nearly driven from all her moorings by what she had witnessed of the cruel inconsistencies of jarring creeds and motives. This England, which men called merry, had been sorely visited. It was not with the sweating sickness alone, nor merely with the common dearth produced by the rage for laying down land in pastures and rabbit warrens, that some might grow rich from the high price of wool and the general use of fur in dress, while the yeomen and peasant class fell into grievous decay, and troops of beggars, relieved by the proscribed religious houses, and unable to take up any other occupation, became thieves when young and strong, and, when old and infirm, wasted and died as they camped—an army of grisly skeletons—by the highways, the ditches, the kennels of streets in towns. A conflict had been waged which had shaken men's convictions to the centre, and had sometimes displaced the old growth of belief without planting and nourishing a new one.

The Reformation in England was not like the Reformation in Scotland; working gradually outward from the Church itself, and upward from the people, leaving the Stuart sovereigns stranded indeed, but doing more than it left undone. Certainly there were gallant, devoted Reformers in the English Church from the time of Wycliffe downwards. Tyndale, Ridley, Latimer, Gilpin, and many another such, wrote and spoke in prophetic indignation and fervour. But the king and his government stepped in hastily, and, completing the work prematurely, did much the same as the Czar Peter when he would create a great city. They succeeded in producing a reformed labyrinth—a part wilderness—where there were to be breaks of waste land and humble buildings, at all stages of rough progress, side by side with elaborate ecclesiastical edifices, untouched and uncondemned by the measurer's plummet-line, or else brought to perfection speedily by an excess of fervour. A chaos, not a cosmos, was the result in many instances, and the minds of the people were apt to be confused by this flood of change without a corresponding flood of knowledge.

In no respect did the English Reformation work more irregularly and with more discord than in its dealings with the marriage laws—the laws with which, in the famous case of King Henry and Queen Katherine it had been so soon, so closely, and so unfortunately, as men judge, associated.

Roman Catholic Scotland had presented the same marriage difficulties and abuses as Roman Catholic England, springing out of what had been esteemed the superior sanctity of celibacy, and likewise from the grasping and arbitrary appropriation by the Church of no less than eight degrees of kindred within which no man or woman might marry lawfully, unless he or she procured an express permission from Rome. To man or woman discontented with his or her choice of a mate it had always been open to feel a late vocation for the cloister, or to discover that he or she had married in ignorance within the forbidden degrees, so that the marriage, unless renewed by the grant and confirmation of the Pope, became null and void. Public opinion, the interest of children, the voice of humanity, might afford a safeguard against this burdensome, and at the same time perilously fickle obligation. But there were miserable men and women in those days, who had been chief friends, and who separated conscientiously, and walked apart for the rest of their forlorn lives; and this happened both under the

Roman Catholic and the early Protestant régimes. Of the men and women who took the same liberty, there had been as plentiful examples in Roman Catholic Scotland as in England; but there was little abuse of the marriage laws in reformed Scotland. John Knox, with his brother clergy, sternly required the Earl and Countess of Argyle to do penance publicly at the date when their differences had gone no further than a temporary separation.

CHAPTER II.—THE PLUCKING OUT OF A RIGHT EYE.

AT Chevehurst, in the midst of rural peace and sweetness, and moderate prosperity, these tottering, crumbling marriage laws proved the hardly veiled skeleton—the consciousness of whose presence marred the joyousness of life's feast to the youngest and brightest of the guests. With their haunting dread and its agonizing realisation, never absent or suspended for a moment, they poisoned the very springs of existence.

Joyce Barret and her elder and half-sister Elisabeth were the orphan nieces of the squire of Chevehurst.

Hugh Barret, of Chevehurst, was an elderly man—a widower with one child, a son—the younger Hugh. The squire was a scheming, worldly man, who had made his own out of Church confiscations and charges of treason against his neighbours. His public morality, though it was not hypocritical, displayed the worst of the man. His private life showed the best of him. At home he was bluffly cordial and good-naturedly indulgent. He had been kind to the children committed to his care, and had been even warmly attached to the younger sister Joyce, who had come to him a baby to be dandled and fondled, still more fondly than his own motherless boy, Hugh, a year or two older. Elisabeth, eleven years Joyce's senior, had been married at the age of fifteen. Even then she was a grave and earnest young maid, like a pure, steadfast lily in her early fragrance. The marriage arranged by the squire was contracted with Master Selby, of Ditton, a young squire with a good inheritance of half-a-dozen farms, crowned by a mansion-house, within easy riding distance from Chevehurst.

Young Madam Selby did not at that time go and reside at Ditton, nor, as it happened, till a number of years had passed and many changes had occurred. The wedding had only taken place to make assurance doubly sure, for Master Selby was but two years older than his bride, and his education was

not completed. After a week of nuptial rejoicings at Chevehurst, he started on his foreign travels, leaving his young wife to the care of her uncle. Elisabeth was not loth to remain behind, for she knew very little of her bridegroom, beyond what the four or five years old child Joyce could appreciate of his gay surcoat, the jewelled haft of his dagger, the boyish tricks of swaggering and vaunting, and the manner in which he wore his feather-fringed bonnet. She must learn to know him better through the brief formal letters of the day, and be ready to welcome him home with the duty and affection of a true wife. But Elisabeth never had to welcome Morris Selby home. On his travels he was struck down by one of those fatal fever epidemics which so often passed over Europe, reaping a goodly harvest of men and women. Joyce was a little older and more intelligent, a quick prattling girl of seven, when to her wonder and chagrin, and somewhat to her indignation, she saw Elisabeth divested of her bright-coloured suits, girdles, chains, and diamond buttons, and habited in the long morning sloop, tippet, and barbe muffling the lower part of the face, which indicated the loss of the widow of eighteen years.

Elisabeth took that loss more to heart than may be easily conceived in this generation. A meditative, tender-hearted girl, she pondered on what might have been, and, identifying herself with the dead whose name she bore, lamented with simple pathos the blighting of her hopes. She spent a large portion of her private income, in masses and alms, bestowed in the name of the dead, while religious study and practice became one of the principal occupations of her retired and still youthful life.

In the course of nature Elisabeth outgrew her tender, dreamy sorrow, but not till it had so chastened and refined her that she had won something like a reputation for saintliness in her neighbourhood, and was regarded with enthusiastic reverential affection by Joyce, to whom she had been half a mother. This unreasoning, exaggerated spirit of homage had been disturbed by a second marriage, arranged for Elisabeth by her uncle, but not so entirely by his authority and influence this time that the woman did not concur in the union. The second bridegroom was a second Master Selby, of Ditton, so that Elisabeth had not again to change her name; she had but to recur to her old visions, in order to picture herself presiding in state and bounty at Ditton.

Julian Selby was the younger, delicate brother of Morris, and had been originally

destined for the Church; with regard to whom, it had been the will of Providence that he should survive and succeed to his hale and hearty elder brother. A judiciously framed appeal to his holiness the Pope had cancelled such obligations as Julian Selby had incurred, and altered his destination in life, eventually permitting him to marry, after his sovereign's fashion, his brother's widow, Elisabeth Selby. Elisabeth, the person who would have been most likely to have objected in the circumstances, was slow in rising to reason against the delusions of her Church—the Church of her first love. The squire of Chevehurst—who was the individual most mixed up with public affairs, and so most in the way of hearing the cautious whispers stealing abroad—did not choose to give ear or heed to a view which would overthrow long-cherished schemes of his own. Elisabeth should wed Julian Selby, and so finally accomplish the convenient alliance with Ditton, which had been balked before; and, if Julian died young, like his brother, which was not improbable, and Elisabeth, continuing childless, tarried in her second widowhood, her fortune would descend to the squire's favourite adopted daughter Joyce; who, by another dispensation from the Pope, should then marry her cousin Hugh, never forsake Chevehurst, but secure a kindly, cheery home for the provident squire's old age. So far he had his will, until even Joyce—a lively, affectionate girl of fourteen—learnt to laugh at her fanciful canonisation of Elisabeth, and declared that it was better she should go over to Ditton, and greet Elisabeth as her dear friend and equal; while she did not despise the brother's regard of her star-gazing, cythern-playing, herb and flower-loving, artist-born brother-in-law. He was dubbed half crazed, and was laughed at behind his back, by such stout, practical men as the old squire of Chevehurst; but there was so much craziness of a similar character scattered about in the world just then, that Julian Selby's oddness was tolerated and forgiven—generally attributed as it was to his bodily weakness, even by those who understood it least, for the sake of the young man's frankness and liberality.

Young Hugh, of Chevehurst, seemed also obligingly ready to gratify his father's wishes. He had been the companion and ally of his contemporary cousin Joyce since the boy had held mimic jousts for the girl's amusement, or the two had been taken as a special treat on their ponies, hunting and hawking with the squire. As they grew up they were thrown on each other for sympathy, in their secluded

life; and those early relations had inevitably merged into those of lovers. This was particularly the case with the lad. Joyce was coy and sensitive in temper, and, with all her fine qualities, was difficult to deal with.

Gradually, "the king's business" became openly spoken of, the sharp echoes of the contention rang even into the corners of country places. Other women besides poor brave Katherine of Arragon shuddered and grew pale for the consequences. At the same time a new element in the Church was fermenting—the lump was being leavened with

its first leavening. Heretical arguments, so long abhorred and visited with deadly penalties, were proved to have been only laid to sleep, not stifled or destroyed by such hideous forces as those of Smithfield. At a sign, a word, these dragons' teeth sprang up armed men on every side, openly acknowledged and received as the deliverances of reverent councils. "Mysteries" played on every village green, turned the unapproachable mummeries and abuses of centuries into open ridicule. The English translations of the Bible, at which men had been working in secret from



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the time of St. Cuthbert, and for which they had been hunted and slain at home and abroad, were authoritatively owned and privileged. Verily the good news which had been spoken in the ear was proclaimed upon the house-top. A fresh and more perfect translation of the Bible, to which one of the king's earned young daughters, Princess Mary, had contributed her far from mean Greek scholarship, was in preparation. For the present, English Bibles, by the king's orders, were to lie open in every church within the realm, only they were to be fastened by a chain to

the reading-desk, because of their preciousness.

Think what was the state of England then, what the keen excitement experienced, the bewitching transition effected, when the Bible was offered as a new book, at the same time that it was held to be a divine revelation, to all except the handful of learned men who had read it in the original or in the Vulgate. The mass of men thought of it unquestioningly as their title-deed and chart to salvation, and here was it for the first time put into their hands and exposed, without reservation, to

their close scrutiny and independent judgment.

All that such a right royal, noble, and faithful action (however much or little it might originate in state craft and human passion) could do was done in undermining for ever the monstrous tissue of casuistry, concealment, and false assumption. But men do not digest great truths in the hour in which they are presented to them; and the bonds of ignorance and superstition, like the bonds of love, are hard to loose. Still, enough of light had flashed in on people's eyes to make men and women in a very considerable number throughout the country renounce much of the old faith, embracing instead much of the new. Among those more than half Protestants were the Barrets and Selbys without an exception, unless it were the old squire, who was not behind in adopting Protestantism, but had adopted it from his earthly point of interest and to serve his own purposes. At the same time weighing the spiritual state of the man as nearly as one dares, the squire would have more fitly remained a Catholic; for with all honour to Catholics without guile who look for the coming of the Lord along with all true Israelites, it does seem that a thorough sadducee such as the squire was, belonged by right to a Church which claims most loudly an expedient confession and profession—sincere or insincere—and makes every allowance for worldliness in an indifferent arguer but a polite giver.

With the squire's Protestantism came a strange temptation. It chanced about the same epoch, by two unexpected deaths occurring in rapid succession, that Elisabeth Selby inherited an estate of many profitable acres in Wiltshire. A pity it was, it struck the squire then, that she had thrown herself away—he did not say to himself at his express instigation and with his entire consent—on two such mean squires, by comparison, as the Selbys of Ditton. Had she been single, or even widowed still, she might have contracted a much higher and more powerful alliance, and her original portion, enriched by this new estate of Rokeham, would have descended, and without fail, to Joyce and Hugh. Why, the last marriage contract was not a very sure one, if the king and his advisers had the rights on 't. He—the squire—might well know that, since he had taken enough trouble to keep such idle, troublesome considerations out of sight at the time, especially in putting them past Elisabeth. He might have been better employed, as it now seemed, but he should take no such pains in future. Nay,

other people had consciences as well as the king, and he might begin to question whether, as the Protestant religion bade fair to be established throughout the kingdom, he did right to let his niece Elisabeth continue in the dark as to the doubtful legality of her marriage. Poor soul, it might break her heart and shame her into the dust to be enlightened and loosed from vows which had never been binding; still the truth was the truth, and ought to be told before more harm was wrought. The squire would consult the new vicar, who was a stringent reformer, and very zealous in the promotion of his opinions. Master Nye would rather enjoy an opportunity of showing how clean his fresh broom would sweep. If necessary, the squire would set Master Nye to open Elisabeth's eyes, to remonstrate with and exhort her, comforting himself that no reflection could rest on him.

Thus it came to pass that Master Nye went boldly to Ditton, where a happy and united household had dwelt in honour, peace, and love for half a dozen years, and launched a thunderbolt into the midst of the serenity and sunshine, by speaking brief words, to the couple who in their very childishness were all in all to each other—"it is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's widow for thy wife; it is not lawful for thee to have thy dead husband's brother for thy husband."

Julian Selby, peaceful and delicate student though he was, resisted the mandate furiously. Elisabeth, serious, earnest woman as she had always been, over whom the shadow of the coming woe had fallen, suffered the sentence to fall and rest on her heart like lead, and to pierce her like an arrow. She writhed for a time under the burden and the torture, and then sought respite, womanlike, in submission. She consented to go forth from the house of him who was decreed not her husband, in order to return to her maiden home with her uncle.

The master of Ditton, sick and sore in heart, had gone to London to take counsel there; and the result had been that he was compelled to send Elisabeth word that he could not get redress, or find a Protestant prelate who, in the face of the judgment which had divorced Queen Katherine, and proclaimed Queen Anne, to cancel or contradict Master Nye's declaration.

After this sorrowful avowal Master Selby could no longer oppose his sister-in-law's departure, should she desire it. Therefore it was arranged, to save a painful scene to both, that Mistress Selby should quit Ditton while its master was yet absent, and repair to

Chevehurst. It was for this sorrowful arrival that Joyce Barret and Dame Wade watched. The old squire was intentionally from home that afternoon; but his son had ridden over to give a kinsman's countenance and support to that of the serving-maid and the yeoman who formed Elisabeth's escort.

"There they be," cried Dame Wade at last, as Joyce stood stiffened into stony silence by the spectacle; and then the old woman hurriedly recollected that she had stores to give out and furnishings to arrange; and so left Joyce alone to endure the meeting.

"I shall remember it though I live a hundred years," protested the girl, clenching her hands tight. "I'd liefer have been disgraced myself and led out to one of the blocks, which seem to stand handy as anvils on wheels, nowadays. I should go hide myself in the blackest dungeon, and refuse to show face again, but it would do no good; I should but fail her, my sister, my half mother. How fair and tender I remember her, and how happy they were at Ditton, in spite of Julian Selby's sickliness! Who will minister to his wants and wait on his every look now? He hath lost the fondest, most faithful companion, the best wife man ever owned!"

Joyce's exclamation was provoked by seeing Elisabeth close at hand, riding up to the gateway clad in deep mourning—the very stop, tippet, and barbe, as she fancied, which she could dimly remember she put on her sister when Elisabeth's girlish bloom was just a little nipped in the bud for the first Master Selby, to whom she had had the evil fortune to be allied. Did Elisabeth remember him, and that far away parting, when, wan as a ghost, and with all beauty, save the beauty of a noble and meek heart, dragged and crushed out of her haggard face, she rode within the gateway?

Joyce could not stop to ask. She had settled with herself, after the first startled surprise, that it was only too fitting that Elisabeth should come back to them in mourning. If she could have come in sack-cloth and ashes, it would have been still more appropriate to her who was again a widow, quite as much as if she wore her second weeds for Julian Selby.

The last time that Joyce had seen her sister, Elisabeth had worn her wife's bright-coloured rich silken gowns, the glittering wifely girdle with its keys, and a snowy lace curch, though she had worn them with a heavy heart. But whatever trappings she had laid aside, whatever grievance she had accepted, she was the same Elisabeth, only a

thousand times dearer to Joyce, who was burning to fight her sister's battles with the world and the Church, terribly tempted to arraign Providence on her behalf, and resolute to abide by her and suffer with her.

So it happened that Joyce vouchsafed no token to her cousin Hugh, but tartly ignored his presence, while he, in soberest suit of russet, was looking wistfully for some kindlier sign as a reward for his execution of a distressful errand.

Now, it is well when girls like Joyce Barret can keep their minds in such a well-balanced state that, even in the midst of suffering of kindred and friends, they are exempt from prejudice, passion, and injustice. But it is beautiful also to see a sisterly devotion so strong that it can rise above the demand of ties and loves that are generally declared to be more absorbing to woman's heart. And even in the rough, old days of King Hal, a girl like Joyce Barret could be so moved by her sister's wrongs that she could cease to have eyes or heart for her lover, blameless though he might be. Perhaps better so, even to the doing him some slight despite, than that she should be so engrossed with his attractions as to be unable to think of her sister's broken heart and clouded estate. Yes, and to the credit of woman's nature, the fact was not unnatural. Joyce at that moment loved her faded, fainting sister to the jealous exclusion from her notice of her hearty young lover, with his life stretching far in fair promise before him.

"Dear heart, it is kind of you to be meeting me," said Elisabeth, trying to steady her voice and to reciprocate the love which was brimming over from Joyce's eyes.

"I should have come farther, thou knowest, Elisabeth, if I had been let know the time of starting," said Joyce in a low tone.

"It is best as it is," answered Elisabeth briefly. "Well, the old place looks as usual," she added languidly, glancing round as if she had half-expected some great change, and as if she were striving to speak indifferently. "The weather is fine for the season, and your grass is green and forward. I have heard from my cousin Hugh how my uncle fares, and since you are also well, I have only to inquire after Dame Wade and her calves, lambs, and chickens. Oh! Joyce, Joyce, what have I to do with such simple, happy things?" she suddenly broke off, bursting into a stifled cry of anguish, while she clung to her sister's arm as they crossed the bridge and entered the quadrangle.

The strain had been too much for her, or

some quick, keen remembrance had suddenly confronted her. She had recalled in a flash how, on her last visit to Chevehurst, her husband had lifted her from the saddle and bade her note the small changes, and compare the look of autumn at Chevehurst with its look at their own home at Ditton.

Her mind had strayed in a second back to some episode of her one true wooing, while still half girl; the spring wallflowers, daffodils,

and violets had smelt as now, when she had stolen lightly to the postern to welcome Julian Selby, and they had lingered without on the bushy bank of the moat till she had chid him for tarrying in the humid air, and refused to stay and listen longer to the songs of the birds, and he had gone in gaily with his hands full of daisies, as if he had been a little child, and not a curiously accomplished gentleman.

ILLUSTRATION OF THE BIBLE FROM ANCIENT INSCRIPTIONS.

By H. B. TRISTRAM, F.R.S.

IT has sometimes been remarked, in a tone of faintly disguised disparagement, that all the sciences, save that of theology, are progressive; that it alone is stationary and left behind in the advance of human knowledge, that it has no new facts to discover, no new relations to establish, nor any old ones to place on a new basis. The students of matter, in like manner, have not spared the sister science of metaphysics her full share of depreciation on similar grounds.

So far as theology is interpreted to comprise only the study of the dogmas laid down and accepted as of divine origin, the charge is in some sense true. But it is only true of those dogmas, in the same sense that the definitions, axioms, and postulates are immutable and fixed bases in mathematics; and that the great "laws," such as of gravitation, are fixed and accepted as immutable by every student of physical science. But just as the problems which the mathematician has to solve from his axioms and definitions are inexhaustible; just as the application of the great laws of nature are infinite, so the student of theology is no dull plodder on some familiar well-trodden path—he has no wearisome and unreasonable formula to recite again and again, beyond which his thoughts must not venture to stray; he is prepared to work out any problem of humanity from the dogmas or definitions which he accepts. He accepts them as divine and immutable, because he is convinced that their origin is divine, and that as such they must be in their nature immutable spiritual laws. But the theologian must be prepared to defend the claim of the divine law from attacks on each side. He must be prepared to prove them antecedently reasonable and probable;

and not less to submit their claims of authority to the keenest and most minute scrutiny. And this scrutiny is now on one side, now on another.

The assaults on Revelation have varied in every age—each part of the line of defence has been attacked in turn, and frequently an oft-foiled assault has been repeated with new arms and under new conditions. Hence of all branches of theology the study of the evidences has been the most progressive. From the days of the Neoplatonists and Celsus, to those of the modern materialist and the positivist, the front of the defence has continually varied with that of the attack. We might almost say that to meet the assaults of to-day with the weapons of the last century were as futile as to furbish up the antiquated blunderbuss against the newest rifle.

And need there is none for confining ourselves to old weapons, where the system of warfare has changed. Each department of modern science and investigation has, we fearlessly assert, supplied means more liberally to the defenders than the assailants; and it cannot with truth be maintained, as in the struggle between marine artillery and armour-proof, that the attack always soon overtakes the defence.

Especially is this true of the line of historical evidence, the very line on which a superficial observer might have supposed that least advance could have been made. But historical analysis, historical criticism, and historical research have become almost new sciences since Gibbon relegated the annalists of the last century to oblivion. It is difficult so far to abstract ourselves from the historical knowledge which has been ex-

homed within the last fifty years, as to recognise the immense advance made in the historical illustration of the Old Testament narrative. We may briefly summarise a few of the corroborations of the Jewish records which have been brought to light within the lifetime of the present generation.

Let us remember that fifty years since there was scarcely a single contemporary illustration of any event recorded in the Old Testament, excepting one disputed Egyptian inscription. Such has been the progress of archaeological discovery that now there is scarcely an instance in which the Jewish history impinges on that of the neighbouring nations, which is not in some degree illustrated by contemporary inscriptions, or by the newly-discovered records of Egypt, Assyria, Chaldæa, and Persia. These corroborative records extend from the very earliest political event after the birth of Abraham, recorded in Genesis, down to the end of the latest of the historical books.

Nor is it merely or chiefly in the way of direct confirmation of facts recorded that historical evidence has advanced, but principally in the incidental illustrations of expressions, customs, rites, public life, and domestic manners, which our increased knowledge of the inner and outer life of the great nations of the Nile and the Euphrates affords us. In tracing the minute details of Egyptian life, the light of the antiquary's torch increases, as the darkness of the ruins among which he gropes becomes more intense; while with no uncertain voice the monuments of Assyria witness for the truth of the Bible since her history has been disinterred from her palaces, and her theology and poetry been restored from the mutilated walls of her temples.

Since the labours of the Rawlinsons, Layard, and their followers, we hear no longer of the "unhistoric character" of the records of the kings of Israel and Judah. We must not speculate how much further back the charge of "unhistoric character" may have to be relegated, when Mr. Smith shall have completed his excavations, and his cylinders shall have been deciphered.

To such an extent already have contemporary records been recovered, that instead of possessing merely two or three incidental allusions in Herodotus, we are now able to identify, either certainly or with great probability, with some known character in profane history, every monarch or great prince, with two exceptions, whether Assyrian, Chaldæan, or Persian, whose name occurs in the

Bible from the time of Solomon downwards.

To commence with Daniel. The historical character of that book has been severely questioned, and on no ground more strongly than because the last king of Babylon has a false name given him by Daniel, and that "Belshazzar" nowhere occurs in profane historians. Three ancient historians—Berosus, Herodotus, and Ptolemy—who all lived centuries after the event, give Nabonadius, also called Labynetus, as the last native king of Babylon. Berosus tells us that Nabonadius, after the capture of Babylon, was taken prisoner in Borsippa, a town which he was defending against the Persians, and that he was not put to death. The differences seemed irreconcilable, until nineteen years ago, when several clay cylinders were discovered among the ruins on the Euphrates, and both Sir H. Rawlinson and Oppert deciphered on different cylinders the name of Bel-shar-ezer, the son of Nabonadius, and associated with him in the government. Bel-shar-ezer was governing as deputy in Babylon, and was slain, while his father outside escaped. Here the whole difficulty is suddenly solved in the simplest manner.

But Nabonadius was not of the royal stock of Nebuchadnezzar. How then could Belshazzar claim to be son of the great king of Babylon? This is easily explained by the eastern custom, which we may be sure the usurper Nabonadius would follow, of marrying into the blood royal, and so giving his children a double claim to his succession—a custom often followed since, as by the English Normans, and the Lancastrians. Belshazzar is spoken of as the son of Nebuchadnezzar by the Hebrew idiom, which has no word for grandfather and grandson, but speaks of all in the direct line as father and sons. Jacob speaks of Abraham as his father, Levi is called the father of Aaron, Saul is the father of Mephibosheth, David is the father of Asa and of Josiah. In fact the examples of the idiom are not soon to be reckoned up.

A curious incidental illustration of the fact first revealed by the cylinders, is the promise made by Belshazzar, that whoever interpreted the handwriting on the wall should be made the *third* in the kingdom. Why should he not have said *second*, as is proposed in other similar cases, as by Pharaoh, Ahasuerus, and Nebuchadnezzar? Simply because he was only *second* himself, reigning as the colleague and deputy of his father.

One other probable illustration, out of the

many recently exhumed, bearing on the history of Daniel, may be adduced. No one but the prophet has related the seven years' insanity of Nebuchadnezzar. There is nothing to surprise us in this fact, when we bear in mind the fragmentary character of our Assyrian history, and also that during such a period there was not likely to be any great foreign enterprise undertaken which would mark the epoch in contemporary annals. Under an absolute monarchy, it would probably be a period of political paralysis. But Sir H. Rawlinson has deciphered a partially mutilated inscription, which can scarcely be explained, unless as referring to this portion of the king's life. It is translated thus :—

"Four years the seat of my kingdom in the city in which did not rejoice my heart. In all my dominions I did not build a high place of power, the precious treasures of my kingdom I did not lay up. In Babylon, buildings for myself, and for the honour of my kingdom, I did not lay out. In the worship of Merodach, the joy of my heart, in Babylon the city of his sovereignty and the seat of my empire, I did not sing his praises, and I did not furnish his altars, nor did I clear out the canals."

More of a similar character follows. Professor Rawlinson observes on this, that the whole range of cuneiform literature presents no similar instance of a king putting on record his own inaction. The inscription and the inspired record would certainly seem here to illustrate each other, and to explain what is otherwise unintelligible.

There is less to be found in recently discovered inscriptions which casts new light on the history of the Jews under the Persian rule, as related in Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther, since their historical statements present little to which sceptical criticism could take exception. Of the first six kings of Persia, five are mentioned by Ezra, the fifth in order, Xerxes, who from internal evidence would seem to be the Ahasuerus of Esther, being omitted, from the simple fact that none of the events there recorded occurred in his reign. The Hebrew for Ahasuerus is the exact equivalent of the Persian name which the Greeks rendered by Xerxes. The second and the third in the list of Herodotus and other writers, Cambyses and Smerdis, answer to the Ahasuerus and Artaxerxes of Ezra. Even in Greek authors these Persian kings have different names.

We know that Cyrus was an earnest Zoroastrian, and as such would have great sympathy with the Jews and their pure worship, being himself a monotheist and an enemy of idolatry. His decree for the

rebuilding of the temple, his surrender of the sacred vessels, and his grant of money from the treasury to defray the costs, are thus in accordance with his character. The third king, Artaxerxes, the usurper Smerdis, interrupts the building of the temple, he being a Magian, and as such the bitter opponent of the creed of Zoroaster. Under Darius, however, the work is speedily resumed, and he confirms the decree of Cyrus. Darius, we know from history, to have been a jealous disciple of the old Persian faith of Zoroaster, which at once explains his action. But we find an interesting corroboration of the record of Ezra in an inscription of his, in which he informs us, that he began his reign by "rebuilding the temples which the Magian (Smerdis or Artaxerxes) had destroyed, and restoring the religious chants, and the worship which he had abolished." "As it was before, so I arranged it." The frequent mention of the "Lord of heaven," the one Supreme Being, and the strongly religious character which pervades the decrees of all these Persian monarchs, excepting the Magian Smerdis, is abundantly illustrated by the Persian cuneiform inscriptions. The one supreme God, "Ormazd," is repeatedly mentioned in them, and to his providence is ascribed all the power of the king, and every success which he has achieved. The inscription usually begins with an ascription of praise to "the great God who gave both earth and heaven to mankind."*

When, following up the stream of Jewish history, we go back to the period of the kings of Israel and Judah, the cuneiform records of the East are rich indeed in corroborations and illustrations. They crowd upon us, and afford us confirmatory proof of almost every event in the history upon the testimony of contemporary and competent witnesses. In the sacred writings of this period, we find mention of six kings of

* The ancient religion of Persia, as reformed by Zoroaster, was the purest of all the faiths of the old world, or perhaps we should rather say, the least corrupted from the simplicity of patriarchal tradition. Zoroaster held that there was one supreme independent Being, and under him two principles or angels, one of light, the other of darkness, between whom there will be to the end of the world a perpetual struggle, when the angel of light and his followers shall go into a world of everlasting light and happiness, while the angel of darkness and his disciples shall be punished in a world of everlasting darkness. The Supreme Being gave the holy fire from heaven as the true Shechinah, and his followers worshipped *forwards* this and the rising sun. The sacred fire was never extinguished, and never blown upon by the breath; it was fed only with clean wood, and fanned only by pouring on oil and by blasts from the open air. Zoroaster introduced tithes, and regulated the order and support of the priesthood very much after the system of the Mosaic law. It has been conjectured that there were two Zoroasters, one the pre-historic founder, whose simplicity of doctrine and worship had in course of ages been much corrupted by the Magi; the other, the great reformer and purifier, not very long before the time of Cyrus.

Assyria,—Pul, Tiglath-Pileser, Shalmaneser, Sargon, Sennacherib, and Esarhaddon; of four Egyptian kings,—Shishak, So, Pharaoh Necho, and Pharaoh Hophra; and of three Babylonians,—Merodach-Baladan, Nebuchadnezzar, and Evil Merodach.

Of the last Babylonian kings, we have not yet found cylinders or contemporary inscriptions. They are, however, the less necessary, as the scriptural records of their time are not open to cavil, and are abundantly illustrated and corroborated by profane writers. But of the earlier king Merodach-Baladan, from whom Hezekiah received letters and a present, and to whose ambassadors he ostentatiously exhibited his treasure, the name could scarcely be identified under the form in which it had been handed down. Here the inscriptions again come to our aid. We find Sargon recording his victories over Marduk-val-iddan, King of Babylon. This king had two reigns, both recorded in the inscriptions, before and after the transitory successes of Assyria. The chronology exactly agrees with that of Scripture, and we can easily perceive the politic scheme of Baladan, who overpowered, and still threatened, by the rising power of Assyria, was anxious to secure alliances westward with Judah and Egypt, to prevent the absorption of all western Asia. Finally, however, he was, as we learn from the inscriptions, conquered and deposed by Sargon, and Babylonia reduced to a province.

Of the Assyrian kings, to commence from the latest mentioned, Manasseh is stated to have been taken captive to Babylon by the king of Assyria. This must have been Esarhaddon, son of Sennacherib. But it would be perplexing why or how a king of Assyria should have a state prisoner brought to *Babylon*, did we not discover again from the inscribed bricks of the Euphrates Valley, that Esarhaddon alone of the Assyrian kings resided there in person, and did not govern the great city by a deputy. The bricks tell us that he repaired temples and built himself a palace there. In another inscription Esarhaddon actually names Manasseh, king of Judah, among the subject princes who provided him with workmen for the building and decorating of his palaces.

Of none of the Assyrian monarchs have we such full accounts in Scripture as of Sennacherib, the father and predecessor of Esarhaddon, and of no one of them has the story as yet been so fully told as in his own records of stone, the famous discoveries of Layard at Nineveh. We had, indeed, in

Herodotus, the story he received from the Egyptian priests, of the miraculous destruction of his army at night through myriads of mice gnawing their bowstrings, an evident distortion of the Scripture narrative. But now we have his campaigns even more fully told by himself than by Isaiah. These tablets in the British Museum are perhaps the most familiar contemporary illustrations of Holy Writ, and yet, we must remember, they are the discoveries of yesterday. The two invasions of Sennacherib are spoken of. In neither of them was Judah, but Egypt, the chief object of attack; but Hezekiah, by his friendship with the Pharaohs, drew down on himself the vengeance of the Assyrian. Sennacherib thus records his first campaign :

“And because Hezekiah, king of Judah, would not submit to my yoke, I came up against him, and by force of arms, and by the might of my power, I took forty-six of his strong fenced cities, and of the smaller towns which were scattered about, I took and plundered a countless number. And from these places I captured and carried off as spoil two hundred thousand one hundred and fifty people, old and young, male and female, together with horses and mares, asses and camels, oxen and sheep, a countless multitude. And Hezekiah himself I shut up in Jerusalem, his capital city, like a bird in a cage, building towers round the city to hem him in, and raising banks of earth against the gates, so as to prevent escape. . . . Thus, upon this Hezekiah there fell the fear of the power of my arms, and he sent out to me the chiefs and the elders of Jerusalem, with thirty talents of gold, and eight hundred talents of silver, and divers treasures, a rich and immense booty. . . . All these things were brought to me at Nineveh, the seat of my government, Hezekiah having sent them by way of tribute, and as a token of his submission to my power.”

We have here a simple amplification of 2 Kings xviii. 13—16.

There is but one slight discrepancy—eight hundred talents of silver instead of three hundred. The conqueror may have exaggerated, or he may have counted in all the precious metal given, the vessels and ornaments, as well as the money, while the sacred writer speaks only of the tribute-money. But while thus full on the subject of his first expedition, the Assyrian annals say nothing of his second. This, as it resulted in failure, is ignored; for these engraved tablets never are known to record the nation's humiliations; nor can we conceive it probable that they should. In like manner no Assyrian inscription records the death of a king. The hiatus is, however, easily supplied by the Egyptian records, which have preserved it, and its truth is thus corroborated by the very silence of Nineveh on the period.

Of Sargon, the father of Sennacherib, all

that Scripture has to say directly is comprised in a single verse of Isaiah (xx. 1), "In the year that Tartan came unto Ashdod (when Sargon, king of Assyria, sent him) and fought against Ashdod and took it." No other writers had mentioned Sargon, and critics had variously identified him with Shalmaneser, Sennacherib, and Esarhaddon. But now come in the Assyrian inscriptions, and while for two thousand five hundred years the record of Isaiah had stood alone and unsupported, we find at last that Sargon was a real and distinct king of Assyria, the successor of Shalmaneser and the father of Sennacherib. We find that he is not only the captor of Ashdod, but that he is the unnamed king of Assyria of 2 Kings xvii., xviii., who took Samaria and carried Israel into captivity, replacing them by the men of Cuthah, Ava, Hamath, and Sepharvaim, while he planted Israel in Halah, Habor, and the cities of the Medes. He tells us in his inscriptions that he annexed the towns of Media to Assyria, and that he established fortified posts there in new situations. He also records his capture of Ashdod, and adds that he re-peopled it with captives from the extreme east, while elsewhere he mentions Media as the extreme east of his dominions. It was he too who overthrew Merodach-Baladan, and re-conquered Babylon after its seventy years of independence. He too was the first Assyrian general who defeated Egypt, and shook its supremacy over its neighbours, and his victories were only the precursors of the final conquest of that most ancient of states by the lords of the valley of the Euphrates. This, however, is scarcely referred to in Scripture. He was the builder of the Khorsabad palace, the mine where so many Biblical illustrations have been dug. He restored the palace of Sardanapalus at Calah, and repaired the fortifications of Nineveh.

From Sargon we ascend to his predecessor Shalmaneser, whose sceptre the usurper seized, and whose monuments he seems to have diligently effaced. Enough, however, is left to illustrate the Bible story, which mentions him as having twice invaded Israel, and having besieged Samaria for two years. We find Hoshea, king of Israel, named on one of his inscriptions, and Sargon claims that he took Samaria in his *first* year. It may have been taken by Shalmaneser, when Sargon had already seized his sceptre at Nineveh, and it is to be noticed that the book of Kings does

not give the name of the king who actually took the capital.

Of Tiglath-Pileser, the predecessor of Shalmaneser, we have the fullest accounts from his own cylinders. The great cylinder inscription of Tiglath-Pileser is one of the most complete which have been exhumed, and covers a far more extensive field both of history and geography than is touched upon in the Jewish annals. These mention his two invasions of Israel; the first when he took Gilead, Galilee, Naphtali, and all the northern towns, and carried them captive; in the second, when he came as the ally of Ahaz, crushed Pekah, king of Israel, took Damascus, and slew Rezin, its king. His own cylinders illustrate every detail. He relates how in his sixth year he defeated the vast army of Azariah, king of Judah. After his twelfth year he tells us he made a campaign against Pekah, king of Samaria, and Rezin of Damascus, whom he besieged for two years, and at length, when he had taken him, put him to death, while he only took from Pekah a large portion of his dominions and carried a vast number of his people into captivity. He also mentions that at Damascus he received submission and tribute from the neighbouring sovereigns, mentioning among them Pekah, king of Israel, and Ahaz, king of Judah. Turn to 2 Kings xvi. 10, and we thus read that Ahaz, king of Judah, went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria!

Menahem and Hoshea, the kings of Israel, are both mentioned in the records of Tiglath-Pileser.

One more Assyrian king of the second monarchy yet remains, who is named in Kings, Pul, king of Assyria, who extorted a tribute of a thousand talents from Menahem (2 Kings xv. 19), and might seem to have been the immediate predecessor of Tiglath-Pileser. He alone of the whole series has no place on tablet or cylinder that has yet been read. But he is mentioned by Berosus as a Chaldaean king, and seems to have been a pretender in the western and southern provinces, or perhaps a legitimate Babylonian king, who, in the weakness of the northern empire, seized upon its western dependencies.

Such are a few of the illustrations which the last ten or twenty years have added from the Euphrates alone, to a small portion of Scripture history. Not less rich shall we find the illustrations of even earlier epochs, from the newly-read records of Egypt and the scattered monuments of Syria and Arabia.

THE EDITOR'S ROOM.

I.—HOME NOTES.

OUT OF TOWN.

WHILE the world was going at a sober jog-trot pace, it was only school children that had their regular holidays; now that we are accustomed, even in our ordinary avocations, to railway speed, we must all have something of a vacation, and, if possible, a vacation ramble. It is an interesting and even a happy thought that the antidote often springs from the same source as the bane; it is in accordance with this provision, that the same agent that has made modern life so hurried, furnishes likewise so many new facilities for obtaining quiet and leisure. Steam, the great revolutionist of the nineteenth century, which has turned the life of so many into a perpetual whirl, as if relenting at the sight of its own hurry-scurry, has made it the easiest thing possible to get to the seaside, the lakes, the highlands, the islands, or wherever nature is calm, and quiet, and soothing. In numbers perpetually increasing, the well-to-do classes are off from the bustle of the town to the quiet of the country, returning, it is to be hoped, with a new bloom on their cheeks, and a new vigour in nerve and brain and muscle. The hospitable and kind-hearted like to have their friends and their children's friends about them in this happy season of leisure; it is a time for the growth of friendship, and the easy play of all kindly feelings. A happy institution! a real boon from Him that knows our frame, and remembers that we are dust; coming down from above, like every good and perfect gift, and worthy surely of not less profound acknowledgment than that of the heathen poet—*Deus nobis hac otia fecit.*

Yet, if care be not taken, the holiday puts all classes more or less out of gear; breaks in on regular family arrangements; disturbs the discipline of self-control; encourages something of a spirit of *abandon*; and undoes not a little of the effect of the regularity, the self-denial, the energy acquired in the season of work. In our religious life, this risk is especially strong. People are severed to a large extent from their ordinary Christian associations; those engaged in Christian work are removed from their Bible class or their district meeting; a considerable part of the Lord's day is left without definite employment; and in the case of those who travel abroad, there is a temptation to accommodate the observance of the day to the laxer standard of foreign countries. In proportion, too, as persons are useful in their ordinary place of residence, their temporary absence occasions a blank, and there must be more or less of languor in the operations in which usually they take a hearty share. In every point of view, therefore, holiday time needs to be guarded, lest the gain in one direction be more than balanced by the loss in another. We are glad to observe that in several quarters efforts are being made to rouse the attention of the members of Christian churches to such things, and lead them to

put in operation the principle, "forearmed, forewarned." Instead of being a time of mere spiritual dispersion and ease, the holiday season affords many interesting opportunities of receiving and doing good; it may bring to the quieter and remoter districts the greater vigour and intensity of the towns; it may spread interest and sympathy and prayer; and it may lead to the commencement of blessed enterprises which will bear a great harvest of fruit. It is pre-eminently a time of blessing to those "who sow beside all waters," and whatever they may be weary in, are never weary in well-doing.

WORK NOT OFTEN HEARD OF.

A lady whose name stands high as a Christian worker and, as our readers know well, a cheerer of Christian work by her exquisite Christian song, Miss Frances Ridley Havergal, has, we observe, been giving expression to her great regret that while every journalist is eager to pounce on every black spot in the Church of England, there are so few caring to make known any good work going on in her borders. Let any clergyman go to an extreme in ritualism or rationalism, the circumstance, she says, is blazed abroad from one end of the island to the other, as if it were a fair sample of the ordinary state of things; whereas, even in large towns, any useful spiritual work, however important, is hardly noticed, and in country parishes it is utterly ignored. Yet, as Miss Havergal shows, by some interesting instances, there is a great amount of such work going on, even in places little dreamt of. For our own part, we have had occasion to make a similar observation very often, and especially in preparing the notes which we are accustomed to furnish from month to month in this department of our Magazine. It is a mistake to suppose that the phenomenon is limited to the Church of England. If we were inclined, we might very easily fill column upon column with the records of controversy, and with highly-coloured exposures, from the religious journals, of error and wrong. The material for such writing is very abundant, though for our part we are disposed to look at it shyly, believing that even as news it often has a hurtful effect. Undoubtedly, however, the public, or a large section of it, likes such provender. Man, we fear, retains for a long time a spice of the savage, and likes to hear of a fight. Nothing is more certain to draw a crowd—in the street, in the battlefield, in the senate, in the Church. Next to a fight, his curiosity is stirred by anything strange, sensational, monstrous. An ecclesiastical "Police News" would prove somewhat popular, we fear, in several circles. The taste, however, is obviously a low one, deserving to be discouraged by Christian journalists. It were a good sign if a more extensive appetite were shown for such narratives as Miss Havergal has brought forward.

She tells, for example, of a mission recently held in

Bristol, at which fourteen parishes united. The churches and schoolrooms in each were open every night, not for routine services, but for heart-to-heart Gospel work—prayer, addresses, and after-meetings, while many additional addresses and prayer-meetings took place at other hours, the attendance being numerous, the people deeply impressed, and the Divine blessing largely poured out. "The very countenances bespoke the deep feelings within, and the large numbers staying for personal and private conversation during the after-meetings, told of the burning thirst for blessing." A similar meeting had been held at Birmingham a few months before. It was signalled by a celebration of the Lord's Supper, attended by some five hundred persons engaged in Christian work, who renewed their consecration to their Master with an earnestness that told mightily afterwards, especially on the work of the following week. Services of a similar nature are often held under the auspices of earnest Christians, though the ordinary newspapers contain no notice of them. Gatherings, too, like that of the Mildmay Conference, recently held, are now very common, at which hundreds are present; they are designed to impart information regarding the work going on in different places, and to stimulate all workers and all Christians to greater earnestness and heartiness. We observe that preparations are being made for a very extensive and earnest mission, similar to those in Bristol and Birmingham, to be held in the metropolis during the ensuing winter. Considerable difficulties are apprehended by some in the carrying out of this mission, in consequence of the great difference of views in Church matters characterising those who may be expected to take part in the services. There can be no doubt that services conducted without any break after the ordinary routine method are liable to become somewhat languid and tame; and that they may with great advantage be interspersed with special efforts, in which the most fervent Christians set themselves to ask a blessing, and the most rousing preachers strive to break up the prevailing languor, and summon men to a prompt decision on the solemn concerns of the soul.

THE CONFSSIONAL IN ENGLAND.

It is necessary, however, notwithstanding what has just been said above, to advert to the movement, recently made public, for obtaining authority to introduce the practice of what is called "sacramental confession," and to institute an order of confessors, in the Church of England. A few weeks ago, as is well known, upwards of four hundred clergymen presented a petition to the Convocation of Canterbury in favour of sacramental confession. The proposed re-introduction of this practice into the Church of England has created a very widespread and deep sensation. The Archbishops of Canterbury and York, though confessing themselves powerless to drive back the current of ritualism, have publicly expressed their high disapproval of the confessional movement, and their firm determination to do all in their power to discourage it. A public meeting in Exeter Hall, presided over

by the Earl of Shaftesbury, has given forth a most vigorous protest against the proposal, and called on all members of the Church of England, who value the principles of the Reformation, to bestir themselves for defeating a movement which threatens to introduce among them the most odious corruptions of the Church of Rome. It is felt that there is something very bold in the movement of the confessionalists, seeing there is no feature of popery which has become more odious to the popular mind than the confessional; but this is only in accordance with what has been going on in the party for a number of years, its leaders being of opinion that they have made such progress in leavening the community with their views that what a little while ago they dared not whisper in the ear, they can now proclaim on the housetop. In the House of Commons, Lord Sandon, adverting to the progress of ritualism, asked the Prime Minister whether it was the intention of Government to bring in a bill for instituting a court by which violations of the law and Protestant customs of the Church might be promptly defeated. Mr. Gladstone said that they had no such intention, and that their attention had not been turned to the subject by the heads of the Church. On receiving this reply, Lord Sandon gave notice that at the earliest possible period of next session he himself would introduce such a measure. The serious nature of the crisis for England is becoming so apparent that none can shut their eyes to it; and it is obviously the interest and duty of all, whatever branch of the Church they may be connected with, earnestly to consider in what way they may prevent the return of errors against which some of the noblest spirits in the army of the martyrs strove so earnestly, sealing their testimony with their blood.

AN EVENING AT ALDERSHOT MISSION HALL.

Aldershot is one of those strange places of which one can form no right conception without having seen it. Like Tadmor in the wilderness, its situation is strange and unexpected,—a city in the midst of a moor; while its various camps and barracks, arranged with something like the formality of an American town, betoken a community very unlike any in America, at least, in times of peace.

In a conspicuous and convenient part of the town stands the Soldiers' Home, a commodious and attractive building that owes its existence to the exertions of the late Mrs. Daniel. If ever a place needed such an institution, it is surely Aldershot. The Home is an institution intended to foster piety, temperance, mental improvement, and profitable intercourse among soldiers; and if it be considered what large numbers of soldiers are to be found in Aldershot in the course of a year, how much annoyance, if not persecution, is the lot of the godly soldier, how absolutely impossible it is for him to obtain a moment's privacy for devotion or meditation, how many music-halls and theatres there are in the town to attract him by their amusements, and how many public-houses and houses of vice spreading for his feet the net of deadliest temptations, it is surely cause for

thankfulness that there is also a Christian Home, presided over by ladies of culture, of position, and of warm Christian affections, furnishing by its reading-room, its refreshment-bar, its halls for meetings, its Christian services, the kindly and holy influence of the ladies who take charge of it, and its various other agencies for good, very precious help to the soldier for enjoying the best of his privileges and performing the highest of his duties.

On a recent visit on a week-day evening, we found the lecture-hall full of soldiers, and had the pleasure of listening to a very earnest and most suitable address from the vicar, who happened to be officiating that evening. We saw a number of the soldiers in their reading-room, got an account of a prayer meeting in which some of them took part, and also of some of their conversations with Miss Daniel, who takes down names for the Temperance Society, and gets much knowledge of the temptations and the history of the men. We heard of the meetings held once a week in Miss Daniel's drawing-room, with a view to the welfare of the officers; and now we have enlarged our knowledge by the perusal of the report for last year. The work of the missionaries and the Bible-women is here brought before us, and every page shows the heartiness with which the work is done, and the measure of success with which it pleases the Lord to own it. Among the fallen women that, alas! haunt the town to the number of between three and four hundred, some hopeful work is done, and the plan of cottage homes, at a distance from Aldershot, each presided over by a suitable Home mother, seems likely to be attended with success. We should like to see the operations of the Home more closely associated with those of the colporteur, who carries on his work here in connection with the Colportage Society for Scotland. We have oftener than once shown in this magazine of what signal benefit the labours of suitable colporteurs are productive; and we do not know that there could be a happier association than between the Home and the Colporteur.

Miss Daniel is one of those Christian ladies whose heart is ever growing larger, and whose success in her own neighbourhood prompts her to do something of the like kind for other places. Finding that the moving life of the soldier makes him very liable to lose at one place the benefit he may have got at another, she is now very desirous to get similar institutions set up at Chatham, and other military stations. In this good work we heartily wish her success, and we trust that through the liberal and considerate contributions of the Christian friends of the army, she may be able to accomplish this object to her entire satisfaction.

A DOUBLE BLOW TO THE AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE.

The newspapers have been so full of the double good news which has lately come to us—first, respecting the success of Sir Bartle Frere in bringing to an end the slave traffic of Zanzibar; and second, the safety of Sir Samuel Baker, and the complete suc-

cess of the perilous enterprise in which he has been engaged—that we feel it necessary to do little more at present than record our thankfulness to God, and under Him to those who have gained these triumphs for humanity. We cannot but believe that the blows that have now been struck against that infamous traffic will effectually prepare the way for those further benefits which all hearts that make war on the slave trade desire for its miserable victims. One can see something of the final cause of the perils and anxieties that are suffered to befall such men as Livingstone and Baker in their benevolent undertakings. At first one might say that if any enterprises deserved to prosper, and did not deserve to be surrounded with perils of the most trying kind, it was such errands of mercy as the enemies of the slave trade go forth on. Yet no work is more full of peril and hardship. It is by means of them, however, that interest and information are diffused, and what is very important, sympathy is roused for the men, leading to cordial effort and warm prayer for the success of their work. The faith and prayer and patience of the Christian friends of Africa have had visible encouragement by Providence, and a new voice has sounded forth from heaven to bid them not be weary in well-doing.

II.—JOTTINGS FROM THE MISSION FIELD.

THE SPIRIT OF THE ANNUAL REPORTS.

II.—THE WESLEYAN MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

Like its sister, the London Missionary, the Wesleyan has had more put into her purse last year than in previous seasons, the whole amount for the various mission fields—home, continental, colonial, and heathen—being £156,910 12s. 5d. This sum includes forty-three donations from £5 to £1,000. During the year thirty-five missionaries have been sent out. Several losses of unusual severity have been sustained, partly in the person of missionaries, and partly, in that of friends of the work. Conspicuous among these are Mr. Chubb of London; Dr. Hoole, for many years a secretary of the society; Mr. Shaw, one of the apostles of South African Missions; Mr. Jackson, the venerable father of the Wesleyan community; Peter de Zylva, "who for forty-two years preached the Gospel in Ceylon, and adorned it by a holy and stainless life, and was a wonderful example of Christian sincerity and purity;" and Edward Frazer, a negro, and forty-five years missionary in the West Indies, "an able and manly preacher of the cross."

The fields of the society's operations are—1. Nominally Christian countries (Ireland and other European stations), where 101 missionaries are employed; 2. Colonial, 85 missionaries; 3. West Indian, 97 missionaries; 4. Sierra Leone and Gambia, 21 missionaries; 5. Heathen countries, viz. INDIA (Calcutta, Mysore, Madras, Tamil, and Singhalese missions), 75 missionaries; CHINA (Canton and Wuchang), 11 missionaries; and POLYNESIA, 23 European, 63 native missionaries, 906 native catechists, and 1,796

local preachers. These last figures are very striking, indicating, what we have formerly noticed, the remarkable capacity of the converts in the South Seas to become themselves missionaries.

The annual meeting was presided over by Lord Napier and Ettrick, who purposely declined to say anything on the higher and more spiritual aspects of the work of missions, but, confining himself to their bearings on education, civilisation, and social order generally, bore most emphatic testimony to the great good which they have done.

The general tone of the meeting was expressed in an ingenious remark by the President of the conference, Mr. Wiseman, who found in

The Dead March in Saul

an analogy to the feeling experienced in connection with mission work:—

"The musicians here present," he said, "will follow me when I remind them of the structure of the celebrated 'Dead March in Saul.' First of all there is a soft wailing dirge as the body of the fallen monarch is brought into view. Then afterwards the drums and trumpets are brought in, and there is a grand strike-up, as much as to say, 'After all, though the monarch is gone, and the beauty of Israel is fallen from her high places, there is the foe yet to be vanquished, there is the honour of Judah to be maintained:' and so, my Lord, we are prepared to say to-day. We are prepared, by the grace of God, to strike up a joyful and encouraging strain. The note to-day is most decidedly, 'Forward, forward!' 'Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward.'"

Mr. Barley, a missionary from the West Indies, referred in terms of the deepest interest to a remarkable

Revival in Demerara.

The date was not given, but the movement began at a large meeting on a weekday evening, when some six hundred persons were engaged in earnest prayer, and appeared almost instantaneously to be filled with the power of God; a cry for mercy went up from various corners, and night after night meetings took place for weeks together, the fruits of which were very remarkable; one thousand five hundred members were added to the Wesleyan Church in the colony, and an evangelical alliance formed among the various ministers, and a Scripture Readers' Association, which were both in existence to the present time. "This revival originated in a leaders' prayer-meeting. We got the leaders together from week to week, and as their own hearts were graciously warmed, they became as living flames in the hands of God when they met their people."

The Rev. Frederic Greeves, from Polynesia, remarked on the wonderful fitness of the Gospel to all conditions of men. Missionaries have carried it to the wild Arabs of the East, and to the Red Indians of the West. They have preached it amid the polar snows to the Esquimaux, and in the tropics to the Negroes, and they are able to tell us that everywhere the voice of the Great Father is intelligible to all his children,

and the blood of the Common Saviour is able to cleanse men from their sins. Mr. Greeves proceeded to give an account of—

The Change in Fiji.

"I have heard one of our Missionaries say, that he stood once in the presence of a savage Fijian chief—a man in whose presence a human life was not worth a fish-hook. He said to that man, 'What does your religion teach you to do to your enemies?' 'Kill them, and eat them,' said the chief, handling his club as if he were about to begin with the Missionary. 'Now,' said the Missionary, 'listen to my religion;' and he read to him some verses of our Lord's Sermon on the Mount: 'I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.' 'O!' said the Fijian, 'that is a good thing; that would suit Fiji.' And then the Missionary turned to the 12th chapter of Romans, and read to him: 'Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.' Again the Fijian chief said that this was a good thing, and would suit his people, and he sent for a teacher to come and instruct his subjects; and what has been the result of our Fijian Mission? Why, we have a King there a Christian; his name is Ebenezer, for hitherto the Lord hath helped us. We have a Queen there a Christian; her name is Lydia, for her heart the Lord hath opened. Her two daughters are Christians; the one is a Methodist Class-Leader, and the other is president of the Band of Hope in the island. We have given to these people a Christian literature, in which there is not a single bad book, and I hope it will be very long before there is any bad book in the Fijian language. We have given them a code of laws of which we can say this, at least, that it is quite as equitable and a great deal more intelligible than the law of Great Britain."

The same gentleman concluded a very interesting speech with some notes of

A Sermon by Dr. Guthrie.

"I remember hearing Dr. Guthrie preach a sermon once, which I will briefly sum up to this audience. This was the text: 'Lord what wilt Thou have me to do?' His divisions were, first, Divine authority,— 'Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?' Thou art the Master; I must not choose my own work, my own station, the degree of my own labour. 'Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?' Secondly, individual responsibility,— 'Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?' It is not, What ought the Church to do? not, What ought this Missionary Society to do? The law comes to every man according to his several ability, and I am as much alone as though God had never made another man responsible for this work. Show me my work. 'Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?' Third, practical religion,— 'What wilt Thou have me to do?' Not, What ought I to feel? Not, What ought I to speak? I can neither feel right, nor pray right, nor think right, unless I do my part in this great cause. And then to wind up with one of the Doctor's exquisite illustrations. Mark yonder ship, my brethren, the tempest's fury has broken upon her, fast she is sinking in the flood, the mariners

are seeking refuge; some have already climbed on yonder rock, others are trying to get up by their side. I had rather see a man help his brother from the water than see him go down upon his knees and thank God he is safe himself."

Long may the Wesleyan Missionary Society continue to prosecute its blessed labours in this self-denying Christian spirit!

LETTERS FROM MEXICO.

Our readers are aware of the remarkable Protestant movement in Mexico which has had its origin and centre in Mexico City, and, under the auspices of the Presbyterian Church of the United States, has borne remarkable fruit, in the conversion of not a few Romish priests, and the formation of several active congregations. There is not much communication between the different parts of Mexico, and at Toluca, the capital of the state of Mexico, though only fifty miles from Mexico City, an English gentleman, Mr. Pascoe, whom business drew to reside there, had not heard of the Protestant movement elsewhere. Like St. Paul at Athens, Mr. Pascoe found his heart very much stirred as he saw the people wholly given to Romish idolatry, the worship of the Virgin being carried out there to a degree which he fancies must be unparalleled in the world. The class for whom he felt his sympathy strongest was the Indian population—the descendants of the original inhabitants of the country, who are well pleased with Romanism, because it is not like their own old form of idolatry, but who cling to their own language with a tenacity that cannot be conquered. Mr. Pascoe, with that ingenuity which compassion for souls never fails to generate, though himself poor, devised means, through the help of friends, for circulating Bibles and tracts among those whose spiritual condition he so deeply compassionated. The results, under the blessing of God, have been very wonderful. In a letter which we have received from a gentleman in England who is in correspondence with Mr. Pascoe, they are thus summed up:—"Toluca has a population of 30,000 inhabitants. Six months ago, he could not reckon on more than three persons as Protestants; now, he has a nice little place fitted up for worship, and there are a hundred earnest worshippers, all Protestants, and most of them he thinks are truly converted to God." Referring to a visit lately paid to Toluca, by Mr. Phillips, the agent of the Bible Society at Mexico City, Mr. Pascoe writes: "He said he was astonished, and it seemed evident that God's spirit is being poured out on us in great abundance, as he could see that every effort that I and my helpers make takes immediate effect, that wherever we scatter the seed, it seems immediately to take root. The Spirit, he thinks, seems to be only waiting to descend and bless the efforts to arouse the whole nation."

PERSECUTION AND MARTYRDOM.

In November, 1872, in a little town called Capulhuac, six leagues distant from Toluca, a small knot of native converts began to meet for worship. Their pastor is an Indian, a man of very humble position,

and little or no education, but on whom God's Spirit seems to have been poured out largely. He had been a staunch Catholic, hating the very name of Protestant; till, being in the market of an adjoining town, he bought a Spanish New Testament from a bookseller, without knowing it to be a Protestant book. Taking it home and reading it secretly, the truth at once began to enter into his soul, and no sooner had he accepted the message for himself than he began to preach it to others. The little flock that began to gather in his home last year are twenty-seven in number, all poor. The pastor's dwelling is the usual Indian cabin, made of thin shingles tied together.

The curate and alcalde, or village magistrate, excited a persecution against them; on two occasions the pastor's hut was set on fire, and on one of these turpentine was used to expedite its destruction, but without effect. The Protestants are the objects of bitter annoyances; one girl in particular, who is alleged to be worshipped by them, being often hooted and mobbed, while the gamins kneel around her in mock worship. On the 12th of April, whilst the little flock were engaged in public worship, and a child was being baptised, the Romanists prepared to make a deadly assault upon them. At a couple of hundred yards from the place of meeting, they poured a volley of musketry upon the Protestants. A scuffle ensued, the Protestants trying to escape to a distance; one of them was killed, and other two wounded. In one place where they tried to find refuge, the people rose against them and would not let them enter, nor could they find safety or shelter, until they had buried themselves among the neighbouring hills. Mr. Pascoe is gathering funds for rebuilding the chapel, and trying to obtain justice and protection for the people. But the fact of the village magistrate being the leader of this cowardly attack is sufficiently indicative of the intensity of the feeling, and the dangers of the persecution.

Other towns in Mr. Pascoe's neighbourhood are showing similar signs of interest. In writing on 6th February last, he says: "I have received a visit from an inhabitant of a town some thirty-six miles from here, imploring me to do something towards helping them. For two years they have had a Protestant congregation of above sixty men, not counting their wives and families; but they have no pastor, no organization, no place of worship, no prayer or Bible meetings, and only two Bibles in all the congregation! I did all I could, advised them as to becoming better organised, and made a present of a few copies of God's word, promising to give more, and to take some steps towards helping on God's work."

SUPERSTITIOUS BELIEFS IN MEXICO.

In illustration of the influence of Mexican popery, we are told that amongst other titles ascribed to Mary are those of "Mother of the uncreated Light, Temple of the Holy Trinity, Wife of the Holy Ghost, and Throne of eternal righteousness!" In a volume of prayers, printed for the behoof of souls in purgatory,

it is laid down that for saying No. 1. the Catholic will save himself from purgatory, and also take one soul out; No. 2. will obtain pardon for as many souls as there are stars in heaven, or sands in the sea, and grass in the fields. The eight from 3 to 11 gain each a pardon of 140,080,149 years! On Fridays each of the prayers obtains a pardon of double the above time; and on Good Friday each prayer obtains the same pardon, and in addition, also, obtains a pardon eight times over for perpetuity for every soul on earth! How the views of the Protestants are perverted may be judged from the following:—A priest who had got a copy of a tract on the Lord's Prayer took it to the pulpit, and told the people he would read it to them to show them what kind of persons the Protestants were. He read out, as if from the tract, "Our Father which art—in hell! The Protestants," he said, "thus openly acknowledged that the devil was their father."

"Look unto the fields, for they are already white unto harvest." Such seems emphatically to be the state of Mexico. It has a population of about eight millions, of whom it may be said that they have sat for centuries in the region and shadow of death. It is deeply interesting and instructive to find private individuals like Mr. Pascoe moved to begin so good a work among them. We own we do not much like the tone in which he speaks of the American brethren who are promoting the work in Mexico. Afterwards, experiencing their help and their kindness, he speaks of them much more pleasantly. The Gospel is infinitely more precious than any form of church government; yet it is sufficiently evident that, for the efficient protection of the Gospel against the arts of Rome, a form of church government is quite necessary. We repeat our cordial good wishes, and acknowledge the good we have received from Mr. Pascoe's letters on his work in Mexico.

III.—GLANCES ABROAD.

THE PILGRIMAGE FEVER IN FRANCE.

We learn from the correspondent of the *Guardian* and other sources, that the enthusiasm for pilgrimage in France has reached an unprecedented height. The month between 22nd July and 22nd August has been set apart as the month of pilgrimages, and arrangements have been made for special prayer during that month in all the churches of France. Three plenary indulgences have been accorded by the Pope to all who shall have said the appointed prayers, and received the communion at the appointed places, or helped in some equally substantial way to consecrate France to the Virgin.

But the friends of pilgrimages have not waited for the month. Processions to holy wells and sacred shrines have been going on with unrivalled enthusiasm. At Lyons more than six thousand children went in procession to the celebrated shrine of Notre Dame de Fourvière, some just able to walk, and some carried in the arms, the bigger ones carrying banners, counting their beads, and singing hymns to the Virgin.

The number of places to which the pilgrimages have been organized is very large.

Pre-eminent among these is the pilgrimage to Paray-le-Monial, in the Department of Saone et Loire, beyond Moulins. The expeditions thither are in honour of the sacred heart of Jesus, and are designed to make the *amende honorable* to Him, and to invoke the sacred heart on behalf of France on the anniversary of the day on which our Lord appeared to the blessed Marguerite-Marie, and said to her, "France shall be consecrated to my Divine Heart, and all the land shall be conscious of the blessings I pour out upon it. Faith and religion shall flourish anew in France, by devotion to my Divine Heart."

The committee in charge of the movement observes:—

"The movement which carries all France in the direction of the Sacred Heart of Jesus extends itself every day. Our great towns are in a state of commotion. Marseilles, Lille, Cambrai, Lyons, Paris, Nantes, Angers, Montpellier, and many others have come, or will come one after the other, to make the *amende honorable*, and consecrate themselves to our Saviour on the spot where he deigned to manifest his heart to the Blessed Marguerite-Marie. It is consoling to see the flood of pilgrims which is pouring into Paray-le-Monial praying and telling their beads without regard to human opinion, and chanting their pious canticles in our streets and public places, along our rivers and on our railways:—

'Sauvez Rome et la France
Par votre Sacré-Cœur!'

Such is the sentiment and the cry of all hearts. Our misfortunes, the hope of a better future before us, the glorious *souvenirs* of Patay, Mans, and Loigny, impart a patriotic character to the movement which is taking place among us."

The enthusiasm of the population for religious pilgrimages and fêtes is marvellous, and even newspapers whose tone used to be quite different are writing regarding them with hope and expectation. The explanation is partly that the feelings of France are profoundly stirred by her misfortunes, and partly that she has an intense desire to go in for the very opposite course followed by the Germans. The injudicious severity of Count Bismarck in his opposition to the Ultramontanes seems to invest their cause in France with an air of martyrdom and glory. At the bottom of these movements there is an intense impatience of the German yoke, and desire for the restoration of France to her former proud position. Whatever too is genuine in the religious feelings of the people is roused, and made to swell the flood of enthusiastic eagerness with which aid is solicited for the salvation of France.

FATHER HYACINTHE'S COMMENTARY ON THIS REVIVAL.

Father Hyacinthe has given his opinion as to the nature and causes of this revival.

"There are stories all over France," he says, "just now of strange apparitions, of supernatural occurrences. It is impossible to be wholly incredulous. Such delirium, such utter blindness, in a nation so conspicuous for its sense and intelligence, can hardly be

accounted for by natural agency. . . . There exists a moral atmosphere of obscurity and electricity, which sits heavily on men's souls. The evil extends in another shape to statesmen and thinkers. And in those exalted regions we may now behold faith allied with politics, fanaticism hand in hand with scepticism—possibly with hypocrisy—with a view to conclude between heaven and earth an alliance equally repugnant to both. The self-styled Conservative and ruling classes are just now like those of whom Isaiah spoke—they err in vision and stumble in judgment. But no, they do not stumble—they unhesitatingly, 'resolutely,' lead the country into the abyss."

He traces this state of feeling to the forcible extinction of Gallicanism, the stamping out of Jansenism, and the attempt to harmonise faith and science, and the establishment of Ultramontane Popery as the only form of religion, the only thing left for men to cling to, who have any faith in God and the necessity of religion. Democracy was increasing this feeling. Not long ago he had seen, on the part of a democratic paper, an attempt to show that the Jews were the greatest enemies of modern society, because, but for the Jews, we should not have had Christianity; we should have been raised above that notion of the unity of God, which was a low form of religion, lower than the Grecian mythology. It was in this way that the minds of people were driven to Ultramontanism as the only refuge from the atheism that was so dreadful to the mass of Frenchmen who lived in country districts. The great thing was to proclaim to France the religion of the Bible.

His concluding observation is suspended between hope and fear:—

"Everything is dying in France—nay, possibly everything may be dead already, save the soul of France. That lives, will live; my country is in the position of the victim of that atrocious punishment which consisted in tying up a living man between two dead ones. On the one side, there is the *ancien régime* that refuses to die; on the other, the stillborn corpse of that gigantic and monstrous abortion, sham Democracy. France is yet alive between the two. She lives, for she hungers and thirsts for truth and justice; and I would tell her, in the words of the great Italian and Catholic poet—

'O, Living Soul, separate from what is dead!'

What we should try and do is to clear away the clouds that are artificially raised before our God, He who made our race, who fears no progress, the God of Pascal and Bossuet. We should try and extricate Him from behind the idol where He is concealed amid clouds of the incense of the virgins of Lourdes and La Salette, and the *sacris causes* of Paray-le-Monial, and show Him to the people of France and say, 'Here is not a new religion, but that which is ever old and always new, traditional, and progressive. We also are true Christians and true Catholics; we also are true Liberals and true democrats; we believe in the soul of the people, and we worship the God of the people.'

IV.—OUR LIBRARY TABLE.

The opening chapters of the *Life of Sir James Y. Simpson, Baronet*, by John Duns, D.D., have quite a romantic interest. From the humblest ranks of the Scottish working-class, as in the case of Robert

Burns, there emerges a boy of singular qualities of head and heart, who in his own path reaches a fame scarcely inferior to that of the poet, and leaves his mark on his profession and on mankind as few have done before. The class from which he sprung, however, though on the lowest social level, enjoyed the benefit of a culture that aristocracy does not often transmit—remarkable industry, self-reliance, and self-control on the father's side, and godliness of a high type, with many of its real fruits, on the mother's. Through the force of "push and pluck" the boy finds his way to college, becomes a student of medicine, devotes himself to the department of midwifery, and begins early to achieve distinction in that branch. By-and-by he is the successful candidate for the chair of Midwifery in the University of Edinburgh, and from that time his fame grows with a steady and unchecked progress. The remark of Buffon that "genius is the power of making efforts" was never more wonderfully fulfilled than in the case of Simpson. The efforts he made were prodigious; had he not done with his might whatsoever his hand found to do, he would never have reached the position he attained. The greater part of his professional life witnesses him engaged in struggling for professional eminence, not, however, for his own sake only, but under the influence of a conviction that of secular professions medicine is the noblest. It must be owned, at the same time, that his intense professional ambition is not a pleasant object of contemplation, and that the many squabbles and controversies with brethren of the highest respectability in which he got involved, sensibly diminish the moral instructiveness of his life. His medical discoveries and applications were of most remarkable interest, and his delight in them, as fitted greatly to diminish the sum of human suffering, was in entire keeping with the singular kindness, the irrepressible benignity of heart which showed itself in his whole intercourse with his patients. At the age of fifty he became an earnest Christian, and at times he bore very noble public testimony to the riches of the Saviour's grace. To the Christian heart the finest of his appearances were such as those when, on the death of Sir David Brewster, he spoke to the Royal Society of Edinburgh of the Saviour to whom the venerable philosopher had given himself; or at the graduation ceremony, in presence of the University, urged the medical students to realise the love of Christ, and devote themselves to his service. The style of his piety was of the impulsive kind, very vivid at one time, more languid at another; and this circumstance, joined to the fact that the echoes of his professional squabbles never died away, doubtless obstructed his influence as a religious man. His biographer seems to regret that he came out so much as he did immediately after his conversion in public religious meetings, inasmuch as his previous study of the Bible, and knowledge of divine truth, were exceedingly imperfect; and fears that, had he persevered in that line, injurious consequences might have resulted.

Sir James Simpson's wonderful activity of mind and capacity of work were doubtless the means of

shortening his life. To the subjects of his study and intense application he was always adding, and notwithstanding embarrassments which were sometimes painful, he seemed incapable of either restricting his practice or curtailing his intellectual labour. As in the case of Hugh Miller, though, mercifully, in a different manner, the effects of his unrepressed and irrepressible activity of brain appeared in the premature close of his life. It seemed as if he was incapable of turning away from any kind of work that had a living interest for him.

In one or two points we might correct the biographer, but we will notice but one, which has reference to this magazine. Dr. Duns says, that when Sir James Simpson was asked to contribute to the SUNDAY MAGAZINE, he declined. On the contrary, he very cheerfully agreed. At one time he offered to write on two most interesting Christian philosophers, Sir David Brewster and Michael Faraday, comparing their characters together. At another time he said that he would like very much to write on our Lord's miracles of healing, and that in particular he would like to say something on leprosy. Not a few efforts were made to obtain these papers—but in vain. Nor could one press him very hard when he said that Sunday was the only day on which he could put together his thoughts on such subjects. At this distance one sees clearly that it would have been well if Sir James could have let alone some of his antiquarian researches, or his controversies on such topics as that with Professor Smyth on the use of the Pyramids of Egypt, and written carefully on the miracles of healing. A permanent contribution to the right understanding of so remarkable a class of our Lord's mighty works, and a clear conclusion for their supernatural character, by one who had come nearer to them in his own practice than any other man, though of course by the use only of natural means, might have been a singular service to Christianity, and would have been a highly suitable field for the talents of one acknowledged on every side among the kings of medical science. But whatever may be thought on these and on other topics on which we do not enter, there can be no doubt that the name of Simpson will shine in all time in the glorious record of men of highest gifts and attainments who have been taught to bow at the cross of Jesus, and sing the new song in testimony of redeeming love. A heart peculiarly emotional was brought under the influence of the love of Christ, and sometimes it would pour itself out in words of rapture full of the music of heaven. Such intensity of emotion, especially in a Scotchman, is alike rare and beautiful. Granting that in Sir James Simpson it may have been but occasional, every expression of it by such a man was a remarkable tribute to the honour of the Saviour, and a remarkable evidence of the power of his grace.

Under his Banner: Papers on the Missionary

Work of Modern Times, by Rev. H. W. Tucker, M.A., is based on an excellent idea; for nothing is more needed than concise accounts of modern missionary enterprise, in a collected form. English Church missions are spread over a wide extent, and embrace a great variety of interesting localities. In the present volume, seven chapters are given to India, and its several presidencies; one each to Ceylon and Burmah; under Borneo and the Straits we have an account of the labours of Bishop Macdougall and his coadjutors; China and Japan come next; Africa and adjacent islands have no fewer than twelve chapters; then follow the West Indies and Gujana, Patagonia and Terra del Fuego, Australia, New Zealand, Melanesia, Hawaii, North America and its various sections; we have then a chapter on Roman Missionaries, one on the Eastern Church, one on the Moravians, the Heathen World, the Future of the Anglican Church, and Missionary Societies. The author writes with clearness and vigour, and shows no small share of that power of combining details and general views which is so needful in a book embracing so great a variety of subjects. He laments with much earnestness, and exposes faithfully, the deficiency of missionary zeal. We regret, however, that his point of view is so very High Church, that his book can be acceptable only to those who are at one with him there. When he treats of the Madagascar mission, for example, he writes of the excellent men, whose labours have been so successful, in terms of contempt and obloquy much to be regretted. What could induce him to speak of the Christian faith now professed there as "the spurious religionism of a semi-heathen island which is steeped in the foulest sensuality, while it repeats the intolerant shibboleths of the seventeenth century," or say that the missionaries have abandoned the coast "to fever and the devil?" We can only say that our disappointment has been great in finding a book which promised so well, open to objections which must interfere so seriously with its purpose.

Another little work of similar aim and purpose is *The Light of All Ages, by the Rev. Gavin Carlyle, M.A.*—The object is to work out the relation of Christ to the history of all ages and nations—the sun of our system, the enlightener of humanity in all directions, political and social, as well as religious. First, He is delineated in his own essential characteristics, then in his relation to all ages, especially as set forth in the Messianic prophecies, and with the seal of the resurrection set on Him; the connection of his life is then traced with the politics and social institutions of different periods, and its bearing on the future of the world, and on the everlasting life of the church in heaven. The field is a remarkably interesting and fertile one, and in the hands of Mr. Carlyle it is surveyed with a happy combination of thoughtfulness, devoutness, and scriptural simplicity.

CROOKED PLACES:

A Story of Struggles and Hopes.

BY EDWARD GARRETT, AUTHOR OF "OCCUPATIONS OF A RETIRED LIFE," ETC.

THE LAST PART.—THE CONCLUSION OF THE WHOLE MATTER.

CHAPTER I.—A STRANGER FROM AFAR.



B E G
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standing straight before her in the church-yard path, raising his hat from a very stately iron-grey head. And as the startled Millicent looked up at him and answered, there came over her a confused recollection of long candle-lit evenings, very full of needlework, and a sound rang in her bewildered brain like Hatty's naughty whistle of old days. It was like a once familiar language forgotten. And then a trifle—a nothing characteristic in itself—made it all clear, as one translated word will sometimes restore the lost key of knowledge. It was only a worn signet ring on the stranger's little finger.

“I am Millicent Harvey,” she said, “and—I know you now—you are Harry Westbrook.”

“I am he,” he answered, grasping the hand she held towards him. “And thank God for the friendly sound of the old name—you are the first that have called me by it since I have been back in England!”

He turned and walked by her side. “I knew I could not be wrong,” he said, speaking with an eagerness of delight that con-

trasted half pathetically with his dignified figure and whitening hair. “I could not mistake a Harvey face. I should have known it if I had met it on the Himalayas.”

“I have not to question you, fearful what your replies may be,” he went on. “Only yesterday, I took a wandering about our old haunts in Mile End, and went into one of the shops where Hatty used to deal, and where the same old name was up. I asked after you all. ‘Yes, the old lady was still alive,’ they told me, ‘and looking finely. And Master George was married and had a grown up son, and was a great man. And Miss Milly was still at home. And Miss Hatty was Mrs. Webber, but she still looked in sometimes of an evening, and sat down, and was as friendly as ever.’ I did not need to hear that Hatty was Mrs. Webber,” he added, with a touch of gravity in his playfulness. “I knew that years and years ago. I saw an old newspaper with the marriage notice. If you think I may see Mr. and Mrs. Webber, I have something for them. If not, I will send it through you. It is only an inlaid chess-table, and a set of chessmen in Indian ivory.”

“I am sure they will both be very glad to see you,” said Milly, not speaking without authority, for Harry Westbrook, though seldom mentioned, was no tabooed subject in the Webbers' house—Mr. Webber having always stoutly maintained “that it had been a good sign in any young man to be taken with Harriet,” while Hatty, though a light shadow would flit over her merry face at the old name, was always humbly and thankfully conscious that she had been guided to do the right thing—not being one of those weak and foolish women who think that their hand alone has strength to save a man's life and soul, such women being generally those who would only seal his perdition. “I am sure they will be very glad to see you,” Milly reiterated; “but will you not come home first and see my mother? Our house is quite near. And Miss Brook is still with us—do you remember Miss Brook?”

“Indeed I do,” he said cheerfully, “she is not a woman to be forgotten. A very important piece of my home-coming triumph would be lost if I missed Miss Brook. It is

a treat worth having, to put in a creditable appearance before those who predicted our disgrace."

"But nobody will be better pleased than Miss Brook," said Milly, "she really liked you."

"I know she did," he replied heartily. "I did not think so at the time, but it is now some years since I came to that conclusion."

And so Millicent led in the unexpected guest. The two old ladies were seated in their little parlour, Mrs. Harvey reading the Pilgrim's Progress, and Miss Brook perusing the book of Job. Mrs. Harvey caught the name of "Harry Westbrook," but thought such a possibility was so exceedingly pleasant that it could scarcely be true, and therefore rose and made her dignified old-world curtsy, with its accompanying "Very happy to see you, sir," with the added aside—"Who—who—does she say it is?" while Miss Brook promptly took it all in and shouted in her ear,—

"It's that young Westbrook, been and made his fortune, and come back wonderfully improved, as I always said he might be:" a turn of her prophecies which threw the whole party into a hearty laugh, out of which they all emerged as comfortably familiar as if they had never been separated for more than a week.

Of course Mr. Westbrook stayed to dine with the Harveys; indeed, it was instantly settled that he should remain with them for the whole day, and if the Webbers did not look in at the cottage before evening service, then Mrs. Harvey or Milly would take him to their house after it. In one way or the other the Harveys and the Webbers always saw each other every Sabbath. Mrs. Harvey and Milly still went to church, and the Webbers still went to chapel, so as they did not meet in God's House, they regularly met at the household altar.

There was no overwhelming amount of conversation, and the inquiries mostly came from the stranger, and the news from the hostesses. It is not "travel in far lands" which furnishes subjects which we care to talk over in the sacred first moments of reunion. Days would come when the three women would hang interested on their gratified visitor's stories of Indian life and society, on his sketches of Benares and the Himalayas, his descriptions of Hindoo ceremonies, and his specimens of oriental needlework and flora. But just now, it was far more interesting for him to hear about the death of his old minister, and how the house in which he used to live was pulled

to bits and turned into a factory. The sight of the same old dishes of former days seemed to him more astonishing than the seven wonders of the world, and one or two old books lying about he lifted as reverently as if all the souls whom they had ever comforted still clasped their hands about them.

It is strangely solemn, that meeting of family friends, long parted in utter silence. Influences have been moulding each, of which the other knows nothing, which may have driven them apart, or may have drawn them nearer together. There is scarcely an ordinary phrase, a tune, a public event, a mass glory, or a moonlight shadow which has not acquired some secret meaning for each. These things escape speech—they are now so disguised as when clumsily clothed in words. What is there to tell of our histories? Somebody died—somebody married—somebody was introduced to us—everybody knows beforehand that such things must have happened to us. But the bare facts are nothing; and those who know them know nothing. These old friends of his knew all about Harry Westbrook's old love affair, and time will come when it will be frankly talked over among them; but they will never know—he will never be able to tell them—how it felt to sit lonely in the shadow of tropical trees, and know that Hatty and her husband were singing out of one hymn-book in their little East End chapel. Millicent, in her turn, mentioned both Fergus Laurie and David Maxwell to Mr. Westbrook, in the course of this his first visit, and in due time he will know all about the ambition and selfishness of the one and the saintliness of the other; but Millicent will never be able to tell how she felt when she wrote to Fergus and offered him her money, or when she watched the sun go down, as she flew through the country in the Harwich train. If others cannot see these stories in our eyes and hear them in our voices, they will never know them at all. Those who can read these open secrets know us better after one hour's talk than some who have lived with us all our lives.

To Millicent that Sabbath afternoon was like a peaceful dream; or rather years and years gone by seemed like a fevered delirium, all except David's Bible lying on the table, and David's grave in the sunlight not so very far away. She knew that Acre Hall was still standing where it did—that the man in possession was gone (though he might not be without his transitory successor), and that the household still remained unchanged; for Fergus had not yet started for America, but was

going about in the most dashing of frys, buying for himself the most sumptuous of Russian leather-portmanteaux, and coolly assuming that all of his creditors had done a very good thing for themselves when they allowed him to get into their debt. Millicent only marvelled within herself how she had ever wavered in her judgment as to what must be the end of such way of life—how she had ever hoped to gather figs of thistles—to find a hero walking in the counsel of the ungodly—a saint sitting in the seat of the scornful. It must have done harm, too—this wilful judgment of hers—when, rather than own herself in the wrong, she had shut her eyes to the right, and accepted excuses where she should have uttered protests. Fergus might be saying to himself and to others that she had not been a true friend. It was a bitter lie as he meant it, but she owned to herself that it was but too true in a far different sense!

Mr. Webber and his wife did not call in at the cottage, and so, when evening service was over, Millicent and Mr. Westbrook went to their house.

The good little stationer himself received them, because, as he explained, Hatty was still up-stairs "taking off her bonnet."

"I'm proud to see you, sir," said the worthy man, "and it will be just as great a pleasure as you could give my Hatty. 'If he ever comes to England, he'll never come near us,' she's said often and often."

"Well, Mr. Webber, I can't say I meant to do so when I landed," said Mr. Westbrook, frankly; "but the worst of it was, there was nobody else to come to see, and there was no place I cared to haunt, except where we all used to live."

"I'll go up and tell her myself," said Mr. Webber, bustling away, and Mr. Westbrook sat down to wait their return.

The guest gave one glance round the room—Hatty's *ménage*. No, he wouldn't have liked such a room to live in. This would never have been his best home, as it was hers. This was fit for her, she had made it for herself in fact; but she never would have been able to make it if she had been linked with him.

Hatty came down presently. Not very quickly. She had had something to say to Mr. Webber first; probably she had also to give him a kiss. At any rate she had had to put her best pearl brooch, her husband's wedding gift, into her lace collar. "He won't notice what you are dressed in," Mr. Webber had reasoned; but Hatty persisted.

Mr. Westbrook rose and went forward, and

the two old lovers met under the clumsy gilt chandelier, and shook hands, and said how glad they were to see each other.

"But you've grown, surely," said Hatty, trying to laugh.

"In some ways, I hope," answered Harry Westbrook rather wistfully.

One felt, as the two stood together, that there had never been a husband and wife like them in the world, though Millicent remembered thinking in the old time what a suitable pair they looked—quite a typical couple. But she had never seen an old settled husband and wife such as these now. Together they would not have grown so. Sitting gazing at them from her twilight corner, Millicent caught one of those curious revelations of possibilities in faces, which come to us all sometimes, understand them or not as we may. Sometimes they show us what people might have been, as well as what they may be. These two might have been a lazy, ill-conditioned reckless man, and a soured indifferent woman, with a useless, restless heart like a caged animal. And as Milly caught this glimpse of the escaped dangers of the past, even Hatty's rich silk dress seemed to cling about her, as would have clung the poor tousled shawl she was never to wear, and Harry's tall and stately form seemed to droop into the shamble of the drunken sensualist, that, thank God, he was never to be! No, the fondest love could wish neither but what they were, and what they were they never could have become together.

Before Harry Westbrook and Millicent left, the two sisters had a little chat in Hatty's bedroom.

"I'm just awfully glad to have seen him again," said Hatty, using her stepson's slang in sober earnest, "only I wish he was married and settled. He seems to have made plenty of money. Do you know whether he means to go back to India, Milly?"

"He says so; he speaks of going back quite soon," Millicent answered.

"I wish he was married. But you needn't fancy I'm such a donkey as to fear he is keeping single for my sake, unless it is in the way that I gave him a disgust at women."

"There's plenty in life besides marriage," said Millicent; "even the world admits as much in the case of men. Marriage is never said to be their chief object in existence, as is sometimes stated of women."

"But it's six of one and half a dozen of the other, for all that," said Hatty shrewdly. "Unless it's six to one and more than half a dozen to the other, for the world's talk gene-

rally goes by contraries. I can understand a woman looking at her future with only a side-glance at marriage; she can easily fancy herself living with kindred, or set in households somehow, as women always are. But I can't fancy a man looking forward and wondering whether he'll pay his housekeeper fifty pounds a year or a hundred. That's a dismal look-out. Mother is very pleased to see Harry, isn't she?" Hatty inquired, with a sudden change of subject.

"Yes, we all are," Millicent replied. "You don't know how much those old cheery times of ours have been in my mind lately. I had been thinking about them as I think Noah's family must have thought of the blue hills and green dells while they were floating over the face of the dull grey flood. It seems so odd that Harry should turn up just when my mind was full of the old memories which he shares."

Hatty kissed her sister. "No, I don't think it's odd," she said. "It always happens so. It is wonderful, but it does, and that only makes it more wonderful. It wouldn't be half so wonderful if the sun forgot to rise, or the trees to bud in spring as that they never do."

And the two sisters went down-stairs, and warm invitations to renew his visit were given by the Webbers to Harry, and then he escorted Milly home.

They walked in silence for a few minutes, then Harry said,—

"Well, I thank God that I knew your sister. I believe my knowing her saved me for this life and for the next. You see I had nobody of my own, Miss Harvey, no sister, no near relation. I had no ideal of home till I saw yours. It was God's providential blessing that it all happened as it did."

Millicent understood the thought in his heart, narrowed as was its expression. She knew that he felt now that Hatty had given him the utmost and the best that she had for him, that any giving more would not only have overflowed, but overturned the cup. There are men and women whom God makes brothers and sisters and sacred kin in spirit as in the flesh, and between these there is a spiritual barrier, similar to the lawful "impediment" between near relationships. They can be so much to each other, unless they lawlessly determine to be so much more! With them, transposing the poet's sentiment,—

"A little less, and how much it is!
A little more, and what worlds away!"

Yet Milly understood, too, that the heart of the dignified man beside her was conscious

of a new loss, even the loss of his old crown of loss. A man who has fancied himself heir to an even irredeemably forfeited estate, feels himself beggared to find that there was a blunder in his genealogy, and that he never could have had the least claim to the alienated land. The bed where only rue and rosemary have grown looks drearier still when left empty for weeds to overspread. There may be shadow and rest under a yew-tree, and an alas when it is cut down. Harry Westbrook would never again sit on the Himalayas and soothe his solitude with sighs over the solace that had slipped from his life. But we cannot joyfully take the spoiling of our sorrow, if it be all we have!

Millicent's sympathetic reverie was broken by Mr. Westbrook saying, as if in answer to her unspoken thought,—

"Ah, but I am very glad I have come back to England. I don't suppose I shall ever lose sight of you all again, and I shall leave the country very differently to how I left it last time. Then I felt ready to run away anywhere—anywhere. Why, I went down to the cabin and lay down in my berth, just to miss the last sight of England! Now I shall watch the shadow of her last rock! No, Miss Millicent (as they paused at the cottage gate), I will not come in to-night, for your good hospitable mother would not let me go without another half-hour's chat, and I will not be drawn into breaking her wholesome custom of early hours. But I will come back in a day or two if I may? Yes? Then perhaps I may look in to-morrow. Good night."

"Good night," said Millicent, and went in, her heart full of thankfulness for the safety and welfare of the dear old friend, whose familiar face had returned to her like a fresh blossom from a tree planted long ago.

And the moonlight shimmered through the elm-trees round Acre Hall, and slept on David's grave beneath the Norman tower.

CHAPTER II.—LAST THINGS.

HARRY WESTBROOK kept his word. He did visit the cottage the next evening, and the day but one after that, and then the next Sunday. He went to the Webbers too, and took them his tardy wedding-gift—what fun the step-children made out of that, and young Dick would have it that it was for somebody else—for there was a second generation of weddings now in the very near future of the Webbers' household.

Under all circumstances it was only natural

that Mr. Westbrook and Millicent should make the best companions for each other. They had such a mutual Past. Mrs. Harvey and Miss Brook could join in their laughing gossip over old times; but they were not their own "old times," which were twenty or thirty years further back. In the spring time of these those had been absorbed, anxious women. Then George and Harriet had each had the poem of life since the prelude, and their memories did not habitually go back so far.

Gradually Harry Westbrook spoke less of going back to India—actually said that there was no particular hurry for him to do so; it might even depend upon circumstances whether he went at all! And more significant than his words, was the fact that he began to give serious attendance at the London office of the firm in which he now had an important share.

Mr. Westbrook's was one of those characters that begin by being all possibility. Most of us have a little actuality to begin with, which is a splendid start at first. But you cannot tell the size of a flower by the size of its seed. Nay, a grain of mustard seed "is indeed the least of all seeds, but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs." The secret lies in that mysterious gift of growing.

Such a little thing means so much to such natures. The very easy goodness of Harry's nature—its sheer want of grasp—had made it seem possible that he could take the world without a struggle—enter into his inheritance, without proving his right thereto. The thing he had needed to learn was that giving goes before taking, and that the heir, so long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant. When Hatty sacrificed the sometimes treacherous joy of self-sacrifice, and did the right thing first instead of vainly striving to accomplish the beautiful one instead, she had taught him this. It showed him that the verb *to be* goes before the verb *to have*.

The native easy goodness stayed. He did not hurry on to any second lesson before he had thoroughly learned the first, and it had served his entire life hitherto. His soul had lived in that silence and solitude which for souls who are strong enough to bear it, is the tropical region of spiritual growth.

"When one has nothing else to remind one of God, I think it makes one hang the harder to one's own prayers," he said. "Why, a travelling missionary's sermon at a station sometimes had to serve me for a whole year. But it always did. The more

I turned it over the more came out of it; you see I was always a slow fellow."

And yet out of this silence and solitude, he stepped into a far wider world than Millicent knew, in her busy life. As she entered into his interests, it was as if a door in a convent garden was opened upon a breezy common.

To him the world did not seem a worn-out world, for himself to galvanise, as it had to Fergus; rather it was a great car rolling upward with so many pulling and pushing it, that his own shoulder to the wheel concerned himself rather than it. He did not stop short to sneer at the petty quibbles and human weaknesses of boards and committees, but lifted up his eyes upon the mission fields, white for harvest, and blessed God for the labourers there, however few. He looked upon the Church in the world, and saw her, as God Himself surely sees her—a queen in disguise, greater than she seems, with jewels hidden under her rags. He was quite sure that there was plenty of heroism and endurance and unselfishness in the world—quite sure; whether he saw it or not, he knew it was there. Perhaps he had learned this faith by a few untold heroisms of his own. It is a way people have of learning that lesson.

He thought thoroughly well of the prospects of humanity, because being a good man, he honestly judged that there were many a great deal better. One may generally know a man by that test.

Poor Millicent! She was conscious of a soft glory like autumn sunlight creeping over her life. She said to herself that it was very pleasant this renewal, this deification, as it were, of an old friendship. Surely it was something like the renewals of heaven—the same old familiarity and dearness—yet so much better. Nay, it seemed a faint, faint type of many of the mysteries of immortality. Had not their friend found his way back to them over all the time and distance, only because they had once been really in his history, and had not he fallen fittingly into a new place among their new ways of life?—not jarring, not disarranging, but completing and beautifying. How many tangles would be so unravelled There! And Millicent lifted up her eyes towards the pleasant fields beyond the swellings of Jordan. And her peace came back as the peace of a little child. For what makes childhood but trust and hope? Only the childhood which is of the kingdom of God trusts in Him instead of man, and hopes in heaven instead of in "growing up."

Only at last there came a something—a

silence—a mystery—between Harry Westbrook and Millicent Harvey. Any stranger, seeing them, would have known at a glance that they were not brother and sister, nor familiar kinsfolk, nor merely old easy friends.

"Do you think that people grow too old for new love?" Mr. Westbrook asked abruptly, as they two were walking home through the lanes after a visit to George and Christian.

"I think it depends on the people themselves," said Millicent.

"Do you think that a love is the richer or the poorer for another love having gone before?" Harry went on.

"I think that too; all depends on what the first love was, and how it was lost," answered poor Millicent.

"I think, then, that I understand you hold the good, old-fashioned belief that there can be but one love, in the supreme sense, for each life?" observed Mr. Westbrook.

"I do think so," said Millicent, raising her dark eyes, where the passionate enthusiasm of youth was not dead, but only sleeping. "I do not believe in 'second love,' as the phrase is often used. I believe in the love that goes on into heaven. In an utter misconception of what love is, lay the grossness of the Sadducees' question about the woman with the seven husbands."

"And yet many second marriages are very happy," said Henry.

"Of course they are," Millicent argued. "Sometimes the second marriage and not the first is the real soul-marriage, and at other times it is a solid and substantial friendship, which after all is nearly as high as love and almost as beautiful, but different."

"And the last is like some so-called 'first love,'" said Harry.

"Yes, that is just so," Millicent answered, knowing in her heart that he was thinking of his own story, "and sometimes they are only blocks for love to be fitted upon, as it were, till it is ready for its proper wearer," and then she knew in her heart that she was thinking of her own.

"What do you think makes a true soul-marriage?" asked Harry.

"When two grow together, and because they are together grow the faster to the full stature possible to their natures," said Millicent, "while in the dearest friendship they may grow apart, and to different heights, till there is little in common between them but the old kindliness."

"Ah, and how precious that is!" said Mr. Westbrook. "If in youth there is a charm

in very novelty, as we grow older the dust Time leaves behind him turns to gold."

"That is so true," Millicent responded.

"Let us turn down this way," said Mr. Westbrook, pausing at the end of a lane, where houses were but sparsely scattered between the hedgerows. "It will make our walk home the longer."

Millicent hesitated just half a minute, and then obeyed. Henry Westbrook was a wise man. That little complaisance put a great deal of courage in his voice, when he said presently,—

"Millicent, do you think you could marry me?"

"I might try, if I were asked," she answered, with a smile about her mouth, though there were tears in her eyes. The pair had come to that time of life when sentiment masquerades in humour.

"You know I've had a 'first love,'" said Henry. "But we are quits, for I'm quite sure you have. It was not that good David Maxwell, and it couldn't be that humbug, Fergus Laurie; yet it seems to me to lie between those two. I think you ought to tell me all about it."

"It was between them," Millicent confessed, with tears brimming over. "They were together, you see, like a bright lantern and a dark one. And the light of the one shone on the other, and the shadow of the other overspread the one. There was a hero and there was a nothing, and I mistook them, don't you see. I made my love upon the block and fancied it was the real man, and only found out the mistake when he did not want it, not even for a shroud!"

Harry Westbrook caressed the hand that lay trembling on his arm. "I think we both got lost in the same jungle," said he. "There was a sister and a wife, and years ago I mistook them."

The playfulness of his tone did not jar the tenderness at Milly's heart. The analogy was fitting. He understood.

"We will both love Hatty better than ever," he went on, "and we will both pray for Fergus Laurie, and if—if we are ever very nearly concerned in naming a little boy-child, we will call him David Maxwell."

"Only—only"—and Millicent's proud head was bowed, and her tears came very fast. "only I feel so afraid that David's life lost something. He gave, but he never got. I don't mean that my love was any loss," she said. "I can't be sure that he ever cared for it. The kind of love I had then was not worth anything—it is worth more now."

because something of him is in it somehow, Harry. But I feel as if he missed something."

"No, Millicent," said her lover. "God has a secret for such as he. Be quite sure of that. And just fancy God keeping a secret for one! What must it not be when his common words are blessings and his open ways make straight the 'Crooked Places?' Such as David are the heirs of God's 'Last things,' and remember what His 'last things' mean—'Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; but thou hast kept the good wine until now.'"

CHAPTER III.—MADE STRAIGHT.

HENRY WESTBROOK and Millicent Harvey were married. A very, very quiet wedding, with no bridesmaids, and even Harriet and Christian only sitting in a pew as "friends." The bride's dress scarcely marked her as a bride. And during their six weeks of beautiful travel in Switzerland they might have been an easy middle-aged pair, taking a rest and a breathing-time on the summit of life, preparatory to jogging down hill together.

They came home, and settled down in an old house at Tottenham, an old red house with old brown rooms, and an old green garden. The Westbrooks were rich people in their quiet way, but they took so many duties along with their wealth, that they still got some pleasure out of their money. It was still a personal treat when they ventured to appropriate a trifle of their wealth for the purchase of an ebony cabinet, or a bit of old red or blue china. And affluent matron as she was, if Millicent still occasionally forgot to put on new gloves quite as soon as she ought, and absolutely neglected to purchase a sealskin jacket or an Indian shawl, till Hatty carried her to do so in triumph, and would not let her off with anything but the best in the best shop—at any rate Millicent never forgot anybody's birthday.

God sent two little children to the quaint roomy house, that seemed as ready for them as an old elm-tree for nests. "Elizabeth" came first, and was old enough to have a doll before "David" arrived. Dear Grandmamma Harvey gets into trouble about those children. Mamma says they really must not go to see her so often, she spoils them so. Poor grandmamma says that it is the spirit of the age that has demoralised her, she is sure she used to be a good disciplinarian; but she thinks the spirit of every age always demoralised grandmamas! Every day she promises to keep them in better order, if they

only come again to-morrow. Little rogues! they ransack the sacred old workbox that her own grown-up daughters think it almost sacrilege to look into. They find the funny old yellow card whereon "Mrs. Devon (long since dead) desired her compliments and hoped that Mr. Harvey and his sister would give her the pleasure of their company at the Vicarage on a certain date." Fancy grandmamma keeping that. How funny! They run off, shouting, to show it to mamma, who takes it tenderly, as if it were a bit of her mother's heart.

All the Webbers—Richard, James, and Ellen—are married. Richard is in Calais, Ellen in the Isle of Wight, and James in Dublin. Mr. Webber's business is chiefly in the hands of managers now, and he and Hatty spend a great deal of time visiting among their children. Hatty's "step-daughters-in-law" all like her so well that their own mothers are in danger of being a little jealous, or would be, only that Hatty conciliates them by the way in which she says,—

"I'm not a mother-in-law, you see. I'm only Dick's stepmother—no real relation at all; don't you understand?" And when the mothers by blood want to give a little advice, they sometimes come to Hatty to suggest it, "because, you know, it is ticklish for relations to interfere. Young people think they are presuming on their rights, but our Dick, or my Jane, will be sure to listen kindly to you, as a friend." And Hatty always gives the advice, and the young people are generally under the impression that they asked her for it and got exactly what they wanted.

George and Christian are living where they did. Their boy Robert is a young man now, and has just taken holy orders. But he is not going to settle in England. He will presently start for the Far West of America, where he is to minister to a little township where the people will all be like himself—emigrants from the old country. They are all going from a certain western shire, in a village of which Robert Harvey is now serving as curate; James Webber, who is a doctor, is, with his young wife, determined to go too. "It is to-day's version of the Pilgrim Fathers," says Christian. "It is your poems in a crystal, my husband. And as for America being very far away, hearts make tracks," she adds, "and heaven is everywhere, and nobody are separated but those who will not be together." And she thinks of Fergus Laurie, who has been in England again and again since he migrated, and yet David's Prayer-Book is still left in her keeping. Christian has written

out David's message concerning it, and the paper is laid inside the book, and the book is made up into a parcel, with "Mr. Fergus Laurie" put outside. It may reach Fergus some day yet. Who knows? None but God.

And here we leave the Harveys. Our story has come round to those with whom it started. Elizabeth Harvey, the widow, and

Cicely Brook, the spinster, are left together in their little leafy cottage. They will have it so. They have not a want unsupplied, but Mrs. Harvey will not leave the old place for any of her children's houses. She tells Millicent (she finds there are now some things which Millicent understands better even than Christian) "I've never lived in a house with a master since I lost my Peter—



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your father, my dear, whom you do not much remember. I'd rather go on as I am."

The two old ladies talk over their simple, ancient gossip, and patiently darn their old lace (they will not have any new) and puzzle their failing eyes over their old books. "Spectacles and all, it takes me a minute to make out a word now," says Mrs. Harvey; "but somehow there seems a great deal more

in it. I think we mostly read too fast, especially in our Bibles."

There is an old hymn which Mrs. Harvey is always crooning when she is left alone. She has it in manuscript, and she has set it herself to a favourite old tune. She has taught it to Bessie and Davie Westbrook. It is sweetly touching to hear them singing it—the dear old cracked voice and the pretty

trebles. Sometimes all the family sing it when they are gathered together.

Listen to their blended voices! There are lines in that plain old hymn that seem made for each :—

“ Take the praise we bring Thee, Lord,
Something more than what we speak,
For the love within us feels
Words uncertain, cold, and weak.
Thoughts that rise and tears that fall,
Praise Thee better : Take them all !
Looking back the way we've come,
What a sight, O Lord, we see,
All the failure in ourselves,
All the love and strength in Thee.
Yet it seemed so dark before,
Would that we had trusted more !

We will shun no future storm,
Sure Thy voice is in its wind ;
We'll confront each coming cloud,
Sure the sun is bright behind :
Praying then, or praising now,
Only wilt Thou teach us how !

Use us for Thy glory, Lord,
In the way that seemeth right,
Whether but to wait and watch,
Or to gird our limbs and fight.
Marching on, or standing still,
Each is best, when 'tis Thy will.

When at last the end shall come,
What, O Lord, is Death but this,
Door of our dear Father's home,
Entrance into perfect bliss,
Peril past, and labour done,
Sorrow over, peace begun !”

The End.

MUSINGS AT EVENTIDE.

I.—SUNLIGHT AND SHADOW.

SUNLIGHT and shadow play upon the hills,
And chase each other on the restless waves,
Seeming to follow but their own sweet wills,
Yet to the powers above them faithful slaves,—
Reflecting every changing cloud with ease,
Stirr'd by a leaf, and dancing with the breeze.

Oh, blessèd shadows ! who so kind as you,
So patient, humble, generous, and good ?
Obedient to the sun, and ever true,
Your presence beautifies the roughest road,
Lends to the sternest rock a tender grace,
And throws a charm upon the meanest place.

Oh, blessèd lights that make the shadows sweet,
That make the world so exquisitely fair !
Life is more full when lights and shadows meet
Than in the midnight gloom or noonday glare ;
And human hearts have little tenderness
Till grief and joy have met in fond caress.

II.—SUGGESTED BY THE CONTROVERSY ON PRAYER.

Wouldst thou then know the power of prayer ?
Walk with thy God, and pray ;
Just as a little child who asks
To learn his father's way :

Not doubting *him*, but looking up
And learning evermore ;
Thou canst not pray, unless thy heart
Will lovingly *adore*.

To ask a sign is unbelief—
Signs meet thee all around ;
In cloud and sun, in air and sea,
And on the hard cold ground.

If sternest Winter yields at last
Beneath Spring's tender kiss,

Colder than Winter is the heart
That finds no sign in this.

If the sun's power can turn the clouds
That darken all the earth
To rainbow-coloured hues and tears
That give the flowers their birth,

Oh, may the Light that lights the sun
Do what is harder still—
Melt into tears the unbelief
That clouds man's darkened will!

Then will life's flowers bud forth and grow,
An Eden everywhere;
And none will ask, for all will know,
What is the power of prayer!

J. BESEMERES.

GOD'S JUDGMENTS.

Being Thoughts on the Fiftieth Psalm.

BY PRINCIPAL CANDLISH, D.D.

III.—RECKONING WITH THE FALSE AND SELF-DECEIVED.

THOSE with whom the Lord is now about to deal, in this judicial investigation or precognition, as it were, anticipating the final judgment, are professedly members of the Church—of the society or community cited collectively (ver. 5) as the Lord's saints, or holy ones; who have made a covenant with him by sacrifice. They themselves claim that character; and in that character they present themselves to God and to their fellow-men. This is implied in the indignant reproof with which the Judge meets them:—"But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy mouth?" (ver. 16.)

They declare the Lord's statutes; his statutes of holiness and love; and by these they profess to stand. Not only so. They take his covenant in their mouth. They openly and solemnly own adherence and obligation to the covenant with God made by sacrifice. They receive with their lips literally the seal and pledge of its sanctity. So they come to be among the number of those whom the Lord, the Judge, is entitled, in this great assize, to call before him as bearing the character of holiness; and standing to him in the relation of reconciliation through the blood of atonement; bound therefore to make good that character and standing.

This is a serious thought for all professing

Christians. Come forth, O thou, whoever thou art, who namest the name of Christ—thou who avowest thyself a Christian—thou who wouldest not for the world be thought to have abandoned thy faith in Christ and thy hope of heaven; come out of thy hiding-place, whatever it may be; come "stripped naked of all but conscience into the open presence of the Holy One!" To be tried! tried! And upon what issue? Art thou what thou wouldest have thy God, or thy fellow-man, or even thyself, take thee to be?

Nor will it avail you to take shelter in any subterfuge; as for instance, in any supposed distinction, even in the Church itself, between the unequivocally devout and a less decided class. You do not aspire to be so very holy or to live so very near to God as some who are accounted eminent saints, and whose right to be so accounted you would be the last to question. The test of spirituality which they can stand might be too high for you. Beware of such a snare. The plea does not really satisfy yourself. It cannot satisfy your God. Debateable ground is always dangerous; evasion is dishonourable. Rather submit yourself out and out to be searched and tried now in the day of grace. It will be all the better for you in the day of judgment.

Let the trial then proceed. The indictment, so to speak, is framed with four successive counts; all turning virtually and

substantially upon the command, "Be not conformed to the world." The instances specified of unsteadfastness and perfidiousness in the Lord's covenant, which you take in your mouth, are, in an advancing series, or a declining one; all of them in the line of worldly conformity.

L "Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee" (ver. 17).

The first evil symptom pointed out is impatience of the Lord's discipline; his chastening and his teaching. The instruction here said to be hated is properly correction, chastisement, smiting (as in Jer. ii. 30; Prov. xxii. 15; xxiii. 13); or what partakes of that character and tends in that direction; warning, admonition, reproof (as in Prov. i. 8; v. 12; Ezek. v. 15).

That is the double meaning of the word "instruction." In that view it fits well into the other term here used to denote the Lord's gracious and salutary dealing with you; his words, his sayings, his teachings.

For these are the two component parts of that discipline of the Lord which you are charged with disliking and despising. What now have you to say to this charge?

Let it be assumed that you are the children of your Father in heaven, and that He is training you and guiding you as his children, as a father on earth trains and guides his son. You are yourself a father. How would you wish and expect your twofold discipline to be taken if your son is dutiful, respectful, loving? You have occasion to inflict upon him some merited punishment, or to threaten him with the infliction of it. He is sullen and sore displeased, and thinks he does well, or has cause, to be angry. If he may not venture to be openly insolent or contumacious, he nurses his wrath in secret. He resents the injury or affront which he thinks he has received, and broods over it gloomily. Or you take pains to teach and inform him as to what is right for him and safe. You tell him what you yourself know of life and duty. You converse with him affectionately, familiarly, confidentially. Alas! you are grieved to see, instead of the frank response of interest and attention, symptoms all too plain of weariness. Nay, in the slightly curled or pouting lip you detect the supercilious air of something like contempt, if not disgust, with which he listens. You painfully perceive that in his own esteem at least he is growing too wise to need such commonplace lecturing as yours; that your homely counsels and old-

fashioned maxims command his regard no more.

Is there never any approach to a state of mind like that in your manner of submission to the Lord's twofold discipline?

First, as to correction, whether actually inflicted or only threatened. When God visits you with trial, how do you feel and act? You do not outwardly complain, nor even inwardly do you actually rebel. You make conscience of schooling or forcing your heart into an attitude of resignation. Nay, you really and honestly try to "be still and know that he is God; to be dumb, not opening your mouth, because it is God that does it." But ah! may it not be the resignation, the silence, the dumbness, of enforced and reluctant acquiescence? You dare not murmur. You will not fight against God. His will be done! But in your inmost soul there is a sense of your being specially unfortunate at least, if not specially ill-treated and ill-used. The burden is very heavy. You resolve through grace to bear it. But it is as in a mood of blank and calm despair!

Is it thus that, as a child of God, you should be affected when in fatherly wisdom and fatherly love he reproves and chastens?

Ah! when, instead of meekly accepting the punishment of your sin, and humbling yourself under his mighty hand, leaning your aching head on his bosom, going to him with the very wound his stroke is causing, opening your heart to him about it, expostulating even and remonstrating concerning its severity; yet still saying, "Though he slay me I will trust in him;"—asking him to show you its occasion and design, and to heal it when it has done its work;—then and not before; when, instead of thus pouring your loud moan into his ear, or your silent groan, as David did, or a greater than David, who "in the days of his flesh made supplication with strong crying and tears;"—you choose to keep your burning emotions pent up in your own breast, and will not speak as a weeping child to a loving father, but chafe and vex yourself in an iron effort of endurance;—can it be said of you that you take in good part the chastening of the Lord? Are you not rather "like a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke?" Is it not the carnal mind still working in you in subordination to the law of your God?

For, secondly, as to his words,—are you not, in such a frame of mind, apt to put them away? They weary you, these words even of wisest counsel and tenderest pity,—words most precious in season. They fall dull and heavy on your ears. Even when

the Spirit brings to your remembrance what Christ has said, it is felt to be dull and stale: as if one were cramming you with old saws against the stomach of your sense, trying to 'charm ache with air and agony with words; to patch grief with proverbs.' The very Bible palls upon you. Its best lessons vex; its choicest consolations jar upon you.

Oh! beware of this first symptom of your heart not being right with God; of a worldly spirit supplanting in you the spirit of adoption. It is the beginning of what may prove a sad decline. Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God by refusing to fall in with your heavenly Father's discipline and teaching. Search me, O Lord, in this particular. Let me not despise Thy chastening, O Lord! or Thy words!

II. "When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers" (ver. 18).

This is the second count in the indictment. It goes beyond the first. It indicates a farther step in the line of declension. The previous charge implied a departure from good; a decline from the right and safe position of sympathy with the discipline of godliness. Here there is sympathy with the principles and practices of the world of ungodliness.

Observe what is the precise charge at this stage. It is not that you yourself commit the sins named, or that any one of you is actually a thief or an adulterer. It is that in some way, and to some extent, you are fellow-partakers, or have fellow-feeling with other men in the commission of these sins. Observe the special danger here. It is very seductive and insidious.

You live in a circle within which there is large allowance made for liberties taken with the exact claims of equity between man and man; and with what is due to the preservation of personal purity, and strict chastity in heart, speech, and behaviour. It may be a circle which owns the law of decency, and of honour; perhaps even the law of chivalry as well. The men with whom you associate would repudiate with indignant scorn the imputation of a lie. They would be the last to make a prey of unsuspecting innocence. You are not the accomplice of thieves liable to be brought to criminal trial. You are not in the confidence of actual seducers, or of reckless profligates. The people with whom you consent, and with whom you are partakers, are not, in so broad and coarse a sense of the terms,

thieves and adulterers. Nor is your consent or concurrence so deliberate and wilful as to imply actual partnership or participation in any such practices. But what then? What are they? What is their honesty? What is their purity? And how do you think and feel as regard either or both?

I must use great plainness of speech here. Thieves. Adulterers. Let the two opprobrious names be taken apart. They indicate the two different sets of worldly men, or the two different sorts of worldly manners, in one or other of whose entanglements you, as Christian professors, halting or hesitating, are but too apt to be ensnared.

Thieves! These are the world's covetous men; unscrupulous in their covetousness; or skilful in overcoming scruples. The world of trade and commerce; the business world, putting forth its eager activity in the counting-house, or the shop, or the writing-chambers; at the exchange or market-place;—has not, even among its own frequenters, any very high reputation for truth, or honesty, or honour. It is with a smile and pleasant jest, or at the utmost a passing frown, that any story is received which tells of gain shrewdly got by skill as against simplicity. What do you say to all that? Does it shock or scandalize you? Or is there a suppressed smile on your lips when you hear of such successful policy? and a wide mantle in your hand ready to be cast over such questionable proceedings?

Adulterers! A strong and coarse word! To charge the Church, or any portion of it, with such gross fellowship! How strange! But yet, look at the world of gaiety, as distinguished from the world of gain. And look at the attitude of many professing Christians towards it. If avarice or hasting to be rich, even on the verge of fraud, is the characteristic of the world of gain, is not luxury ever lapsing into lust, the characteristic of the world of gaiety? Luxury of the senses, of the palate, of the tastes, grosser or more refined; luxury, whether gratifying the animal appetites and instincts, or ministering to the higher sensibilities that are carried captive by the beautiful, the harmonious, the graceful, the sublime; luxury, with far too thin a partition from lust; is it not the atmosphere of fashionable life?—the intoxicating vapour breathed in circles in which it is "idlesse all,"—idle sentiment and idle mirth. And how do you, as Christians, stand affected toward it? Is there a prompt and holy recoil from its light frivolity;—a manly and godly protest against its aimless, listless,

heartless effeminacy? Or are you beginning to inhale the seductive vapour, to tolerate the gay world's luxury; or, for I must speak it plainly, to tolerate the gay world's lust?

Beware of a very subtle snare in this matter. You may say and think that it is not for their success in the arts of gain, or for their loose habits of indulgence, that you frequent the company of your worldly associates. It is for some better tastes and tendencies which you have the discernment to detect, the candour to acknowledge, the tact to draw out. Lay not any such flattering unction to your soul. It is, I repeat, a snare. The very complacency of your supposed discovery betrays you. The conceit of your discrimination is your danger. You who can so well distinguish what is good in your associates from what is evil, may safely venture to have fellowships that might damage weaker brethren. So you think you may touch pitch and not be defiled. For your own sakes I say, Beware!

And for the sake of the lost world, for the sake of perishing souls, for the sake of victims betrayed, and prodigals yearning to return, for the sake of a loving Saviour waiting to be gracious, I say, Beware!

Men are startled now from time to time by alarming disclosures of gigantic fraud and shameless profligacy; morals and manners growing more and more loose. It might almost seem as if it were forgotten that "a false balance is an abomination to the Lord," that "whoremongers and adulterers," however society may regard them, "God will judge." Is the Church lifting up a decided enough protest? Is she denouncing with enough of energy in her own members whatever savours of these sins, or tends towards them? Are you individually keeping yourselves with enough of care, and your households, and all who will hear you, from these contaminations? Oh! see to it that, in addition to all else you may do to purify and elevate life all around you, you yourselves, and all who are yours, are clear from the imputation of "consenting with a thief or being partakers with adulterers," let the names by which they pass current in the world be as smooth and decent as they may. For any fault or failure in this matter soon leads on to what is the third count in the indictment:

III. "Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit" (ver. 19).

The charge now is that of a reckless use of the faculty and opportunity of speech. The

mouth is opened for evil. The tongue is loosed for folly and falsehood. The Lord's solemn warning is to be applied at this stage:—"Every idle word that men speak, they shall give account thereof at the day of judgment." It is a searching test. And it may well be so. For "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." The proud challenge of the ungodly is, "Our lips are our own, who is Lord over us?" The sad cry of the smitten penitent is, "Woe is me, for the uncleanness of my lips." And the sacrifice of praise, which, on the faith of the great sacrifice of atonement, you are to be offering continually, is "the fruit of your lips," cleansed and consecrated by the touch of "a live coal from off the altar." Your prayer, under every fresh experience of the Lord's mercy to yourself, and every fresh impulse to speak of that mercy to others, is, "Open Thou my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Thy praise." The joy of eternity will be to sing with your lips the worthiness of the Lamb that was slain.

Ah! what preparation are you making for this gracious use of your lips on earth, and this glorious use of them in heaven? Is it using them to join with the giddy throng in their idle words and their talk of lying vanities? When you go into the world you hear on every side the language of frivolity and untruthfulness. You dwell among a people of unclean lips. At first, and for a while, in seeing and hearing, you may "vex your righteous soul." In the company of associates, whom you will not, perhaps cannot well, shake off, you witness many things, and are forced to listen to many things that pain and grieve you. You cannot altogether restrain yourselves. You show displeasure. You hint disapproval and dislike. But soon you find that, if you are to be among them at all, it must be as silent endurers, not reprovers, of what is going on. You become schooled to good manners. You take no offence, and you give none. Gradually you are drawn in to bear your share in the genial flow of kindly familiarity and good fellowship. You join lightly in the conversation. You pass the flippant jest, the questionable tale. You can smile at evil, and dissemble truth, and make a mock of sin, and now and then trifle playfully with holy things as freely as the very best of your companions,—or the very worst of them.

And what next? Ah! what next? Satan has well-nigh got you as his own. One more step becomes all but unavoidable.

IV. "Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son" (ver. 20).

This surely is a charge fitted to startle and alarm: an accusation that may well call for serious and solemn dealing.

Look at that poor outcast, long since a wanderer from his early home, his father's dwelling. See him herding with the crew of profligates, by whose flattery and fair speech he has been seduced first, and then betrayed. He is at one of their bacchanalian orgies, seated with them at the table of drunkenness and debauchery. He is talking with them, alas, how familiarly! about their clever tricks and vile intrigues; their schemes of fraud; their lawless pleasures. You perceive that he has ceased to be shocked at anything that is done or said. Ribaldry, profanity, scoffing at truth, indecency, he can now, to any extent almost, endure or welcome. But hark! What noise is heard? What uproar breaks the harmony? One bolder than the rest has dared to utter a vile taunt against the home of that poor wanderer's early days—to question his father's truth, his mother's love—to insinuate a doubt of his brother's honour or his sister's fair name. The outcast's heart is stabbed. His blood is all on fire. He starts to his feet and clenches his angry hand. Woe betide the dastard caitiff who has ventured to touch the tender chord that still beats true in the exile's lone and desolate breast.

Ah! but if he sits mute under the cruel and unmanly outrage; if he takes quietly the unworthy insult; if, instead of resenting it, he is even heard to join in the abuse heaped upon the inmates of his childhood's pure abode, you turn away with sad and sickened heart. The last corruption of the deadly plague is upon him. He has no vestige, no remnant, of nature's kindness any more. He has ceased to be a man. You feel that you can but leave him in dark despair to his inevitable doom.

You see the parallel, and can make the application. On the downward sliding scale of your sad return to folly in a foolish world, you may reach sooner than you think even such a depth as I have indicated. Nay, the alarming symptom may come out very early. Mark how insidiously the subtle poison works.

On the one hand, to go back for a moment to the previous part of the Psalm (vers. 14, 15), you cease in your intercourse with God to be Israelites indeed in whom is no guile; offering to God thanksgiving; paying your vows; calling upon Him in trouble. Your

religion begins again to be formal, ceremonial, self-righteous; a sort of attempt to please God by outward services, while the heart is not right with Him. There is no longer a clear understanding of the footing on which you should be with God as his holy ones covenanting with Him by sacrifice.

Then, on the other hand, flowing from this estrangement, and from the suspicion and dislike which it engenders,—First, There is a growing impatience of God's ways of dealing with you; his wholesome teaching, and salutary discipline. Secondly, There is a growing tolerance of the world's ungodly men and corrupt manners; a growing familiarity with evil. Thirdly, There is a growing disposition to take part in the world's loose talk; its vain and frivolous and false conversation. Fourthly, There is a growing willingness to uncover the nakedness of fathers and brethren in the household of God. You rather like to censure and criticize the righteous;—as if their infirmities might hide or excuse your faults. It comes to be a relief to you to hear a godly friend's character assailed. You are the easier for some good story about him lightly circulating round the company. A pang of shame may perhaps shoot across your bosom as you suffer your features to relax into a smile; you may have some misgivings as you suppress the word of explanation or defence that conscience is moving you to utter. But it does not last. You begin to relish tales that bring ridicule or discredit on Christian friends as heartily as any of your companions, and to tell them with as rich humour and as good a zest. It is high time surely to pause, to think, to tremble.

I have a few words to say about the closing verses of the Psalm. They indicate at once the root of the sad tendency towards backsliding and apostasy; and the only effectual remedy or safeguard against it.

1. "These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes. Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver" (vers. 21, 22). Forgetfulness is the charge here; forgetfulness of God; forgetfulness of his being a reprover, a setter in order, a tearer in pieces, with none to deliver. All that is traced up to his keeping silence; and to the misconstruction of his keeping silence; as if it warranted the thought of his being altogether such an one as ourselves. It is "the error of the wicked," against which the Apostle

Peter thinks it needful to warn even the faithful (2 Peter iii. 17), "Beware lest ye also"—even ye—"being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness." It is the error of the wicked, "the scoffers who are to come in the last days, walking after their own lusts and saying, Where is the promise of his coming?" But it is an error with which you may be led away. For it is the error of the natural mind, misreading or misinterpreting the silent forbearance and long-suffering patience of God. It is a deep and deadly error, and lies at the foundation of all that loose and careless way of walking with God which exposes even his own people to the risk of being drawn away, or "falling from their steadfastness." It is the error of reckoning on impunity or indulgence; fancying that some venial instances of infidelity may be overlooked; putting back and far away the thought of a strictly righteous judicial reckoning; relying on indiscriminating mercy. Be sure that when that error leads you away—be the deviation ever so small—be it that in a single insignificant particular you are tempted secretly to say, as you venture on a doubtful liberty, "This may escape notice, or may not demand investigation," you really run all the risk of that onward and downward course which issues in the bold defiance—"Where is the God of judgment?" or at least in the fond imagination, "He is such an one as myself."

2. "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I show the salvation of God"

(ver. 23). Your real and only security lies in the line of the positive and active Christian life; offering praise such as is glorifying to God; ordering your conversation so that He may show you his salvation. For the Christian life, to be a reality, must be not a mere No, but a decided Yes! Not refusing to go back, but resolving through grace to go forward! To be safe you must be busy; for

"Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do."

Busy? About what? The praise of God and your own highest good; the glorifying of God and the right ordering of your whole conduct; and that with a view to see more and more of the salvation of God. Let there be a high and holy ambition in your souls to "grow in grace and in the knowledge of your Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." For it is not the offering of praise that in itself will avail anything, but the giving of all glory to God; the owning of his sovereignty in the gospel of his Son. It is not the right ordering of your conversation, your conduct, in his sight, but his showing you his salvation. Follow on to know the Lord more fully. Let Him be all your salvation and all your desire. Be ever growing up into Him who is the Head, in all things. "O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together. Let us worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. Let us wait upon the Lord that we may renew our strength; that we may mount up with wings like eagles, that we may run and not be weary, that we may walk and not faint."

SEPTEMBER.

AN April burst of beauty,
And a May like the Mays of old,
And a glow of summer gladness
While June her long days told;

And a hush of golden silence
All through the bright July,
Without one peal of thunder
Or a storm-wreath in the sky;

And a fiery reign of August,
Till the moon was on the wane,
And then short clouded evenings
And a long and chilling rain.

I thought the summer was over,
And the whole year's glory spent,
And that nothing but fog and drizzle
Could be for Autumn meant:

Nothing but dead leaves falling
Wet on the damp, dark mould,
Less and less of the sunshine,
More and more of the cold.

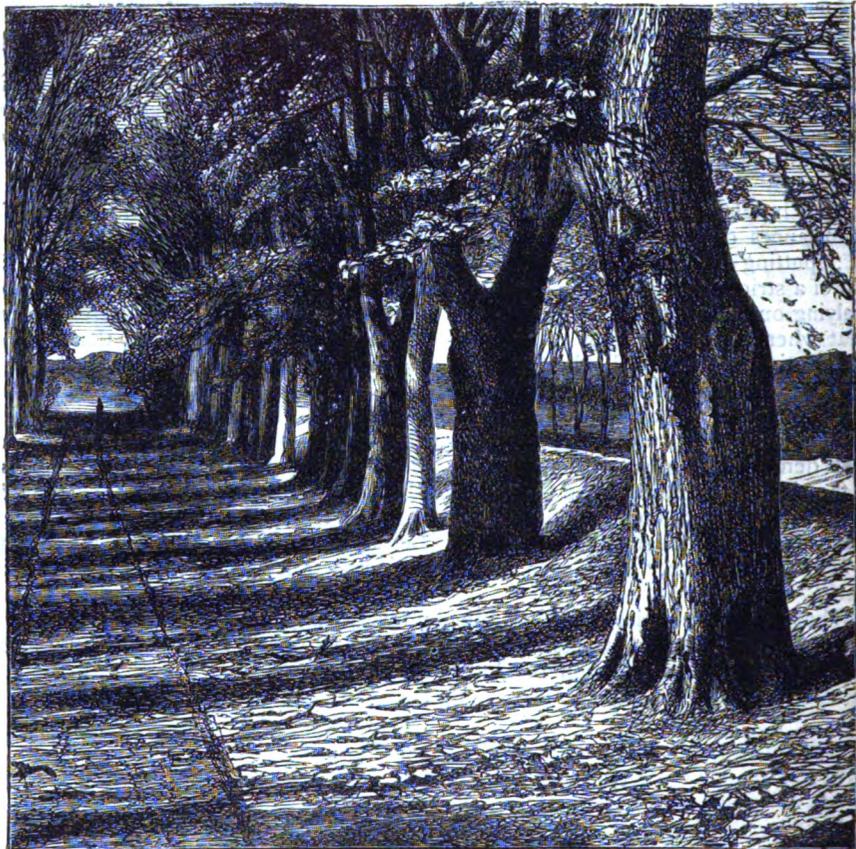
But oh! the golden day-time;
And oh! the silver nights;
And the scarlet touch on the fir-trunks
Of the calm grand sunset lights!

And the morning's bright revealings,
Lifting the pearly mist,
Like a bridal veil, from the valley
That the sun hath claimed and kissed;

And oh! the noontide shadows,
Longer and longer now
On the river margin resting,
Like the tress on a thoughtful brow.

Rich fruitage bends the branches
With amber, and rose, and gold,
O'er the purple and crimson asters,
And geraniums gay and bold.

The day is warm and glowing,
But the night is cool and sweet;
And we fear no smiting arrows
Of fierce and fatal heat.



The leaves are only dropping
Like flakes of a sunset cloud;
And the robin's song is clearer
Than Spring's own minstrel crowd.

A soft new robe of greenness
Decks every sunny mead;
And we own that bright September
Is beautiful indeed.

Is thy life-summer passing?
Think not thy joys are o'er!
Thou hast not seen what Autumn
For thee may have in store.

Calmer than breezy April,
Cooler than August blaze,
The fairest time of all may be
September's golden days.

Press on, though Summer waneth,
And falter not, nor fear,
For God can make the Autumn
The glory of the year.

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL.

September, 1869.

THE FUTURE OF THE WORKING CLASSES.

VI.—THE WORKMAN OUT OF HARNESS.

THE Englishman's house is his castle."

It may be a very good proverb to denote the Englishman's theoretical freedom, but it is rather grotesque when you come to particulars. When you inquire about this same castle, it becomes too often a castle in the air, or, rather, a castle underground—the donjon-keep, and nothing more. A cellar or a garret—a single room with half a window—an airless, cheerless, lifeless enclosure, as if constructed on principle to banish sunshine, propagate disease, and accelerate death. Of all material things that concern the comfort and general elevation of the workman of the future, during the very important part of his time which he spends out of harness, the most important by far is this castle. Of all the advices that could be given to the head of a household who has secured better wages and more leisure, and wishes to know to what use to turn them, the most urgent, so far as outward things go, is: Get into a better house. Make a solemn league and covenant against darkness, dirt, and damp; secure as much space as you can, the more the better; and let the house not only be well-built, but well-aired, well-lighted, and well-looking. If possible, let it be your own property. The wholesomeness of your dwelling, in its influence both on the mind and the body of yourself and of your family, depends far more on such things than is dreamt of by many.

But if it be needful to look to the quality of the house, much more is it needful to look to the quality of its living furniture. We are not going to repeat what has been said so often and so well about the housekeeper, —or dwell on her blessed function to make home bright and happy, and by the glow of the fireside, and the glow of a loving heart, by her blitheness, as the Scotch ballad expresses it, "but and ben," create an attraction that, out of harness, no husband can resist. We are not going to dwell on the duty of the husband to foster by kind and considerate conduct this radiant spirit in his wife, nor on the duty of the wife to strive to cherish it, even through all the chill and frost of a bad husband's bitter temper. We would rather spend a few moments in glancing at another aspect of the subject,—nothing less than the question, what means can be taken to secure that, with God's blessing, the young women of the working classes of the

future shall be better fitted for the momentous duties of wives and mothers?

It is a question of the utmost possible interest, however trifling it may seem to some. Many a young woman becomes a wife with little or no capacity to make her home bright and attractive, and turns out, as the case may be, a slut, or a gossip, a vixen, a drunkard, or a thief. Is there no way of so preparing young women for their future duties that, at the firesides of our working men, treasures and jewels shall be multiplied tenfold, and the homes over which they preside shall be filled with "glints and gleams of heaven?"

Intensely vital though this question is, and much though it is pondered by many Christian philanthropists in the middle and upper classes,—by clergymen, authors, the promoters of mothers' meetings, educators, and the like,—it does not yet appear to have taken much hold of the working classes themselves, or of those among them who are forward to advance their interests. May we hope ere long to see it otherwise? To find working people taking a most lively interest in the question, What is the best education for girls? and what are the employments most fitted to prepare them for family duties? What can be done to chain the demon of licentiousness, which, worse than Sphinx or Minotaur of old, drags so many poor maidens to a beastly life and a horrid death? Is there no way of checking the inordinate love of finery in dress, and the still more pernicious thirst for frivolity and worse than frivolity in literature? What are the influences of example, of education, and, above all, of religion, that are best fitted to rear a race of intelligent, pure-minded, true-hearted women, who shall be a crown to their husbands, and whose children shall arise and call them blessed?

We start the question, but we have no time to linger over it. We must say, however, that we should have better hopes for the future of the working classes if we saw it looked at by them as earnestly as it is by some of their friends outside. We cannot readily forget, in this connection, the efforts of the late Mrs. Ellis, wife of the well-known Mr. Ellis, of Madagascar. She had spent her life in teaching girls of the middle and upper classes of England, and in writing books chiefly for that circle. Not far from

fourscore years, the thought struck her forcibly that in these days of Mechanics' Institutes and popular lectures, many young men of the working class were getting beyond the point at which the young women of the same class were intellectually fitted to be their companions. To remedy this defect, to draw out the intellect of servant girls and others of the same rank, to lead them to use their minds, and to enlarge their conceptions, she formed a young women's class for common things. One night the subject would be astronomy. She would ask their theories of the stars. One girl said they were lamps hung in heaven; another, holes which the glory of heaven shone through. Some outline would then be given by Mrs. Ellis of the wonders of astronomy. Another evening, the conversation would be about books. What, after the Bible, do you consider the most useful book ever written? One answered, the Pilgrim's Progress; another—of the utilitarian stamp—Bradshaw's Railway Guide. There would follow an hour's talk on useful books, including a right estimate of the trash so often devoured. Other friends not less zealous have helped to teach girls of the working class how to knit or sew, how to cook and how to nurse, how to manage children, and generally, as far as instruction can go, how to make home bright and happy. And, more or less directly and earnestly, most of those of whom we now write have sought above all things to bring the soul under the saving influence of that divine grace which alone can truly fit either men or women for their highest functions. When will the day come when working people shall not only allow such things to be done by others, but actively and earnestly prosecute them themselves?

But much though we value home and its influences, we are well aware that the social cravings implanted in our nature prompt men to seek for a wider fellowship with their kind, when out of harness, than the members of their own families supply. And it is one of the advantages which the lot of the middle and upper classes has over that of the lower, that it gives them better opportunity for cultivating social life. The size of their houses, the extent of their means, and the assistance of their servants, make it comparatively easy for them to enjoy the society of friends; while for others the absence of these conditions makes it impossible. The cultivation of social life may, indeed, be said to be one of the chief distinctions of the aristocratic

class; it lies to them to find out and put in practice all that goes to make the intercourse of friends agreeable; to form that code of social law which represses improprieties, and smoothes the tone of speech and manners; and by tact and courtesy towards those whom they bring together, to make the gifts and qualities of each contribute to the pleasure and good of all. This will always be one of the things looked for in an upper class; one of the things which, in consequence of their advantages, they can do better than any other, and would do better if common sense always prevailed over mere conventionality, and if their fellowship were always impregnated with a Christian spirit and directed by a Christian aim. The middle class, too, have generally considerable opportunities of enjoying social life; and as it comes to them more as a change from their ordinary way, and not as a constant thing, it has often more zest and real interest, and serves better as a refreshment and incitement to their more ordinary employments. But hitherto the working class have been in most unfavourable circumstances for enjoying the fellowship of their friends. Their houses have been unadapted for it; and hence the craving for society has generally led the men to the public-house; the women have had to limit themselves to the fireside chat of their neighbours; and the social inclinations of the children have found little outlet but in the stairs or the street. In the case of young men and young women, the opportunities of becoming acquainted in a seemly way have been very limited; their courtship has had to be carried on in all manner of strange ways and places; the refining influence of society has been lost, and so also has been the real brightness and enjoyment which come of a happy, easy blending of old and young, male and female, grave and gay, in social fellowship. Now, this is a real want in human life. It is the want of one of the lesser aids which God designed for the full and wholesome development of character, and the absence of which is liable to lead to artificial substitutes of a pernicious kind. If, then, the working classes are securing better wages and more leisure, let them consider whether something may not be done now for supplying this want. We write these papers with the more thoughtful and sober-minded of the class more immediately in our eye; and it would be wrong to insult them by asking, whether the course which we have indicated would not be unspeakably wiser than that followed by so many men, who, finding them-

selves *embarras des richesses*, pour them out in mere gluttony and debauchery. Can nothing be done to give them a conception of the real joys of social life? Can the younger men not lay the foundations of a new order of things, in which social enjoyment shall be wrenched from the dominion of Belial,—

“The dissoluteest spirit that fell,
The sensuallest, and after Asmodai,
The fleshiest incubus,”

and made the handmaid of all that is pure and ennobling?

Another question is likely to present itself to some. Supposing the working classes, or many of them, to become well taught, and to share in the culture of the age; supposing them to acquire more refinement of manner, and to be able to express themselves without effort and awkwardness in conversation, what probability is there of class meeting more with class in social intercourse, of caste restrictions being abated, of a more free social fellowship among all ranks of society? To this question our reply is, that of such a blending of classes there is not much probability. There may be a greater degree of intercourse occasionally, but that the different orders of society will break down the fences by which they have commonly been separated socially does not seem in any degree probable. As a general rule, when men have the power of choice, they choose their associates and intimate friends from among those who have been brought up like themselves, and whose pursuits, associations, and sympathies are like their own. For the most part, too, men feel most at home, and enjoy intercourse most, with persons in the same circumstances of life as themselves. Occasionally, under peculiar circumstances, high and low may come together—would that they did so oftener! But we have no idea of a time coming when even the most cultivated of workmen will find himself the companion of more than a few persons outside his own order. Nor can we much regret this, because, for the most part, men are able to enjoy society far the most heartily among their own class. “Like draws to like,” and will continue to do so. The upper class, consisting of those whose wealth and leisure make them independent of all formal labour; the middle class, depending more on mental than on bodily exertion; and the working class, eating their bread in the sweat of their face, will probably continue to draw their society mainly from the members of their own orders. But the culture of mind, speech, and manners on the part of the working class

would certainly tend to lower the walls of partition which at present keep them so separate, and perhaps to bring them nearer in sympathy and good-will. But far more powerful in this respect would be the influence of a common religion and a common worship; nothing genders the feeling of kinship, or promotes the sense of unity so much as fellowship in the experiences of the Christian life, a common reliance on the grace of the Saviour, and a common and active interest in Christian work. Would that there were more prospect of a time when everywhere the rich and the poor should meet together, and worship the Lord—the Maker and Redeemer of them all!

Among the things that contribute to the amenity of cultivated and intellectual society, there are some by no means beyond the reach of the working classes. For example, music. We know of no good reason why they should not avail themselves of this delightful means of refreshment and exhilaration far more than they have ever done. Now that singing is so generally taught in schools, and that musical instruments of tolerable quality are so much cheaper, the opportunity of enlivening their homes by music is wonderfully increased. Of course it has its temptations; music-worship is a common snare, and the younger members of families need to take special care that music in some form does not draw them off from more prosaic but indispensable occupations.

Could the working man aspire to travel? The question is a vague one, for what does travel mean? Already, on a limited scale, he finds it within his easy reach. Excursion trains convey him with great ease to favourite scenes in his native country, and enable him to become familiar with places that have either great historic interest or great charm of scenery. Is it vain to expect that he should transcend the limits of his native country, and see a little of the world beyond? We know that to see the world is often a strong desire in his breast; very commonly it is one of the great inducements to a sailor's life; the imagination of the boy revels in the thought of seeing strange countries, with all their wonderful features and products. In the United States of America the love of travel has reached a lower stratum of society than with us; cases are not unknown of working men struggling to accumulate enough to carry them over the European tour. Bayard Taylor was but a working compositor when he formed the plan of his travels, and with rare and almost reckless

enterprise set out with the intention of working at his trade at sundry places in his route, in order to realise enough to carry him onwards. It is not to be supposed that more than a few of the more adventurous spirits among working men would think of such an undertaking as that of visiting foreign countries; probably the engagements of few would admit of it, but to some it is a practicable scheme. Many is the delightful tour in foreign lands that might be had for the money often spent in the alehouse, absorbing no more time than the sum of the days lost to labour in bouts of intemperance.

The changes that have recently taken place in the political world have brought to the great mass of working men the right to take part in politics. For the most part it is not an inviting sphere; but questions that bear closely on the welfare of the community, and the true progress of society, deserve the earnest consideration of all. There is one question of extreme urgency, that concerns the dearest interests of the working class, and that will probably be never satisfactorily settled except through their influence. We refer to the licensing system. It is the interests of working men and their families that are most involved in the question, whether at every corner in our great towns, and at every spot in the country where it is conceivable that men or women should be athirst for something stronger than water, public-houses shall send forth their temptations to all and sundry. It is the working classes that are directly concerned to set limits to a system that, like the lean kine of Pharaoh's dream, threatens to swallow up every given thing that the years of plenty may bring to the hands of the labourer. What is to be the attitude of the working classes towards the licensing system? Of course there is a division of feeling on the subject. There are many to whom the shutting up of the public-house would be the removal of the only institution that brings any feeling of ease and enjoyment to their jaded souls. But there are others who know well that, however sweet its revelry may be in the mouth, it is bitter enough in the belly, and who are grieved to the heart to witness the multitude of public-houses, each, more or less, a propaganda of drinking—a nursery of the worst habit that can enslave humanity. For our own part we do not hesitate to avow our belief that the public-house system is the greatest blunder, not to say crime, of our country. But we have little hope of anything effectual being done to lessen the number of such places, till the

people themselves are more thoroughly roused to a sense of their evil, and until the argument that they are necessary, in all their overwhelming numbers, for the comfort of the working man, is disproved decisively by the working man himself.

There is another subject that tempts us strongly, while we thus touch on the salient points of what we would fain look for in the more disengaged hours of the working man of the future. Why should he not, if God give him the heart for it, contribute most valuable aid to the "work of faith and labour of love" of the Christian Church? After all, this is the noblest work. It is the only work that is thoroughly satisfactory—that reaches as it were to the bottom of things—that forms an adequate use for the superior benefits which the working man has lately been struggling to obtain. It is all very well to struggle for the opportunity of doing justice to the higher part of his nature; but when he has got this higher power, this ability to use his intellect, this opportunity to exercise his affections, this capacity of some of the more refined enjoyments of life, what is the highest use to which the whole may be put? Is the horizon of life not to widen with the higher altitude he has reached? Is there to be nothing in his experience corresponding to that blending of the earthly and the heavenly horizons, that union of earth and heaven which he beholds, when from some lofty point he gazes round and round? The working class has always been noted for the interest of its members in one another. What is the highest use to which that kindly interest can be put? To help on schemes that promote the welfare of mind and body is good; but to try to extirpate the disease that lies at the root of all disorder; to get introduced into the hearts of all working men the germ of a new life which will gather to itself all that is good and pure; to bring them back to their Father's house, and reinstate them in their lost inheritance, is surely better—is surely the best of all.

If the Christian working man of the future sets himself thus to help on the work of Christ, and benefit his fellows in the highest sense, it will be the brightest feature of the good time coming. Not but that in the past many a working man has borne his hand willingly and nobly in this work; but this has taken place only exceptionally, not as a general rule. The public are getting more used to the idea of laymen doing a measure of service in the Christian church; we hear much of "the universal priesthood of be-

lievers." In many cases, workmen would be the best missionaries to workmen. Missionaries, we mean, of the less formal type, endeavouring, by conversation and otherwise, to win their comrades to Christ. Foremen, elderly men, and even young men, in large works, how much have they in their power! How much have they sometimes done! And should the ardent soul pant for a larger sphere, might not some of our Christian mechanics follow the example of their German brethren, and go abroad to work at their trades, and at the same time act as missionaries? What glory could be higher and

purser? What stars would more brighten the firmament of labour than the names of men whose irrepressible devotion to their Lord and love of their brethren, induced them to fill up every spare hour with the work of faith and the labour of love?

As we indulge in such anticipations, it almost seems as if

"Time will run back and fetch the age of gold."

It is well to think of that age, and to work towards it, even though, like the promises made to the fathers, it may be yet afar off.

W. G. BLAIKIE.

ILLUSTRATION OF THE BIBLE FROM ANCIENT INSCRIPTIONS.

By H. B. TRISTRAM, F.R.S.

PART II.

IN a previous paper on this subject, the course of Jewish and Israelitish history was traced back from the close of the Old Testament period to the epoch of the captivity of the northern kingdom, as illustrated by the records of Persia and Assyria, brought recently to light by the researches of the Rawlinsons, Layard, and others. The preservation of these Assyrian records has been certainly providential. The local conditions which have buried for so many ages all traces of the great cities of the Euphrates under undistinguishable sand-heaps, and have left scarce any monuments above ground, have contributed to the preservation of the national records. Timber and stone being equally scarce, clay was the almost exclusive building material. From the deficiency of fuel, sun-burnt bricks were principally employed. These having crumbled from the effects of time and occasional rains, have buried the contents of the palaces under the great mounds which stud the country, where, unsuspected and undisturbed, they have lain for ages. But clay was early adopted also as the material for the reception of inscriptions. The cylinders were moulded, the letters stamped upon the surface of the soft clay, and then the bricks were baked, and on this material the state calendars of Assyria have been written. Not perishable, like the papyrus of Egypt, infinitely more rapidly executed than the tedious engraving upon granite of semi-pictorial hieroglyphical characters,

these cylinders have remained safe from exposure to weather, and fresh as the day when they came from the kiln, buried under crumbling masses of brickwork and sand, ready to be exhumed, when in due time the earth should crack, and yield up these contemporary evidences of the minute accuracy of the Scripture Record.

Yet, at the same time that Assyria has been supplying in rapid succession incontrovertible dates for the illustrations of the regal period of Israel and Judah, the evidence brought to light by the monuments of Egypt has been, though less profuse, not less decisive. In the later period of the Jewish monarchy, there are four points of contact in the Bible record between its history and that of Egypt. Four African kings are mentioned there by name—So, king of Egypt (2 Kings xvii. 4); Tirhakah, king of Ethiopia (2 Kings xix. 9); Pharaoh Necho (2 Kings xxiii. 29; xxiv. 7; 2 Chron. xxxv. 20); and Pharaoh Hophra (Jer. xlv. 30, and xlvi.).

Following the plan of tracing the illustrations up the course of the stream of time, we commence with Pharaoh Hophra. This monarch has been always admitted to be the Apries mentioned by Herodotus. But the Egyptian inscriptions give us more exact details, calling him by the name of Haifra, identical with the Hebrew Hophra, and fixing his reign as having ended some years before that of Nebuchadnezzar, while Egyptian history proves the accomplish-

ment of Jeremiah's prophecy of his miserable end.

Of Pharaoh Necho, the next predecessor but one of Hophra, celebrated for his attempt to cut the isthmus of Suez, and for his successful circumnavigation of Africa, we have full accounts in profane writers; and the mention of his defeat of Josiah by Herodotus is well known. The Greek writer, however, who was ignorant of the topography of Palestine, makes the slight error of speaking of the battle-field as Magdalos, or Migdol, instead of Megiddo. He also mentions his capture of Cadytis or Gaza. Necho frequently occurs as Neku, on the monuments of Egypt, and his history is by them fully corroborated.

Psammetichus, his predecessor, does not occur in sacred history, and we find from the Egyptian records that he was too fully occupied in consolidating the kingdom of Egypt, which he had seized, to occupy himself with Syrian conquests. But in the reign of Hezekiah, we read that during the invasion of Sennacherib, Tirhakah, king of Ethiopia, came out against him. Now, Tirhakah is given by Manetho as the third king of the Ethiopian dynasty, under the Grecised name of Taracus. On the Egyptian monuments he is called Taharak, or Tehrak, the consonants of the name, T, H, R, K, being identical with the Hebrew. But from the chronology of the Egyptian monuments, we find that Tehrak did not ascend the throne of Egypt until about seven years after the date assigned for the death of Hezekiah. How then could he have been his contemporary? The solution is simple, when we observe that he is called in the Book of Kings king of *Ethiopia*, not of Egypt, and that probably he reigned over Ethiopia about ten years before he gained the kingdom of Egypt proper.

As Tirhakah is identified with the third and last king of the Ethiopians, So, king of Egypt, spoken of as having made a league with Hoshea, king of Israel, may be identified with the first of that dynasty. The name So does not occur on the Egyptian monuments; but the Hebrew word thus rendered into English consists of three letters, all of which may be consonants, S, V, H, *i.e.*, Sheveh, and we find in the inscriptions that there were two successive kings, father and son, each called Shebek, immediately before Tehrak, so that the chronology would exactly fit. Shebek is called Sevech in Manetho's lists, and Sabaco by Herodotus. Thus the identity is unmistakable. But we are told (2 Kings xvii. 4) that Hoshea sent an embassy to So, when he attempted to shake off

the Assyrian yoke, and that then Shalmaneser invaded Israel, and finally captured Samaria, thus ending for ever the northern kingdom.

One of the most extraordinary incidental illustrations of the Scripture history is connected with this circumstance. We see here clearly the kings of Assyria and Egypt brought into collision. Now, Mr. Layard discovered in Nineveh a most remarkable clay impression of two seals, which had been impressed on the same piece of clay, side by side, and had doubtless been attached, after the Egyptian and Assyrian fashion, continued in our own legal documents, to some treaty or deed written on papyrus or vellum. The Egyptian seal is that of Shebek, well known by its identity with his signet on Egyptian monuments, but also containing his name Shebek in hieroglyphics. The seal of the Assyrian seems to be that of Sennacherib, the immediate successor of Shalmaneser, but does not, like the Egyptian, give his name. It would seem thus that a peace having been concluded between the two monarchs, the royal signets were together attached to the document, which was deposited in the archives of the kingdom, and has mouldered away ages ago. But in the seal, now deposited in the British Museum, we have this singular proof of the meeting, or at least of the alliance of the two monarchs, preserved among the remains of the state papers of the Assyrian empire, furnishing, as Mr. Layard observes, one of the most remarkable instances of confirmatory evidence on record. As an illustration of Scripture history, for it was probably in consequence of the intrigues with Hoshea, mentioned in the Book of Kings, that Shebek was compelled to make the treaty with the triumphant Assyrian monarch.

Following up the course of contemporary history from the times of Uzziah to that of Jehu, more than a century, we have scarcely an allusion in the Bible to any of the neighbouring nations, none to Egypt or Assyria. At this time both Judah and Israel were strong, and were employed in extending their power over their respective neighbours, unmolested by either of the great empires on the Nile and the Euphrates. Here too the records of Assyria and Egypt corroborate, as much by their silence, as elsewhere by their detailed testimony. Both kingdoms were at this time torn by intestine troubles. The inscriptions of Egypt are entirely silent upon foreign events during this period; we have no records of Phœnicia at this time; and the only Assyrian record

are a few short inscriptions, mentioning some campaigns, but none of them reaching as far west as Syria or Palestine, and also specifying internal revolts.

When, however, we reach the times of Jehu and Jehoshaphat we have an uninterrupted *catena* of references and illustrations back to the time of Solomon. The relations of the Israelite kingdoms at this period were chiefly with Syria, but of that nation we possess no continuous records, and its history, so far as it is supplied from profane sources, can be gathered only from fragmentary allusions in the annals of other nations.

In one of the most important records of the Assyrian kingdom, known as the Black Obelisk, discovered by Mr. Layard under the ruins of the palace of Shalmaneser II. (to be distinguished from his successor already referred to), and which is now in the British Museum, we have some remarkable incidental illustrations of the contemporary history of the Book of Kings. It mentions three expeditions against Benhadad, king of Syria, and a fourth, four years after the third, against Hazael. It makes no mention of any expedition against Israel, but it states that Jehu the son of Omri, king, sent tribute to the Assyrian king. This tallies with the Scripture record, so far as the omission of any invasion of Israel, whose king probably thought it prudent to propitiate the invader of his neighbour by a present. There might be some difficulty as to Jehu being described as the son of Omri, which indeed he may have been by the mother's side, but it is very probable that the Assyrians finding him the successor of that famous monarch, described him as also his descendant.

Another incidental illustration is the mention of the number of chariots captured from Benhadad, when, on referring to the account of the Syrian armaments of the same prince in Kings, we find his chariots twice emphatically mentioned. Shalmaneser boasts that on one occasion he captured eleven hundred chariots.

Tracing back the Bible history, we now come to a corroboration of one of its episodes, from a most unexpected quarter. It was in the year 1868, that the Rev. F. A. Klein, of the Church Missionary Society, discovered at Dibon in Moab the now famous monolith of King Mesha. Though unhappily since broken by the Bedouin, the greatest part of the fragments have been recovered, and we are in possession of a copy and squeeze taken before its destruction,

so that there is little controversy as to the translation of anything except a few words of the inscription. The outlines of the history of the Moabite Stone must be familiar to all our readers. It may be sufficient to remind them that it is three hundred years older than the earliest monument with characters alphabetic like our own, which was hitherto known, the Phœnician Sarcophagus of Eshmunazar: that if we have not in it the original characters used in writing, we have the earliest known representations of them. The language is unmistakable Hebrew, with slight dialectic differences. Thus we see at once why in their intercourse with the Moabites the Israelites had no need to employ interpreters, as they did with the Egyptians and Syrians. The objection which has been raised as to the difference of languages precluding the intercourse described in the story of Balaam and Balak, is thus at once disposed of. It is remarkable, too, that in this inscription the words are all separated from each other by points. It shows also that the dialect of Moab was in accordance with the Hebrew in the use of the four consonants which represent vowels, and differed entirely from the Phœnician.

But when from the style we turn to the matter of the inscription, we find still further illustration of Scripture. We learn from Numbers and Judges that the district north of the Arnon, or one half of the original country of Moab, had been wrested from its possessors by the Amorite king Sihon, and was in turn taken from him by Israel, and colonised by the men of Reuben and Gad. But the Moabites had not in the course of three hundred years (as we see in Judges xi.) forgotten their ancient claim; and accordingly in the Moabite stone, King Mesha speaks of a part of the land having been for many ages in the possession of the Israelites, and mentions especially "the men of Gad," who had held Ataroth from of old. The Book of Numbers (xxxii. 3, 34) specifies Ataroth in particular as one of the cities along with Dibon, and others, which were allotted to Gad and Reuben.

With the exception of the temporary subjugation of Israel by Eglon king of Moab in the earlier period of the Judges, and the conquest of Moab by David, there is but one political episode recorded in which the history of Moab and Israel meet, and that is in 2 Kings iii., the war with Mesha. The exploits of the same king in this war are the subject of this the solitary Moabite monument which has been discovered. It tells of Omri, king of

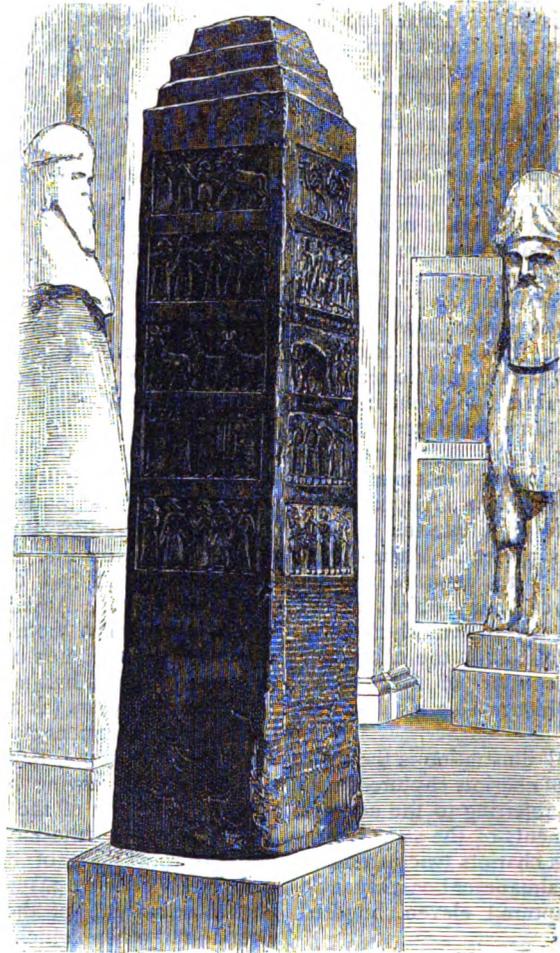
Israel, having oppressed Moab many days ; while the Book of Kings mentions that at the death of Ahab the tribute of Moab amounted to the enormous impost of one hundred thousand lambs, and one hundred thousand rams with the wool, meaning probably one hundred thousand fleeces ; and that the Moabites then revolted. A league was formed between the kings of Israel, Edom, and Judah, the latter probably provoked by the invasion of Judæa mentioned in 2 Chron. xx., who mustered a mighty host, and took the circuitous route by the south end of the Dead Sea, to invade Moab. The story shows the reason of this, for it states that Mesha had seized upon all the towns on the northern frontier and fortified them. Defeated in the open field, Mesha shut himself up in Kir-Haraseth, the still virgin fortress of Kerak. There he sacrificed his eldest son to his god Chemosh, and so raised the fury of his people to the highest pitch. The same writer adds, "There was great indignation against Israel, and they

departed from him, and returned to their own land" (verse 27), *i.e.* had to raise the siege. Mesha's stone explains the result. Having failed in their attempt to reduce his great fortress, the Israelites seem to have been immediately occupied in their struggle against Hazael. Mesha seized his opportunity, and reduced successively, he tells us, Dibon,

Bezer, Kirjathaim, Baal-Meon, Ataroth, and Nebo, at the very time when Hazael was beginning to cut Israel short in those regions east of Jordan, "from Aroer which is by the river Arnon, even Gilead and Bashan" (2 Kings x. 22). After this we learn from 2 Kings xiii. 20, that the Moabites were in the habit of sending in robber bands about harvest time, just as their successors have, until

within the last few years, done against the fellahin west of Jordan : and we find from the prophet Isaiah one hundred years later, that the whole of these places enumerated on the stone as having been wrested from Israel were still completely Moabite.

Thus we gather, as well from the omissions as from the statements of the two records, a manifest corroboration of the truth of the history which has come down to us. Jehovah and Chemosh, Mesha and Omri, as well as all the cities of northern Moab, occur on the monolith in exact harmony with the biblical account, hitherto our only record of the history of that far



The Black Obelisk, page 827.

corner of western Asia.

But it is not only Moab which has yielded a contemporary record of the days of Ahab and Jehoshaphat. Omri, as has been mentioned already, is mentioned on an Assyrian inscription. We also find Ahab mentioned expressly by name, and that with the name of the place appended, where, according to

Scripture, he usually resided, "Ahab of Jezreel." He is there stated to have allied himself with Benhadad and others against Assyria, and to have supplied ten thousand footmen and two thousand chariots. The Syrian league was defeated, and we do not hear of any continuance of the war. Now, this episode is not mentioned in the Book of Kings, which records Ahab's frequent wars against Syria. But a period of three years' peace is expressly referred to (1 Kings xxii. 1). Ahab had had Benhadad in his power and let him go (chap. xx. 34), on condition of his restoring the Israelite cities he had taken. Dread of the common danger from Assyria seems to have suggested this clemency. Ahab had kept his fealty, and helped Benhadad, who afterwards refused to keep his faith, and thus was Ahab's tragic end brought about. A careful comparison thus perfectly harmonizes the two records.

Another incidental illustration of this period may be noted. Omri was the sole founder of the city of Samaria (1 Kings xvi. 24). The Assyrian cylinders repeatedly call Samaria *Beth-Omri*, the "house" or "city" of Omri, and for some ages knew it by no other name.

Passing from the foreign wars and alliances of the northern kingdom, we find that about a generation before the time of Ahab, Judah was invaded by an enormous barbarian host, led by *Zerah the Ethiopian*, who came up from the south-west, and was utterly defeated by Asa (2 Chron. xiv.). We know that Eastern monarchs did not chronicle their defeats, and therefore we could not expect to find any account of this expedition. But it is to be observed that Zerah is stated to have been an Ethiopian, not an Egyptian. There are two names found on Egyptian monuments which would correspond with the Hebrew Zerah, and both of them synchronize with the reign of Asa. One of these, *Osorkon*, a name of which the root-consonants are identical with those of the Hebrew *Zerach*, though a king of Egypt, was not of the royal line, but ruled in right of his wife, and may therefore have been an Ethiopian. The other, *Azerch*, whose monuments have been found at Napata, the old capital of the Ethiopian kingdom, in the isle of Meroe, in Upper Egypt, was king of that region. Either of

these may have been the invader of Judah. It is also to be noted that for many years after this date, Egypt continued to decline, a natural result of such a disaster.

Thirty years before the invasion of Zerah, we meet with the first actual invasion of Palestine by Egypt on record, the invasion of Shishak in the fifth year of the reign of Rehoboam. It was the first great event after the severance of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah (1 Kings xiv. 25; 2 Chron. xii.). Shishak came up with twelve hundred chariots, sixty thousand horse, and foot soldiers without number, captured the fortresses of Judah, received the submission of Jerusalem, and stripped the temple and the palace of their treasures. Turn to the inscription of Sheshonk, as he is called in the Egyptian record, and on the great temple of Karnak we find engraved the story of the expedition, and of the countries and places subjugated. In the long list occurs the name of *the kingdom of Judah*. There are a hundred and thirty-three places named as having yielded to the conqueror. Arab tribes, cities of Judah proper, and also many in the northern kingdom of Israel, are mingled in the catalogue. Among the latter are such names as Taanach, Shunem, Mahanaim, Gibeon, Beth-horon, Ajalon, Megiddo, Edrei, Shocoh, Beth-Tappuah, &c., &c. Now, as Shishak's policy was to establish his vassal Jeroboam firmly in the northern kingdom, these names might present a difficulty, as there seems at first sight no reason for Shishak molesting the territory of the ten tribes. But Mr. R. S. Poole has observed that the places taken are all of them either Levitical cities, or strongholds of the Canaanites. Jeroboam was not firmly established on the throne, the Levites clung to the house and religion of David, and the Canaanites refused to submit to the rule of Israel. These Shishak subdued and handed over to his vassal. Thus an analysis of the list adds a fresh illustration to the political situation, as indicated in the sacred history.

We have thus briefly traced up recent illustrations afforded by inscriptions from the time of Daniel to the reign of Solomon. The illustrations of the earlier period of Israelitish history are, as might be expected, different in character, but not on that account less important or conclusive.



COMPLETED LIVES.

"It is finished."—JOHN xix. 30.

THIS is our Lord's verdict upon his own life and work. It is the last of a series of declarations concerning it which from time to time dropped from his lips. "I must work the works of Him that sent me." "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished!" "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." In his judgment, his life was a mission—a ministry; and now, in the last hour of his life He declares its ministry fulfilled.

It is a significant and striking word, to be uttered at such a supreme moment. The calm, unperturbed, lofty Son of God again asserts himself. A few moments ago, and his complaint, "I thirst," brought Him near to the lowliest sufferer; He suffered as we suffer, and his cry seemed an appeal to our poor sympathy. Now He seems removed to an infinite distance. Half in self-communion, half in assertion to his Father, He utters this great word, as his self-satisfied judgment of his life. And yet it is uttered in the hearing of those who stood beside the cross. Like the self-communing which He permitted his disciples to overhear, "Now is my soul troubled: Father, what shall I say?" It is a tacit invitation to look into the consciousness which thus finds expression. It will be a great teaching for us, if we can understand what it was that, in this solemn hour of death, He thus recognised as finished.

It was his last word, almost the last moment of his life, the last agony of a painful dissolution. But it is not a mere exclamation, a vague cry of exhaustion; nor is it as when in Gethsemane He prayed that the cup might pass, nor as when a few minutes before He exclaimed upon the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me," a cry of surprise and dismay at the bitter anguish which He felt.

It is a word of perfect self-control and composure—an intelligent, calm retrospect and judgment of life. Psychologically remarkable because it is composure immediately following extreme and mysterious agitation. He is manifestly as self-collected as when He sat with his disciple at the Last Supper.

There are two ways of dealing with sorrow and pain—a physical way and a spiritual way. A physician may dull it by anodynes, or the spirit may fortify itself with strong patience.

Christ refuses the anodyne, and conquers his sorrow by the piety and faith and patience of his spirit—his sublime "*Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done.*" Thus He regains his calmness—becomes the "king of sorrows." Sorrow does not overbear Him, He conquers and rules it. A sharp conflict between flesh and spirit, and the spirit is more than conqueror. His last word is a note of victory.

There is also a manifest tone of *satisfaction* in the verdict upon his life which He thus pronounces. Humility does not demand of a good man that he should affect a false consciousness, pronounce an untrue verdict upon his life and character; there are deep and legitimate satisfactions of the spirit which may fitly find expression even in the hour of death. Humility finds expression, not in denying the service or the goodness, which would be to confound moral distinctions, but in the feeling that they are solely of God's grace. Our Lord speaks of his consciousness of what his life had been. "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." And in the hearing of those who stood by He said it, that they might know his satisfaction with it. It is a manifest feeling of achievement, which rises to a note of triumph. It is the joyful sense of having fulfilled the great purpose of his life, a peace of heart in the recognition of it, which is a strength and a blessedness—a feeling akin to that which the author of the Book of Genesis attributes to Jehovah when looking upon the completed creation He pronounced it "*very good.*" He felt perfect complacency in it, and He "*rested.*" No blessedness is richer than the blessedness of completed work.

Men may say concerning their life and its work, "It is finished," with feelings widely diversified—with an unspeakable sigh of relief, for instance. Concerning a toiling, struggling, sorrowing, sinning life, a man may say, "It is finished," glad to have done with it; as if any change must be a relief, so weary of it is he, so profitless has it been. But there is no complacency in such a retrospect; rather is there the feeling of failure and disgust. When a good man closes a faithful, holy life, he does not escape from it as from an enemy—he does not desire that it may be buried in shame;—for him to live has been "Christ," although to die is "gain." It was not with a feeling of relief at escaping a life

which had been a failure and a sorrow that Christ said, "It is finished."

Nor was it the sad verdict that disappointed hope pronounces over the unfulfilled promise of life. Youth blighted in its spring-time; the intellect maturing great powers; the heart ripening for rich affections; the hand preparing for great service; goodness blossoming for rare saintliness. Jesus of Nazareth died a young man, at an age when we should think death premature, and the chief work of life undone. He does not think or feel concerning his life, that his days have been shortened; there is no sense of untimely blight, of ruthless destruction; no feeling of great purposes broken off, of affections bereaved before their time, of the house of life broken into, of the reluctant victim that death takes captive. The sceptre is not in death's hand, the crown is not upon death's brow. There is no surprise or helplessness, as of one who submits to a fate. "No man taketh my life from me; I lay it down of myself." The peculiar death of the crucifixion enabled the manifestation of this. Had He died by stoning—the ordinary Jewish punishment for blasphemy—the discernment of it would not have been possible.

Clearly, too, the *thought of God* fills the mind of the dying Christ; and it does not trouble Him. He surrenders his human spirit into his Father's hands, gives account to Him of the work which had been given Him to do; and He does it with untroubled complacency. Good men often die joyfully, but the joy that inspires them is rapturous gratitude for God's forgiveness and forbearance. No good man so conceives of his own goodness as to die perfectly satisfied with it. There is no consciousness of being forgiven and saved in our Lord's feeling. His word, "It is finished," would have been no suitable verdict upon a salvation such as that of ordinary religious men. It is with himself and with his life-work that He is satisfied. He looks back upon what his life has been, and forward to his "going to the Father;" the thought of God and of the work given Him to do fills his consciousness, and He rejoices in it.

"It is finished." What? There is no specific reference, no antecedent; the thought had gathered, and it finds expression in a pronoun as if misapprehension were impossible. "It," not this or that particular thing among other things, but something in its entirety. Whatever can reasonably be supposed at that supreme moment to have

filled the consciousness of the dying Christ. "It is finished." Whatever He thought of, it was in his judgment completed; it was not a process only begun, to be completed by those who were to come after Him. It was a "finished," a perfected achievement. Can we doubt that it was his judgment upon his entire life and work? All that He came upon earth to do—the entire ministry for which He was ordained of God. He had lived his life, discharged its ministry, perfectly fulfilled its purposes and aims.

It is a word which seals the volume of life, which avows his readiness to die, gives the summons to death, whereby he becomes "obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." A word which is a pivot upon which He turns away from the earthly scene of his service, to the rest and fellowship of his Father in heaven. It is the feeling of a completed idea and service of life.

Complacency in the completed work of life will be great in proportion to its *nobleness and spirituality*. There are many works of life, in which the worker may fitly feel satisfaction; many varieties and gradations of honourable labour concerning which it is a great word to say, "It is finished."

If, by honest industry, the patient self-denying labour of years, a man win competence for his feeble age, and for those dependent upon him, he will feel relief, rest, and joy. With the miser accumulation is never finished; he hoards when there is no rational reason for hoarding. But to the healthy soul of the wise, moderate man, there comes a time when he contentedly says, "It is enough; I have done all that is necessary. It is finished."

If, again, a man have achieved some great work of literature, a noble poem, or philosophy, that will elevate, and enrich, and gladden the hearts of men for generations—some "work that the world will not willingly let die," he will have the feeling that Gibbon records, when his great history was finished: or if he complete some great scientific discovery, like that of Stephenson or Wheatley: or if he achieve some great philanthropic reformation, such as that of a Howard, a Clarkson, or a Cobden; not in unseemly pride, but in humble, thankful, pious satisfaction, he may accept his earthly crown of life, and sing his *Nunc Dimittis*.

Suppose a patriot to achieve the emancipation of his nation, its deliverance from a foreign yoke or from internal anarchy and degradation—to erect upon his native soil a temple of freedom in which justice, virtue,

and benevolence shall minister at the altar, and whose open portals shall be an asylum for all the oppressed; who shall be what Washington was, and everything that Napoleon was not; how purely, piously, and proudly he may say, "It is finished!"

Or, when a religious apostle—a Paul, a Luther, a Brainerd, a John Williams, a Bishop Patteson—sums up his life-work of Christ-like self-sacrifice, and consecration; with what a feeling of noble and exquisite satisfaction he may pass verdict upon it! How like the Divine Master's "It is finished" is Paul's "I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith!" Not a shadow of remorse or regret, but pure, perfect, blessed satisfaction, such as noble work always inspires. The verdict of our Lord upon his own life-work was the climax of all such retrospects, simply because his was the greatest work ever done, the grandest life ever lived.

Who may imagine the retrospect, the thoughts and feelings that gathered into his consciousness? It needs that we should appreciate his work with his own divine intelligence and feeling, to comprehend all that He meant. When He said, "It is finished," none of the great elements of his incarnate life would be absent from his calm apprehensive thought. As a completed whole, his wonderful life on the earth was finished—its revelation of the spiritual Father, its vital conflicts, its mortal sufferings, its perfect obedience, its redeeming achievement.

One scarcely knows what special points to indicate.

1. In every sense in which our Lord's life on earth was the fulfilment of divine purpose, preparation, and prediction, it was completed.

That in the fulness of time He should appear as the Redeemer of men, was the cardinal fact of God's councils of pitying mercy and salvation. From the merciful promise to the first sinning man everything in the spiritual history of the world had pointed to Him, typified Him, anticipated and prepared for Him. Divine promise, manifold type and prefiguration, the blazing sacrifices of almost every people, and through all generations, gathered into the formal and purposed prefiguration of the Levitical system; the gathering definiteness and deepening meaning of a long succession of prophets who "all spake of Him"—all had found their perfect fulfilment in his life and work. No objection is ever urged on the ground of the imperfect correspondence, much less of the

failure of correspondence, between our Lord and the old prefigurations of Him. All admit that if the Gospel system of salvation is to be believed, this correspondence is wonderful in its exactness. No fact is more significant than that wherever Christ and his Gospel are received, sacrificial altars at once cease to blaze. He, the great sacrifice for sin, supersedes all other sacrifices.

What emphasis He himself puts upon his fulfilment of type and prophecy, "Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished!" "All things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms concerning me." "The testimony of Jesus was the spirit of prophecy." Even the most trifling thing was fulfilled with the most scrupulous care. "Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, 'I thirst.'"

2. In every sense in which his life on earth was a ministry, a divinely-commissioned work, He had accomplished it.

It was a ministry of self-denial and suffering; for only by such could He accomplish God's great purposes. In no one point, at no single moment, did He fail. He hesitated at no endurance of poverty, of contumely, or woe. "The cup which my Father hath given me shall I not drink it?" He was drinking the Father's cup, even to its bitterest dregs, when He thus passed judgment upon the service of his life. Never was suffering so fairly met, so nobly endured. Happy the man who, having endured his Gethsemane, on his very cross can say, "It is finished," with the consciousness that he has failed in no faith, or patience, or unselfishness, or service.

His life was a ministry of truth—a revelation of the Father. He could recal it with a sense of perfect fidelity to its highest spiritual meanings and aims. "I have manifested thy name unto the men whom thou gavest me out of the world." "I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me." "I have declared unto them thy name." Neither to the Father whose glory and will He had revealed, nor to the men to whose ignorance, and sin, and sorrow He had ministered, had He failed in a single service. Is there anything that demands purer vision, a higher spiritual feeling, a more faithful courage than the ministry of spiritual truth? How easy to present spiritual truth, on its unspiritual, its intellectual, even its carnal side! How easy to tone down its ideal spiritual tone, to compromise its ideal spiritual claim; to reduce

its divine elevation, its divine sensitiveness to men's dull and carnal conceptions! Happy is the man in whose ministry divine things have been sustained in their spiritualness; who neither through unfaithfulness nor unfit-ness has carnalised them.

His life was a mediation, an atoning sacrifice; of which the cross from which He thus spake, as from a judgment-seat, was the consummation and crown. He came to "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," to "give his life a ransom for many;" as the "Lamb of God, to take away the sin of the world." How perfectly and greatly this expiation was accomplished! Men may question expiation itself, none doubt that if expiatory sacrifice can be offered, Christ offered it. He pronounced verdict upon his atoning sacrifice, declared its completeness and sufficiency, when He said, "It is finished."

He was manifested to destroy the works of the devil, to establish the new kingdom of God in the earth, to call men to a new life of God, and to enable their attainment of it. "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." Did He not, then, now declare the new kingdom established, its foundations laid, its principles and conditions determined? "My kingdom is not of this world." Henceforth men will be filled with a new inspiration, and will realise a higher and more spiritual life. The subsequent history of the Church, the quickening powers of Christ's cross especially, abundantly confirm this.

In a word, all that constituted the greatest life ever lived, the noblest service ever rendered—all that we are accustomed to think of and define as the redeeming work of Christ—He here declares accomplished—"finished."

Is it not the greatest word ever spoken? inasmuch as it declares the greatest moral achievement in human history? The divine counsel of the Father, the incarnate ministry and atoning death of the Son, the moral redemption of man were accomplished. "It is finished;" the word may stand for the entire evangel of the Church—for the sufficient confession of its faith, for the inspiration of all its joy, for its entire blessedness and hope.

We are always finishing something, something that will not recur, contributing some completed thing to the products of human life—to the forces of the world—sending before us some work to God's judgment. Every day, portions of our life are let go, and their works do follow them. And by-and-by the final winding-up will come, not of one thing only, but of all things in one; for the

life of a man is a unity made up of many parts, each action separate, and yet a component part of the character and influence of the whole. Concerning something every day, we have to say, "It is finished," and at length we shall have to say this concerning the whole.

What will be finished, and what will the finished thing be? What the life to which we add the last touch, and upon which we pronounce judgment, as we surrender it to Him who gave it? Will it be a life of selfishness that is finished, a life of frivolous pleasure, a life of ignominious sin; or a life of mere merchandise, or intellectual pursuit, or climbing ambition? Or will it be a life of noble moral character, of unselfish service to men, of spiritual piety towards God; a life of great principles and holy preferences, of lofty spiritual pursuits and communings, and joys; a life of God, with God, in God—the eternal life.

It is a great and solemn thing to live; to finish a product of the living soul; to finish life itself. All must say, "It is finished;" but to be able to say it is grandly and holily finished—to be able to pronounce judgment upon it with pious satisfaction and humble faith—this is the grandest of all things next to the "Well done" of the Master.

What a quickening contagious power there is in a life greatly lived! A man's death is often the manifest embodiment of his whole life. "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace." The centurion who saw Christ die, was constrained to say, "Truly, this man was the Son of God." The penitent thief who saw Christ die was constrained to address a prayer to Him. Even the hardened and unspiritual smote on their breasts as they beheld. The lofty dignity, the calm resignation, the magnanimous spirit, the moral majesty of the dying Christ could not be resisted. There is no testimony, no power of appeal like the completed life, the peaceful death, of a righteous man.

"The chamber where the good man meets his fate
Is privileged above the common walks of life."

If concerning his mediatorial work Christ said, "It is finished," then no part of it remains for us to complete. "Once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." His atoning sacrifice has been offered "once for all." We need not, therefore, by supplementary penances, or pretended repetitions, think to add to his expiation, or to reproduce it. It is for us only to accept the

atonement which He finished—to “believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.” The only sacrifice possible to us is “the sacrifice of thanksgiving.” What an infinite joy such a judgment of Christ upon his atoning work is calculated to give us! What a comfort and encouragement to those who are without righteousness and strength!

Only the urgency remains, that we “neglect not the great salvation,” that we do not refuse to come to Him who alone has life. “There remaineth no other sacrifice for sin;” there needeth no other. “It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.”

HENRY ALLON.

ON A VILLAGE GREEN.

By A SUMMER TOURIST.

A WALKING tour is one of the pleasantest ways of spending a short holiday. In this there is complete enfranchisement. You are not bound very strictly by hours and distances; you do not have the Time-table fluttering constantly before your eyes; you are for once, at least, as much your own master as you may well hope to be; and you have opportunities which you would probably miss otherwise for observing nature, and courting pleasant acquaintance with country-life. In the early morning, as you start fresh and enthusiastic, the hare scuds across your path, whisking the dew almost in your eyes; the scent of beanfield and meadow is then at the sweetest; sky and mountain then take on their most delicate colours; the teams are going forth; the shepherd and the labourer stepping along to their work; and the ear is constantly refreshed by the tinkle of sheep-bells sounding from field or moor through the clear air like a morning carol. If you love old places and buildings, you can turn aside into many an ancient churchyard, quaintly spreading itself and bulging over the wall, as though it would press over into the pathway, and so assert its share in the life that is drowsily going and returning; and if you are fond of natural history, you can take many a rustic by-path and short-cut by blooming bramble hedgerows breathing perfume, and find rare wild-flowers, butterflies of finest tints, delights unalloyed for ear and eye. Rest more pure and healthful is scarcely to be had than such a tour affords, and it is attainable in a short week's allowance, when a distant excursion would be useless, or nearly so, absorbing the whole time in the railway-train or steamboat. Knapsack on back, or bag in hand, the road is made pleasant by a score of cheerful delays and lingerings—a fine view here, a rustic bridge there; a sloping common backed by glowing sunset, or a village lapt in lazy sunshine; some old house, lichen-roofed, and ethereal-

ised by the wondrous magic of light and shade, or a corner of a green field astir with larks, rising in twos and threes into the air, flooding it with sweet sounds—taking the eye and arresting you. Not the least memorable things are the “surprises,” sure to occur, in such a journey—the unexpected meetings, the odd characters you encounter, and the unaccustomed things you see. It is of one such “surprise” experienced by me recently, that I propose to give a brief account.

After a three hours' tramp, I had just descended a slope of common, rich in fennel and purple wild thyme, as the twilight was beginning to gather, and was surprised to hear sounds of hymn-singing not far off, though I could see no chapel near the bulk of the village that I was approaching lying on the other side of the hill. Gradually it swelled and rose in volume; and the secret was disclosed when, turning sharply round a corner, there stood a little rustic congregation on a siding of the common, that had till now been hidden from me by a high hedge. Men returning from labour, with spades or mattocks in their hands, and leaning on them, stood listening; young men and boys with cricket-bats, fresh from their evening game, now grouped themselves in reverent attitude; women with children in arms, and older children squatted quietly beside them; some visitors from town, recognisable by smarter seaside garb, made up a group, motley enough to be striking, and yet with a unity of its own, notwithstanding the comers and goers, who merely turned aside from the main road for a moment to listen and pass on. The singing done, a common-looking man enough offered up a prayer, earnest, but showing some lack of education; and then, to my surprise, a young woman, in plain attire, came forward from beside a little group at one side, and began to speak, as though she stood in her regularly appointed

place. There was a purity of style, a reverent quietness, and a wistful earnestness about her manner, that attracted me, notwithstanding that I have never been much in favour of women-preachers. As she read a passage of Scripture, I could not help thinking of Dinah Evans, and that other Dinah—her imaginative counterpart—who has laid such a hold on the mind of England, though she could never have been had the real Dinah not lived, and done even more nobly than the imagined one.

“He careth for you,” repeated emphatically in quiet, clear tones, recalled me. “Yes, my friends, how can you doubt it? Day by day are you not cared for, fed, clothed, and waited on? Your eyes, are they not blessed with the morning light, and is not the evening hour and the sleep that it brings very sweet unto them? You sow the seed in the wet spring days, and it rots and, to all appearance, passes into clay, and yet in the autumn up comes the wheat, and you go forth to harvest. In this, surely, God careth for you that you may be fed. Summer and winter come in their season; and night succeeds day; but, oh, my friends, how is it that we are so slow to see the blessings that God has given us even in the changes of season and the changes of weather, that do so much for us? Our souls are too like the seed that is sown—taking in all the good—the blessed dew, and the sweet rain, and the bright sunshine from heaven—and giving out but little of its own accord. It must be roughly shaken; it must be beaten on and dashed loose from the husk, and bruised in the mill, before it becomes bread, and blesses the hungry. It is for this the farmer has cared for it, watched it, and attended to it with every help he could get. And so, my friends, it is mostly with us. We would repose on our own strength—to use the phrase the Bible gives, ‘we would sit down on the lees’—we would be too ready to consume, to eat up, our own good—the good that yet is not our own, but given us of God—were we not so shaken and beaten and bruised. In our afflictions, in the trials of our daily life, if we look at them aright, we just see God shaking and bruising us to make us helpful—to render us bearers of the bread of life to others. O my friends, I can say it freely, that, looking back, I see now that no adversity, no pain, no cross, no disappointment, has ever come upon me that has not helped to enable me to come here, week after week, among you, to say a word to warn you, to cheer you, and help you towards the better life—to Jesus and his love. As I walk over these hills week by week to be with you, and

as I return home again, my soul is filled with thankfulness for all the trials of my lot, and with hopes that grow out of that thankfulness that God may help me to save souls among you. I yearn for you, because I know the pain and the sorrow that comes of sin and disregard of God, the way that pleasure cheats the soul, and leaves it empty and wretched. So God makes our very trials and errors help us when we come to believe on Jesus. In this, too, He careth for us. Nay, my friends, here is proof of his best care. You know this holy book I have in my hand says, ‘Whom He loveth He chasteneth.’ Oh, blessed beyond words are they who know this—that their trials are sent to them because God their heavenly Father careth for them, will not leave them till they are filled full with the sense of his love in Jesus Christ!

“And then, think what a good thing it is that we are gathered into families as we are—the blessing of love between brothers and sisters, between fathers and children and friends. And yet how often does it happen that these are not blessed—that sons are set against fathers—that brother strives with brother, and sisters are filled with envy of each other, hating with a hatred more deep in that they are kin to each other. A new dress, a fresh pleasure, a little admiration from others, and there is strife and envy, which, as you know, the Bible says, is like the letting out of water. I am sure you each one know of cases where this is true. In these family affections God careth for us; but as it is with the seed that is sown, they often, often waste themselves unless the love of God comes in to preserve them and keep them pure. But when we have God for our loving Father and Christ for our elder Brother, we can grudge nothing, envy nothing—we rejoice in all gifts that others possess, if so be we can only be made to help consecrate them to his service, and we never let go hope of that. Oh, dear friends, it is only when we have got this love in our hearts that all other ties become light and joyful, and no work or labour is any longer slavery, however hard. Your child, so long as he is a child, how lightly will he do your bidding, run your errands, what trouble he will take on your account in the hope of the reward, the smile at the end, or the little gift you have in store for him! Even so is it with believers; they have got entered into a true and abiding family life, and count all men brothers in the tie of a blood that was once offered up, and they know there is a smile and a gift for them at the end. Oh, blessed blood of Jesus,

redeeming blood of Jesus, may we be washed therein and made clean—fit to be of the glorious company that is gathered from near and far to serve Him for ever and for ever!

“You know it is only when you cease to be children that you cease to be glad in obeying. You pass away from your parents, and have different views from them—it may be, look on your interests as completely opposed to theirs. Well, so it is pretty much in our way with God. You fancy you could not want this bit of pleasure, that gay dress, that little self-indulgence, and so you shut out the way to pure enjoyment, to a pleasure that reaches to the bottom of the soul and fills it. If you put your little finger close before your eye, it will shut out the whole country from your sight, and if you were to persist in holding it there, it would by-and-by make you blind. So it is very often with our souls and the worldly trifles and enjoyments we strive after. You know that the heart of man is called a great deep, and so it is, for it takes a mighty deal to fill it. Don't you feel, after a night's pleasuring, a strange want in the morning, a craving for the same and more still over again? And if you do and can indulge yourself, don't you feel the want more and more, the next morning after? Oh, my friends, pleasure is like these birds of passage, the swallows, that fly and twitter about our houses in the bright summer days, and then vanish away and leave us, because the dark days of winter have come, when most we need such cheering visits. You know pleasure is called a bubble, and so it is; for it bursts as you try to hold it in your hand. And it is no good striving and trying to hold the bubble in this hand and the grace of God in the other. This is what many Christians—professed Christians—are trying to do. The worldly life is endless labour—a rush, a feverish snatching at something in the air, but never rightly got or enjoyed. But Christ brings life and happiness; once give your hearts to Him, and all the dulness and restlessness will pass out of your life. You will then have rest and peace; and hope that casts out all sorrow. My friends, I do not use vain words. I knew no real happiness till I cast in my lot with Jesus. He has given me a work, and He will give you one, and it will fill your soul so completely that no want will any more be felt. And He will lighten all your burden of care.

‘I lay my sins on Jesus,
The spotless Lamb of God;
He bears them all and frees us
From the accursed load.’

My friends, ‘He careth for us.’

“Yes, the way to be happy is to have work that you have complete pleasure in, that you never tire of—work that is always fresh to you, that, as the common saying is, you can put your whole soul into. And there is no work for this but Christ's work. Once begin it, give it fair trial, and it is like music, like magic. It sets everything in order; there is no more grinding and grating among the wheels of life as now, when it goes just like an ill-oiled mill, wasting itself away with every turn that it takes. Oh, friends, why will ye seek for the twilight, seek to stand between the darkness and the light, when you may be in the full and blessed light of day? Starlight, such as is coming down upon us now, is better than the darkness; but who would wish to be for ever even in the starlight? And the starlight is pleasant just because the sun, though he is hidden, shines through it, gives us promise that he will come forth again. And like to the starlight are all those pleasures—even those innocent pleasures of life—in comparison with the full joy of the life in Christ. So far as they are innocent and truly pleasant, these earthly joys and ties of ours are so because He is in them, and when you come to Him, you only find the way to enjoy them fully, you are in the sunlight instead of in the starlight. So ‘God careth for us’ in making Jesus Christ, his only Son, the Way, the Truth, the Life. In all pure and innocent things we may find Him, and, finding Him, enter by them into greater peace and rest. Oh, my friends, do not leave this place till you have anew consecrated yourselves; and if, alas! you have been hitherto out of Christ, and never had a thought for Him, come now, believe upon Him, receive the gift of his Spirit, that will work in you richly to renew you in the inner man. To think of one lost soul! lost, gone into outer darkness! We speak of the misery of the blind, shut out from the light of day, and all the varied colours that glide over earth's face, and flit over sky and cloud. But what is that to the endless darkness, and the conscience self-torturing, which, you know, is likened to the worm that bites and never dies. Oh, my friends, before you leave this place, resolve to be one with Christ, for there only is safety for to-day and for ever.”

Then the preacher raised a hymn, and having finished it, intimated that she would preach in the same place on Sunday morning as usual; and by this time darkness was falling, and he who had prayed before again raised his voice in supplication.

AGAINST THE STREAM:

The Story of an Heroic Age in England.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE SCHONBERG-COTTA FAMILY."

CHAPTER XXXV.

ANXIETIES deepened on us in our little home-world, as well as in our world of England.

Francis had not prospered, as had been predicted, at the university. Every one had expected much of him, and he of himself. But he had simply glided through; and, at the end of the second year, rumours had reached my father of debt.

He questioned me, and made me tell all that Piers had done to save Francis, for so long. I had never seen him so roused.

"Debt, to the middle classes, is like cowardice to a soldier," he said. "A man who has the habit of it—who does not mind it as long as it only inconveniences other people—has lost all backbone and muscle. He has done with living, and can only be dragged through life at other people's cost."

He reproached himself.

"Euphrasia, you were right!" he said, "I have been blind in refusing to recognise the evil."

Mrs. Danescombe endeavoured to excuse.

"They are gentlemanly debts, Mr. Danescombe," she said. "It is a comfort that my poor Francis has not degraded himself by throwing himself away on low associates. You see, his tastes are all so refined. Books, Mr. Danescombe! He was always so particular, poor fellow, about the bindings of his books. And no doubt these young noblemen and gentlemen of fortune he has written about, who were so pleased to come to his rooms, could not be entertained quite like ordinary people. He will learn the value of money in time. He was always open-handed."

My father shook his head.

"Euphrasia, for heaven's sake," he said, "let us call things by their right names. If it had been a young man's careless generosity, I would have had more hope. To give to equals or inferiors may, at least, be giving. To get into debt, to entertain people above us, is simply bargaining and swindling,—buying a position we have no right to with money we have no right to. It is the sin of the Pharisee and of the publican combined."

"But this once we must give him a chance," she pleaded to him.

II. N.S.

"The only chance," he said, "is to let him feel the weight; to let him feel that these easy, good-natured, selfish habits are binding him with chains more difficult to bear, in the end, than it is to say 'no' in the beginning."

"But these gentlemen who have accommodated him," she said. "It would be such a disgrace!"

"Gentlemen!" exclaimed my father. "Let it be a disgrace. It is a disgrace. I will pay the butchers, and bakers, and laundresses. The gentlemen may abandon him, and wait."

He was not to be moved. The rock at the basis of his nature was reached, and nothing would make him yield.

My stepmother turned to me.

A new tie began to spring up between us.

She wept, and bewailed herself and Francis, and thanked Piers and me for what she called our generosity; and—which touched me most—she said all might be right yet, if only Piers could come back.

The ice-crust between us was broken. I used to sit for hours with her in the Oak parlour, listening to her, and trying to respond in a way which would not wound her.

We had the whist-parties, and the tea-parties, as usual, and she was very complaisant and attentive to every one. She kept up all the old forms of entertainment. She was so afraid Abbot's Weir should scent out anything wrong about Francis.

But, afterwards, she would give way altogether, and declare she was a monster to be able to seem unmoved when that precious boy was perhaps starving, or in prison.

I felt very sure that starving would not be the form in which Francis would suffer debt to press upon him. But a debtor's prison was by no means an unreal, or a tolerable, dread in those days. It made my heart warm towards Francis just to feel how she loved him, and to her to feel how she could love.

The self-reproaches which I had inflicted on myself in my childhood, sitting at my sewing, on that window-seat, came back to me.

Surely, I thought, if I had loved my stepmother more, and Francis, things would have been better. I should have penetrated to her heart sooner. We should have been more united as a family, and more able to help each other.

And yet the excuses with which she excused him to herself were as repugnant to me as to my father.

At last, one morning came a letter in the laboriously neat handwriting of an uneducated person, addressed to Piers, with "Urgent" on the cover.

After a little hesitation my father opened it, and to his perplexity found it signed in our family name—"Dionysia Danescombe." Slowly the meaning dawned on him. It was from some one calling herself the wife of Francis. "He had wished the marriage to be concealed from his family for a time," she said, "desiring to tell his father himself."

She had consented. She wished now she had not. Her father, also, had objected. His family had lived for generations in the village. They had a little farm and a general shop, and he did not like marriages with gentlefolks. They had been hasty and wrong, she feared. But Mr. Francis Danescombe had told her everything was sure to come right, and every one was sure to come round. Now, however, everything had gone wrong. Some of the creditors had found out the marriage, and had refused to wait any longer; and Francis was in prison, and her father was very angry. He had never had any wish for his daughters to marry gentlefolks, but if they *were* gentlefolks, they must prove it, he said, by paying their debts; and she had always heard Piers was kind; and she did not know what to do but to write to him. She was sure every one would help poor Mr. Francis Danescombe, when they knew.

"To my surprise, my father was less disturbed than my stepmother about this letter.

"Impertinent creature," she said, "to dare to call herself my Francis's wife!"

"It is certainly no consolation if she is not," he replied. "But I have no doubt she is. The letter is straightforward enough. The poor child, no doubt, thinks Francis comes of the race of Croesus; and she has, I fear, the worst of the bargain. It is a sad affair. But it may teach them something."

"*Them*, Mr. Danescombe!" she exclaimed, with tears, "you never surely mean to acknowledge such a connection. That my poor boy should be tied for life to a creature that cannot fold or seal a letter properly!"

"My dear," he replied, "if the law acknowledges the connection, what can we do? The question, at present, seems to be to acknowledge the debt. And, indeed," he continued, endeavouring to console her, "I think there is a cheerful side to the affair. The father, you see, did not wish it, which

looks respectable. He is a village shopkeeper and yeoman;—not one of the university tradesmen, who prey on young graduates. And a debtors' prison is the kind of lesson our poor Francis is not likely to forget."

Every article in my father's pleading was, I felt, telling the other way with Mrs. Danescombe.

"Indeed, Mr. Danescombe, I shall never be able to understand you," she said. "What consolation there is in the poor deluded boy's having made a low marriage (which I do not for a moment believe he has); and if he has, what comfort there is in her father being not only a tradesman but poor; and least of all, how you can think any good is to come of his being in a debtors' prison, you cannot expect me to comprehend. I confess I think this is not a subject for pleasantry."

"Pleasantry, my dear!" he exclaimed. "I never felt anything more serious or less pleasant in my life. But the most serious thing of all is the wretched habit which brought the poor boy to it. I was only trying to hope that might yet be cured."

"Wretched habits!" she said. "You talk as if Francis had been given to drinking or other vice, when he has not a fault, but that his temper is too easy and his habits are too refined."

My father gave up the debate, with a sigh. And then he sat down at once at his escritoire, and began to write a letter.

"To whom are you writing?" Mrs. Danescombe asked.

"To the girl's father," he replied, "to find out the truth and see what can be done."

"You mean to believe all that creature writes!" she said, "and to leave my poor son to bear the suspense and misery?"

"My dear," he said very gently, "if it is not true, let us hope Francis is not in prison; and if it is, what better way is there of helping him out?"

The letter was sealed and dispatched.

And every morning after it was at all possible an answer should arrive, my father, calm as he tried to be, went himself to the coach for the letters. And I with him.

On the third morning, the coach had already arrived, and there was a little stir and crowd around the door.

When we came there was a buzz of sympathy, and way was made for us at once. A tall, spare, bronzed young man, partly turned from us, was helping to lift a wounded person of some kind into the inn parlour.

A little subdued moan came from the sufferer, and then a cheery word of thanks, from a well-known voice.

And in another moment my father and I were standing with our own Piers, hand in hand, beside poor Dick Fyford, lamed at Trafalgar, and only landed, owing to some accidents of weather, the day before, on our coast.

"Picked him up at sea!" said Dick, indicating Piers.

With which vague vision of Piers floating from Lorraine to England on some ancient Ocean River, we had for the time to be content; Cousin Dick himself being the first subject of attention.

How content we were, I recollect to-day, as distinctly as if that were yesterday. It was like springing straight from the breakers to the fireside. The whole world became *terra firma* once more. Everything, I was persuaded, must go right now; the French war; the abolition of the slave trade; Francis and his debts and marriage; Amice and her love, and her work for her slaves; Abbot's Weir, England, the world. And all because that one parting was over!

So long ago! So many partings since, without meeting again! Without the meeting again *yet*. And now, at last, so near the meetings; so nearly past all the partings, at least the partings *from being left behind*, is it any wonder my heart should bound sometimes, more like a happy child's than an old woman's? Is it any wonder that looking back to that return of my brother, the tears of joy come into my eyes again, whilst I feel now it was nothing but a shadowy glimpse and a momentary vision of what is to come, and is not to pass away?

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THERE were so many people in want of help in our little world when Piers came back to us, that there was little time to discuss his own adventures. Besides, Piers's genius was not exactly narrative. For many years some casual incident or remark would continue to bring out new fragments of his French experiences. We had to put our "Odyssey" together as best we could out of stray allusions and episodes.

On one point he insisted; and this was, that he owed his escape to Claire, to the easy, idiomatic French into which we had naturally fallen with her from childhood, and to the friendly aid of the people who remembered her family, in reaching the coast. It was a fresh link between these two to have that *terra incognita* to all besides, the scenes of Claire's childhood, familiar ground to them.

Moreover, in those three years, the world of books had opened on Piers.

He had picked up fragments of the old libraries of the gentlemen of Port Royal, classical and mathematical, in farmhouses near the desolated abbey. He had found a safeguard from restless regrets and wishes in sharpening his mind against the old mathematical problems. In his banishment from those he loved and could serve in the present, the great men of the past, workers and thinkers, had come near to him; the life of the past had become a reality, and a school to him; and he came back to us with the bracing and bronzing of Greece and Rome on his mind, as his face was browned and bronzed by the suns which had ripened the vineyards and corn-fields of France.

In religious reading, he had been limited to a Port Royal copy of the Greek Testament, and to Pascal, so that in those years the incrustations and petrifications of Mr. Rabbidge's "letters" had been pierced in many directions by living springs of thought. But this, like the rest, only came out in glimpses. The first obvious and certain discovery was that our healer and helper had come back to us, and that we had immediate need of him.

His first labour was to extract Francis from prison, and to extract from him the truth concerning his debts and his marriage.

Piers did not indeed find Francis in one of the miserable dungeons in which John Howard had discovered the prisoners for debt twenty years before. The walls had been whitewashed, and some of the more fatal grievances had been removed; but he found him penned in with a forlorn company composed partly of destitute creatures fallen there through wrong and misfortune, and feeling the humiliation bitterly, and partly of reckless men brought there by vice, and minding it very little, as long as they could gamble with each other, or bribe the gaoler to get them food and drink.

Francis was depressed and remorseful. He regretted his debts, and rather repented his marriage. He felt he had lowered himself; but at the same time he felt the punishment so far beyond his deserts, that he was half disposed to regard it as a wrong, for which the only *amende* his family could offer him was to pay his debts, and to enable him to make his married life as comfortable as circumstances would admit.

"If you had been here, my dear fellow," he said pathetically to Piers, "it would never have come to this."

He had, he admitted, been too "openhanded," but at the same time "he could not but be sensible that much of the result had been

the consequence of our father's being a little unsympathetic, and of the scandalous detention of the Ten Thousand by Napoleon Buonaparte."

He felt himself a prodigal son indeed, but arrived at a very touching and hopeful point of his career. He had come to the husks. He found them unsatisfactory. He was ready to return. And no doubt his family were ready and even eager to receive him. None of them, he felt sure, were like the Pharisees. Piers was not a brother to begrudge the fatted calf. And thenceforth there was no danger of his trying the husks any more.

The parable was complete, with one omission.

The "*father, I have sinned*" was not there.

Although outwardly certainly much in the prodigal's position, Francis seemed inwardly to have a great deal more resemblance to the Pharisee.

He acknowledged that he had made mistakes. He had been too careless. But, after all, at bottom he felt himself a person of finer tastes and of a better heart than those who had stayed in the father's house. He had, moreover, been reading religious books. He felt that he had lived hitherto in too legal a spirit. He had not apprehended the mercy of God, the freeness of pardon, and the imputation of righteousness. There was something very affecting in the illustration afforded by his present position. His father would pay the debt, and he would be liberated. But he should go out of prison an altered man, ready to take his degree, and to preach, he trusted, not without effect, as soon as he could be ordained.

At this proposition Piers was infinitely dismayed.

To him those words, which glided so smoothly from the lips of Francis, were such profound realities; and so inseparably united with other great moral realities of which Francis seemed to have no conception!

Sin, as the one evil of the world; Divine Love spending itself in redeeming agonies to rescue from sin; giving itself perpetually in discipline which wounded and probed, in pardons which bound up and healed, to raise the fallen soul from the slough of selfishness up to itself,—were so engraven on his heart,—that to see any one grasping at the pardon not as a call back to the heart of the Father, but as an escape from the discomfort of regret, was to him the most terrible profanation.

His greatest hope was in Francis's marriage. He thought Mrs. Dionysia a young woman of considerable will and shrewdness;

and he was inclined to believe, that once convinced that a certain income had to suffice, she would have conscience and sense to keep Francis within it.

Francis would teach her "letters" (especially the letter "h"); and she would keep Francis within the limits of the law, and, probably, secure him a "respectable" career.

The creditors were therefore, by his advice, satisfied. Mr. and Mrs. Francis were established in suitable rooms, with an allowance of which she was to be the chief steward. And Francis had every prospect, Piers thought, of becoming in her hands an altered man.

One earnest remonstrance Piers could not refrain from making, against the sacrilege of taking orders except from the loftiest motives. In this my father earnestly supported him. But Mrs. Danescombe and Mrs. Dionysia were by no means of the same opinion. They were persuaded that there could be no more respectable profession than the clerical, and therefore no profession more likely to lead to respectability. The character was sure to be insensibly influenced by the position.

And as to Francis, he was persuaded that his motives were as lofty as could be required, his talents exactly suited to the office, and he himself quite a changed character.

I was thrown back on my old theory of Francis being a mere mask, a larva with the creature inside lacking. But a kind of external conversion or transformation, such as is possible to an external creature, he did seem to have undergone. The whole outer shape of his life was altered.

In Mrs. Francis's keeping, he became prudent, punctual, orderly, respectable, to the utmost point, gave his family no trouble, gave Mrs. Danescombe much satisfaction, was, people said, a credit to the family, to Mr. Rabbidge, to Abbot's Weir. And what more could be wished, in that ancient, conventional world of my stepmother's?

Piers's second labour was of a more congenial kind. He could not at all comprehend how we had all taken it as a matter of course that Captain Godefroy must remain a prisoner, while Amice went alone on her mission to her slaves. Exchanges had been effected, and could be effected. The Clapham influence, the Beckford-Glanvil borough influence—every influence must be used to set Captain Godefroy free.

With his own marriage in near prospect, his matrimonial sympathies were very strong. He went to London and waited on the officials, stirred up the influences which in-

fluence officials, touched the warm heart of the Countess of Abbot's Weir, and even moved the calm judgment of her lord, to discover what might be done; and finally had the joy of bringing back Amice in triumph to our own dear old house (Court being at the time in process of transformation for the reception of Mrs. Beckford-Glanvil); with the promise of glorifying Abbot's Weir by a triple wedding.

For our wedding was indeed to be triple. Our cousin Dick Fyford had at last found the helpmeet whom he had no doubt Providence had designed for him from the beginning. Patience, the eldest of Mr. Rabbidge's fourteen, had entirely captivated him in his captivity. A little older than himself (as had been usual with his early attachments), and, since the death of her mother, enriched by all the experience of serving and nursing involved in the care of thirteen brothers and sisters, she had been frequently called in by Uncle Fyford to give counsel and aid in tending Dick's wounds. On our cousin's impressive heart the natural result had ensued. Patience was more than usually loveable and wise, with a sweet voice, graceful movements, and a kind, bright face. His tenderness was won by the sweetness of what she was to him; whilst all the chivalrous protective manliness in him was roused by the thought of what he might be to her. It was, as he said (and I believe, truly), after all, his first love. Uncle Fyford demurred a little at first, for various prudential considerations.

But many things concurred to soften him. A large portion of Mr. Rabbidge's congregation having waked up to the imperfections of his doctrine, had abandoned him for a new chapel and an orthodox minister; whereupon Mr. Rabbidge had abandoned the remainder to a successor more capable of sustaining a drooping cause, and had glided, with his fourteen children, into a pew in the parish church.

My uncle Fyford felt the compliment, and acknowledged the step as the removal of a social barrier. Mr. Rabbidge's family was of respectable "*bourgeois*" origin, on the lower ranges of the professions, legal and medical. And then the whole thing was so conservative; which was certainly a recommendation. It was only for Patience to remove from the Abbey Gatehouse to the Vicarage. She would not have any unreasonable expectations. She would not revolutionise his household, or even his cases of Coleoptera. It would be so little trouble, and would make so little difference, and he was so used to

her quiet ways, and her quiet soft voice, that, on the whole, he easily glided into feeling it the most natural sequence.

So the triple wedding came to pass.

In those days, Abbot's Weir had not blossomed into æsthetics, social or ecclesiastical. Bridal veils and orange-flowers had not penetrated to our remote regions. Bridesmaids were in this instance a difficulty; I being the only one of our more immediate circle left unmarried. However, the requirements of the age were not so severe as to the multiplicity of assistants then as now. I did duty for Claire and Amice, and two of Patience's sisters for herself; and Uncle Fyford married the three couples securely without assistance.

But we thought it all very complete and festive. The sweetness and beauty of the brides made festival enough for us, as we sat at breakfast on the vicarage lawn; the queenly majesty of Amice's movements, and the southern splendour of her radiant face contrasting with the grace of our Claire, and the sweet English freshness of Patience.

And the landscape was fair enough to set our jewels. The sunny vicarage lawn, the old-fashioned garden, the picturesque ruins of the Abbey, around and beyond; for a background, the river sweeping along the meadows beneath the wooded hills, and the grey, old, familiar Tors; and for human surroundings, the children of the Sunday-school at the feast Amice had provided them in the old Abbey Still-house, where we had taught them for so many years, Reuben and Chloe being master and mistress of the ceremonies.

It was certainly not a wedding without tears. To me, if I dared to think of it (which I did not), this beginning was an ending of so much!

Different as the course and the character of the love which united them to each other, was the course of the life before them.

To Cousin Dick and Patience, as Uncle Fyford had said, in outward scene and circumstance little change.

But to Amice and Claire how much!

Piers and Claire were to live, at first at least, in the old Manor Farm, belonging to my father's family; one of the many small manor houses then existing in our neighbourhood. In its earliest stage, centuries ago, it had doubtless been a stately dwelling compared with thorough cottages of the labourers around it. And to this day an air of good birth and breeding lingered around it. There was a paved court in front, entered by an arched gateway; and a sunny terrace at the side, sloping to one of the countless musical brooks

which run among our hills, with beehives on it, and borders of thyme and sweet marjoram and roses and pansies. And within were a hall, with a long mullioned window, and a wainscoted parlour with armorial bearings carved over the large fireplace, and a broad oak staircase with bannisters adorned with carvings of nondescript heraldic creatures, beaked and clawed. And all around its steep roofs and fine old clustered chimneys, a sheltering phalanx of fine old trees, throwing deep shadows athwart the courts and gables and sunny slopes, and made morning and evening musical with the cawings of a pre-historical tribe of rooks, who no doubt looked down a little in a kindly and protective way on us Danescombes as "quite a new family."

A pleasant place it was for Claire to make fair with flowers and fresh draperies, and above all with her own fresh grace; to watch her husband ride from in the morning over the green meadows, and to welcome him to in the evening, with some new discovery or invention of home-delight.

And so life began for Claire and Piers as a delicious pastoral, sunny and pure and calm, shedding the light of its own lustre unconsciously around; whilst Amice and Hervé Godefroy were bent on pilgrimage, literally and mystically, over unknown seas to unfamiliar shores, through untried difficulties to duties as yet dimly perceived. Around them no scenery of sunny pastoral, but storm and battle and peril, to test and develop all that was deepest and highest in them both. No fair golden setting of circumstance around their love. They had only the love itself, the precious stone itself, with all its depth of light and mystic meaning; *only each other*, as a shield for each other against the world, as a shield together for the sufferers of the world.

Yet certainly they did not feel their lot the poorest.

Nor did I.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

LOVEDAY and I were thus, in a sense, left alone, of all the happy circle of my childhood.

Loveday had always seemed as young as any of us; and now I felt certainly as old as she was, not at all regretfully, but as if set in a little skiff which had reached a calm creek; in a sense, outside the current of life, yet not by any means stranded or anchored, but ready at any moment, at any call, to be in the mid-current to succour any one there. Loveday's skiff had been a life-boat to many. Better I could not wish for mine.

And yet, and yet.—There was a silence in the familiar old terraced garden, on the Leas and by the Leat, and in the empty rooms of the dear up-and-down old house. What was the use of listening to the silence, or of filling it with tears?—of being left behind, or of looking only backwards?

As Amice had said years before, when Piers went first to Mr. Rabbidge's school, "*Then don't be left behind.*"

I would not. Loveday never had been. We would press forward, Loveday and I, together. By the way, we should find not a few "hands that hang down" to lift up. Mine should not be hands that hang down, but hands that lift the burdens of others up. So help me God.

After all, there was double work to do in many ways; and if double work with half-power is depressing to look at, it is inspiring to do. The half-power grows to double power by trying, when the work is given us; and the breath cannot be spent in sighing when all is wanted for the race.

Our Cousin Dick had to leave home soon after his marriage; and he commended Patience to my cousinly and "grandmotherly" care, which she needed, having had her strength overstrained too early by the struggle to make poverty press as lightly as possible on her father and the fourteen, who continued to appeal to her as of old.

And one great gain came to me out of the many gains to others which were in an eternal sense at first loss to me. My father and I became closer companions than ever. Piers was with him by day, but the mornings and evenings were mine; often entirely mine, Mrs. Danescombe being not seldom absent on visits to Francis and his wife. Together we walked through the woods and meadows, or rode among the breezy moors and Tors. And together we roamed over our marvellous English literature, past and present, resting in its sunny pastures, and scaling its far-seeing heights; resting ourselves with his beloved Cowper, in his *Winter Walks* by the Ouse, or in his *Winter Evenings* by the Fireside; or led by Shakspeare through the length, and breadth, and heights and depths of human character and human life. Occasionally also new voices came to us, comparatively feeble then, and not at their full force,—yet (my father thought) not without something of the old fire and *timbre* in them,—in the early poems of Wordsworth and Coleridge. Our father never made a barrier of the past to block out his vision into the present. And so one of the best of all friendships grew up for me—

the friendship between a father and a daughter; preserving youth for the child, restoring youth to the parent; enriching the young with the wealth of the recollected past, inspiring the aged with the life of the future which is to expand it; and hallowing all,—the friendship, the memories, the hopes,—with the tenderness of sacred instinctive affection. Often I felt that all my loss elsewhere was made up to me by the gain here. Often I thanked God that I had learned to estimate this treasure before it was too late.

In politics it was not a cheerful time.

It seemed to my father a long descent from the rule of Pitt, of the one man of genius, to the ministry of "All the Talents" which succeeded him. Nor did he share Charles Fox's sanguine hopes of peace with the Emperor Napoleon. He could never comprehend how any one could trust the man whose bulletins were one series of rhetorical lies, who had crushed all true liberty in France, betrayed Venice, and trampled on Switzerland; who had caused the guiltless Duke d'Enghien to be assassinated at midnight in the ditch at Vincennes, and the noble German bookseller Palm, in open day, near Nüremberg, for refusing to give up the name of the author of a patriotic pamphlet; who hated England with the hatred of an imperious will baffled, and a successful conspirator unmasked; hated her as he hated freedom, and patriotism, and genius, and goodness; as he hated Madame de Staël, Queen Louisa of Prussia, and the noblest of the Republican soldiers; as he hated all that were too great or too true to fall at his feet and worship him; with a hatred which hesitated at no weapons, from the slander of a womanish spite, to midnight assassination, or the slaughter of thousands.

For England to make peace with such an enemy, seemed to my father, to betray weaker nations, and her own noblest reason of existence; to sacrifice the reality of patriotism to the theories of liberalism. It was one of the cases, he thought, not unfrequent, in which heart and genius saw alike,—the heart of the nation and the genius of her greatest—and saw truer than prudence and talent,—the prudence of the subtlest policy, and the ability of "All the Talents."

Grievous it was therefore to him to hear of negotiations going on with M. Talleyrand through all the summer of 1806, from spring till autumn, while Napoleon was using the time in bringing nation after nation into submission; "submission," which, as Lord Howick said, "never stopped his progress."

His only consolation was to turn to the other of the two objects which it was said Charles Fox had set his heart on carrying—to the long parliamentary warfare against the slave-trade opened by the first Quaker petition in 1783.

On June 10, 1806, Charles Fox himself, as Prime Minister, moved:—"That this House, considering the slave-trade to be contrary to the principles of justice, humanity, and policy, will with all practicable expedition take effectual measures for its abolition." "His own life was precarious," he said; "if he omitted this opportunity of saving the injured Africans he might have no other opportunity; and under the circumstances he dared not neglect so great a duty."

Too soon was the precariousness of the life, and the sacredness of that opportunity proved. It was indeed his last. That eloquent voice was no more to be heard in Parliament. His health failed almost immediately after that motion was carried by a majority of 114 to 15 in the Commons, and by 41 to 20 in the House of Lords.

Within three months, Charles Fox was laid close beside William Pitt, in the north transept of Westminster Abbey.

"The giants are dead," it was said; "we who have seen them know. We have come to the lesser race."

Another of her great sons had been sacrificed to his work for England. The negotiations for peace with France, from which Charles Fox had hoped so much, had failed. Care and failure had told heavily on his already weakened frame. But "even when removed by pain and sickness from the discussion of political subjects," Mr. Clarkson wrote, "he never forgot the Anti-slavery cause. 'Two things,' he said, on his deathbed, 'I wish earnestly to see accomplished—peace with Europe, and the abolition of the slave trade. *But of the two I wish the latter.*'" The last and best was granted; and the hope of it was permitted to dawn on his dying eyes.

Debates followed in both Houses, sometimes prolonged till the dawn; until at last on Wednesday, the 25th of March, 1807, Lord Granville's ministry ennobled themselves, and England, by obtaining the royal assent to the abolition of the slave-trade, in the very last hour of their existence, when his Majesty had demanded the resignation of office rather than yield Catholic emancipation.

It was decreed that no slave should be landed in the British colonies after March 1st, 1808. That was a day of pure and exalted triumph at

Clapham. To those who fought that battle, success was incomparably dearer than fame, and the success of May 22 was the glory of each, and the joy of all.

Twenty years before, in 1787, the first meeting of the Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade had been held, by twelve men, mostly merchants, all but two Quakers; at their head Granville Sharp, who had struck the first blow in rescuing Jonathan Strong twenty years earlier yet, in 1767;—amongst them Thomas Clarkson, who of all the advocates approached the nearest to the martyr's

crowd, having again and again risked his life in hunting out, through riotous taverns, and on stormy seas, the evidence which convinced the nation and the Parliament.

For forty years they had carried the contest on;—their first victory the decision wrung from Lord Mansfield, that no slavery was possible on English soil.

During those forty years, the monarchy of France had perished; the French Republic had fallen before the Empire; all Europe, all freedom and national life were falling before Buonaparte and the terrible instru-



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ment of destruction he had created out of prostrate France.

Three times invasion had threatened our shores. Our navy had saved us, but had lost its greatest commander. Two of our greatest ministers had died, worn out with the combat.

But steadily, undistracted by perils they felt as keenly as any, or by the ruins of fallen dynasties and falling nations, and undismayed by defeat and calumny, Wilberforce and Clarkson, and those who worked with them, had pursued their great purpose.

And at last the midday sun of Wednesday, March 25, 1807, shone on their victory.

Clapham went to the ends of the earth for metaphors to express the joy. My cousins wrote me that Mr. Wilberforce had been compared to "Marco Capac, the child of the sun, descended on earth in pity to human suffering."

A medal was struck, with the head of Mr. Wilberforce, the "Friend of Africa," on one side, and on the reverse, a number of Pagan allegorical personages, with wreaths, Æsculapian serpents, and shields, one of these per-

sonages being crowned by a winged being from a cloud, carrying a cross; encircled by the motto which, breaking through the cold haze of allegory, goes straight and warm to the heart—"I have heard their cry." And better than all, through the shouts of victory were heard the threatening murmurs of a war which was to lead to greater victory yet.

Lord Percy spoke of the abolition, not only of the slave trade, but of *slavery*; and Sheridan dared to say in the House that the abolition of the slave trade was but a prelude to the emancipation of the slaves.

The planters, and those interested in maintaining slavery (like the Dames at Abbot's Weir—and like the Pharisees), had indeed seen, from the first, whither the conflict was tending, better than many of those who began it.

It was a daily delight to me to carry every detail of the debates to Loveday, as she lay, now, on her bed, placed as near the window as might be, that she might see the birds which came to the window-side for crumbs, and the children playing in the empty marketplace. Sometimes I thought her very peace and joy must keep her alive.

"Wish it, *only wish it enough*, Loveday!" I said to her one day, "and you will live to the next victory as you have lived to this."

On the morning when I told her the king's consent to the Abolition had been given, she yielded to a passionate emotion, rare indeed for her. She wept and sobbed for joy. And then she broke into ritual observance.

"Bride," she said, "I cannot stay in bed to-day; I must dress, and you will place the couch in the front window in the dear old schoolroom; and Piers and Mr. Danescombe will come and lift me to it. And I shall see the children all together again."

She meant not so much again, as "once more," only once more. But she would not pain me by saying so.

Miss Felicity considered it a craze, but she made no resistance.

And that afternoon Claire and I had our Loveday once more on the little couch where she had taught me my "heroes," to say to Miss Felicity, on the first day that Claire kissed me with the fool's cap on.

In the close white cap and the soft grey unrustling dress, and all her cloud of white and dove-colour, with a faint rosy flush on her pale face, like a cloud touched by the earliest dawn.

There she lay like a crowned queen, while all the children came to her, one by one, and from a little basket by her side she gave each some little token; to the girls, pincushions

and needlecases, and knitted mittens and housewives, made out of bits of the old dove-coloured dresses; and to the boys, knives and little seals and pencils, which she must have ransacked her scanty childish stores to furnish; for, money she always considered she had none that was not due to her father and Miss Felicity.

She had some kind little saying for every one, and she begged them all to keep the things as keepsakes for her, and as tokens that the *poor African mothers and fathers and little children were not to be stolen from their homes again any more, for ever*. And then she kissed them all.

The children were pleased, but very subdued. I think they looked on it as some religious festival, which indeed it was, and felt the kiss something sacramental.

And then, when the gifts were given, she said, not in entreaty, but with a gentle easy authority, as of one accustomed to command,—

"Aunt Felicity, I want them all to have a holiday this afternoon, that they may remember the day."

And Miss Felicity made no difficulty or demur, strict as her regulations about holidays were; none having ever been granted by her before, within the memory of Abbot's Weir, for causes less historical than the day of the martyrdom of the blessed King Charles I.—to the confusion of the Jacobins,—or the day of the "happy deliverance of King James I. and the Three Estates of England, from the most treacherous and bloody-intended massacre by gunpowder"—to the confusion of the Papists.

Every one felt that this was Loveday's *fête*; like a birthday, a wedding, or a coronation.

And so the children went away; but their subdued demeanour, which usually ended with the supposed range of Miss Felicity's inspection, lasted further that day.

The little ones went quietly all the way to their homes, to the surprise of their parents; as if it had been Sunday.

And we, Piers and Claire and my father and I, spent the afternoon with her also, as if it had been Sunday; one of George Herbert's Sundays.

"Day most calm, most bright,
The fruit of this; the next world's bud,
The indorsement of supreme delight;"

a day on which

"Heaven's gate stands open,"

as indeed it seemed to stand to us that day, seeing the light shine through it on Loveday's radiant face, and feeling her so near the entering in. It was indeed her last day

among us all. It seemed like a receiving the Viaticum together.

And after that, I felt the journey had to be taken, and we must let her go.

Something about the day having been like Sunday I said to her when we had lifted her to her bedroom again, and I was leaving her for the night.

"Like Sunday? Yes," she said, "but not a Sabbath; not a close. Not a seventh day, but a first day of the week. A beginning. The victory which made it a festival is only the first victory of the campaign. The warfare has to go on, and you will all help to carry it on. And *we* also," she said with a solemn joy, "if we are with Him Who is conquering and to conquer—nearer Him than we can be here—we surely may help, not less."

She said few of what are usually called last words. Her words had all been spoken on the shores of the eternal sea, whose murmurs make last words so sacred, in the Presence which makes that sea but as the Sea of Galilee on that calm morning when the risen Master waited there to welcome the disciple to the shore.

She never spoke of closing and ending, or repose, or death; but of continuance, and beginning, and service, and life.

"Going to rest?" she said. "Yes! such rest as is possible to love; the rest of Michael the Archangel, the rest of Him who was 'persecuted' in His Stephen, and Whose strength was made perfect in the weakness in His Paul. 'Sleep'; yes, the sleep of those who 'rest not day nor night.' *All that needs sleep* in us to be left behind in 'the sleeping place.' And *we*, for *us*, waking, serving, *seeing*, with eyes that can bear to see 'face to face.'"

"I hope I have been learning a little," she said. "And now I shall begin to use what I have learned. Not, indeed, 'ten talents' or 'ten cities,' Bride; but perhaps some little village, some little corner of the worlds, to help."

"Why not *this* corner?" I said; "dear Loveday. Why not *us*?"

"I should like it best of all," she said, with her child-like smile. "And we shall be near enough to ask Him. And He knows and cares without our asking. But He will do the very best, here and there, for us all. Here, if we will let Him choose; and *there* we shall delight for Him to choose."

One morning, when I came, she was holding in her feeble hands a letter from Amice. She gave it me to read, and watched me earnestly as I glanced through it.

And as long as her cough gave her an

intermission she entered into every detail of Amice's letter, which was very bright, though not remarkably sanguine.

"I write to thee first, our Loveday," Amice wrote, "because I am in thy country, among thy people. Dear, they are not as delightful as thyself. They are not exactly the aristocracy of the races. I am afraid they have not yet reached a region where they can be ruled without rewards and punishments. And I am afraid the reward most of them like best is repose in the crudest sense of doing nothing. A Paradise of lying still in the sunshine, and occasional singing and dancing, with a good deal of sugar, sensuous and spiritual, would satisfy them.

"In tastes, intellectual and physical, we cannot imagine how to meet them. The things we like would be a burden to them. The things they like would certainly not be delights to us.

"But then there is the heart; that in us all which *loves*; that is, our inmost selves. And this, of course, we cannot pounce on in a moment.

"Poor dear, blundering, imitative children; children with the passions of middle age, and the cunning of hunted old age.

"On one of the estates they wished to get up a Sunday service in emulation of the white men, and for their Liturgy, recited in solemn measured accents, with responses, '*This is the house that Jack built!*'"

"Sometimes I am afraid the sacred words in our real worship may, in their ignorance, be to some of them little better.

"Indeed, for that matter, we are nearer such absurdities than we think, all of us, when we make our devotions in any degree a repetition of charms, instead of a communion of heart or a lifting up of the soul. It is so difficult to know when they *understand*, and when they only catch the words and tones, and *copy*, like clever, timid children.

"Yet, here again, there is the *heart* in common. That they can love, and sacrifice all for love, is true. 'They may shoot me dead, or do with me what they please,' one of them said, 'if they only do no harm to our teachers.'

"And some of them, I am sure, have learned from the Moravians, of a pitying, loving, suffering, dying Saviour, to please Whom they will be patient and honest (and which seems to me a miracle of grace), will work industriously for masters who have no more right to their service than a thief to a stolen purse.

"Also, we are beginning to discriminate

to see differences among them, in character, and also in race and training. We have a few men of quite higher races; one Mahomedan, who can read Arabic.

"But the grand difficulty is the slavery itself, soften it as one can.

"To train people to be men by keeping them children, to train people to be free except by making them free, by letting them bear the consequences of their sins and mistakes, seems to me, more and more, an impossibility.

"What does the whole history of the world mean but that it is an impossibility, *even to God?*

"We have found that Mr. David Barclay, one of our community, as no doubt you know, did emancipate thirty slaves in Jamaica about ten years since; but he could not do it in the island. He had to transport them to Philadelphia, and there apprentice them to trades. It answered in almost all cases; but the coldness of the climate of Pennsylvania was a difficulty.

"Meantime Christianity can raise and does raise some even of these slaves. 'If the Son makes any one free, he is free indeed.'

"Only it seems to me more difficult for owners to do missionary work than for others; especially for owners who feel slavery a great wrong.

"I want to be down among them, poor and toiling and suffering; and we cannot.

"We cannot; oh, Loveday. How can I? when God has made me rich with every kind of riches, and above all, with such unutterable treasures of love and joy?"

"How good of God," Loveday murmured, as I laid the letter down beside her, "to let me know even that! And yet how foolish!" she added. "As if we should be blind and deaf, and forgetful *there*. Blind in his light! Deaf with His voice within hearing! Forgetful in His Presence, Who careth for the sparrows, to Whom one of us is 'more than many sparrows!' Oh Bride, how I love those words! There seems to me a smile in them, like a mother with playful tenderness reassuring a weeping frightened child."

And then came an interval of breathlessness and pain; and she could say no more.

"Amice has crossed her sea, and begun her new life before I have," she said, when it was over.

"But oh, Loveday," I said, "no letters, no message, no sound across that sea!"

"Not from that side," she said. "Only one Voice audible to mortal ears. 'Go and tell my brethren that I am risen and go before

them,' was from that side. And it is enough. But messages from *this side*, who knows how constantly? And we are to be with Him Whom those messages reach, with Him to Whom here we pray."

"No," I said; "the blindness, dimness, deafness, can be only here! But oh, Loveday, say—promise, prophesy—that you will not forget or change!"

"Did you make Amice promise?" she said, stroking my face as I bent over her. "Life changes us more than death; more than living with Him who changes not. With Him we shall be more ourselves, not less. All ourselves, our true selves, perfected; knowing more, hoping more, loving more. My dear, love in heaven must be deeper than love on earth. No love in idleness, no mere delicious leisures its chief rewards; but caring, giving, helping, serving, *giving itself*. *Loving more than here!* My darling," she concluded, "who has been so true to me, so much to me, so long, it seems difficult to think so. Yet it must be true. With Him Who loves best. Loving even more than now. Although it seems difficult to think so. *Loving more.*"

And after that I know not that she said much.

It came to nursing night and day. Many of those she had taught entreated to be allowed to help. Her sick-bed was supplied with the best dainties the little town could give, from little shops, and from the gardens of the poor, sent with apologies in the most delicate way, as to a princess. And every morning Claire brought the sweetest flowers. Not one service was rendered her that was not a service of love.

And when all the pain was over for her, for ever, a rare gleam of intelligence and tenderness came even over her poor father, as he looked on her face for the last time, pale and lifeless and full of deep rest, with lilies and white roses around her, Claire's last offering. Old memories seemed to wake up within him.

"My poor child! Good little Loveday! She was like her poor mother. I did not do all I might for either of them. God forgive me." Then turning to Miss Felicity and recurring to the habitual shield of "adverse circumstances" which she threw round him, he concluded, "But everything went against me."

But even Miss Felicity, as she led him away, for once forgot the shield, and did not try to comfort or excuse him. She knew too well how sure the stream is to sweep down those who do not pull against it.

She only said, "God can forgive us! He has more than made up to her. He

can make us a little like her,—a little, before we die.”

The beauty of the patient life had burst on her at last, now it was finished. It had then, after all, been no poor ruin; but a lovely cherished shrine of God.

But to me all through those sad days, and from her grave, beside that of my own mother, her words kept echoing back, as if from heaven,—

“*With Him who loves most, Loving more even than she loved here below. Although it seems difficult to think so. Loving more.*”

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE years were come during which England had to pull absolutely alone against the stream; the whole continent swept away by the torrent of Buonaparte's victories; the oldest dynasties following with such acquiescence as they could assume, in the wake of his triumph; the nations dragged helplessly on, not yet aroused. And England herself without any leader, on the throne, in the Council, in Parliament, by sea or by land, to whom she gave her whole trust; Nelson, Pitt, and Fox all laid low in her defence.

Yet the spirit of the nation was high and unwavering. The conscience of men had been freed from the sense of a great national wrong. The least symptom of success to our army was welcomed by many, after the abolition of the slave trade, as a sign of Divine approval; whilst failure, as at Buenos Ayres, was resented as the result merely of the incapacity of the leader, and did but increase the sturdy determination of the people not to give in.

Meantime Europe seemed falling deeper and deeper. On the 14th of October, 1806, Prussia touched her depth of humiliation at Jena. In November Buonaparte had entered Berlin in triumph. Happily for Prussia and for her kings, at the last, they fought and fell with the nation, and were honourably identified with her sufferings. While dismembering the kingdom, Buonaparte circulated calumnies against the noble Queen, and stooped to call the king “General Brunswick.” Prussia and her royal race were in the dust together; and from the dust together they arose.

But as yet not a promise nor a stir of rising life was visible.

From Berlin Napoleon had issued, in November, 1806, the famous “Berlin Decrees,” making all English commerce contraband.

In April, 1807, after his victory of Friedland, Napoleon met the Czar Alexander in the richly canopied tent on the raft on the

river Niemen, and concluded the Treaty of Tilsit.

North and south, east and west, on all the dreary horizon, not a Power seemed to lift its head in opposition, over the fields swept level by triumphant armies; kings were acquiescent, and nations prostrate. Sweden, our one ally at that moment, under the young king so soon to be dethroned, seemed scarcely a Power, and scarcely within the European horizon. Buonaparte's brothers were on the thrones of Naples, Holland, and Westphalia; and one was soon to be on the throne of Spain; whilst his generals were to be transferred to those of Naples and of Sweden.

Yet, hopeless as everything looked, national life was not extinct.

It is good now to recall the thrill of delight with which the first symptom of the rekindling life was welcomed throughout England.

England had seemed the only living nation left in the world, the only people that at the touch of the French armies and the word of the Conqueror would not crumble into atoms. Was there such a thing, some might question, as national life at all? Was not human society after all a mere nebula of disconnected atoms, in perpetual oscillation, and perfectly indifferent around what centre they were grouped, as one attraction or another proved the stronger; the isolation of England being simply mechanical and geographical, an affair of a few miles of separating sea? Was not the “nation,” after all, a Platonic dream, as obsolete as any other of the “Universal Ideas,” or any other exploded theory of old scholasticism, the only reality being individual existence, and self-interest?

The answer came from the most unexpected side; from Spain, asleep for centuries under her imbecile kings.

Buonaparte did but attempt with her what elsewhere had been submitted to patiently enough. The game seemed safer than usual. There was a division in the royal house. One puppet was intriguing against another. What could be easier than to entrap both, betray both, and set a Buonaparte on the vacant throne?

But then suddenly the great chess-player discovered that the pieces had life; kings, queens, bishops, knights, pawns, most evidently of all, and most unaccountably of all, were not *puppets* but *men*, fathers and sons, families, a *nation*.

From end to end Spain awoke; awoke, arose, lived, palpitated in every limb with life. Simultaneously, not at the summons of any

one great Leader, but spontaneously, without preparation, city after city, province after province, rose, felt they were not many but one; and refused to be at the bidding of the one man before whom all Europe had bowed down.

The enthusiasm of sympathy throughout England was universal.

All our England (the England some call prosaic, with an exceptional Alfred, Shakespeare, Milton, Cromwell, Nelson, or William Pitt) ran wild with welcome to the "patriots of Spain."

Sonorous Spanish names rang like our own great patriotic household names through every sober little country town in the land. The Maid of Saragossa became as much a heroine among us as Joan of Arc ought to have been in France. England demanded to spend her treasure and her blood in helping this new-born people to freedom. The name of freedom had its old magic still among us, and knit the countrymen of Drake in brotherly bonds to the old enemies of the Armada. Mr. Wilberforce said in the House of Commons, "that every Briton joined in prayer to the Great Ruler of Events to bless with their merited success the struggles of a gallant people, in behalf of everything dear to the Christian, the citizen, and the man."

We who know what came after that first trumpet-call of patriotism and liberty, the struggles with the incapacity and selfishness of "patriotic Juntas," which all but baffled Wellington, and all the chaos that has followed, may find it difficult to recall the deep and generous response that Spanish appeal awoke.

But into whatever feeble and discordant echoes the music fell, it was, nevertheless, in its beginning, a true trumpet-call, clear and strong, giving forth no uncertain sound. It awoke the nations from a sleep of despair into which they never fell again, to prepare themselves for the battle. And for any nation to have rendered that service to Europe is a fact never to be forgotten.

It was in May, 1808, that this voice of patriotic resistance reached us from Spain.

On the 12th of July, Arthur Wellesley sailed from Cork for Corunna. In August he defeated the French at Vimiero; and the Peninsular War, and the fall of Buonaparte had begun. Buonaparte had touched the sacred realities of human life; and henceforth his warfare was no longer merely with dynasties, but with nations, and with men.

During those years my father woke to new hopes for the world.

He had always looked on Buonaparte as

the most unmitigated embodiment of the principle of selfishness, which is the root of human evil, that the world, or at least Christendom, had seen; the devil's ideal of humanity, "Ye shall be as gods," opposed to the divine, "I come to do Thy will."

And selfishness, evil, could not, he thought, create, or even organize. Being a negation of light, and heat, and life, it can only detach, divide, disorganize, deny, destroy. The nearest approach it makes to positive organization is in freezing, crystallizing living waters into ice. But the unity thus created is only apparent; ice-seas, ice-bergs, ice-blocks, with no power in them save that of mass and momentum; power which the petal of a flower at the touch of the sun can vanquish.

Into such ice-blocks Buonaparte had been freezing the nations; with such an ice-torrent he had been laying them waste, through his Grand Army. And now at the awaking of life within the nations, the whole frozen fabric was crashing down, or melting away.

He had been able to create nothing. It incensed him that men of genius did not rise at his call. He was ready to lavish rewards and decorations on them. But in the icy atmosphere he had spread, no literature could grow. Even the code called by his name was truly, my father said, but a modification of the work of the Republic; the literature that did flourish was but the feeble harvest of earlier sowing. The conglomerations of people he had forced together into "kingdoms," did not recognise themselves as corporate bodies; and when the icy hand was withdrawn, they simply flowed, without effort, back into the old channels. The one thing which had seemed most like a creation, the Grand Army which moved at his bidding, and was inspired by his will, which had enlarged and compacted year by year, and had desolated Europe, was indeed no organization of life to Europe or to France, but only a terrible engine of death, soon to recoil on itself.

And from the first moment when the nations awoke, that engine of destruction, dreadful and terrible and strong exceedingly, was doomed.

Many vicissitudes indeed there were.

The pathetic elegy—

"Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,"

rang like muffled bells throughout England when Sir John Moore fell at Corunna.

Deep was the indignation among us when Andrew Hofer was betrayed and shot in the Tyrol; and true was the grief to many of us when the young Schill fell in battle, saving

Buonaparte from the dishonour of executing another patriot as if he had been a rebel.

Many were the reasonable grumbings and murmurings among us when the Government lavished money in sending thousands of Englishmen to die of marsh-fever at Walcheren, and withheld supplies from Sir Arthur Wellesley. Many also were the unreasonable grumbings when Sir Arthur Wellesley, after the victory of Talavera, retired within the lines of Torres Vedras, refusing to risk England and Europe by hurrying before popular outcry, as he refused to abandon her for any niggardliness of cabinets, or cabals of fanatics.

Those two years between Talavera and Ciudad Rodrigo tried the patience and faith of the nation. For while they were slowly passing, Buonaparte had imposed on Sweden one of his generals as king, whilst Austria had given the Corsican an Archduchess in marriage, and an heir had been born to perpetuate the new dynasty; and a deplorable war had broken out with America, to my father the most unnatural of conflicts.

Yet there was a feeling of hope through the nation, the indescribable sense of vitality and growth which distinguishes the dullest spring day from the finest day in autumn.

One hero was amongst us again, who never lost hope.

Sir Arthur Wellesley, behind the lines of Torres Vedras, persisted that Buonaparte's empire was undermined; and that England had only to hold her own, and keep hope alive in the Peninsula a little longer, and the crash would come.

Meantime, in this silence and isolation of our country, there was anything but silence or lifelessness.

In 1811 the first steamboat was launched on the Clyde. The great Steam Power had made another conquest. In the same year the anti-slavery cause gained another victory by the passing of Lord Brougham's Bill, constituting slave-trading Felony.

And throughout the land sounded a chorus of new poetic voices. Buonaparte could create no literature in France. But Freedom, and the conflict with the oppressor, awoke a fresh burst of poetry and art in England.

Once more, as in the days of Luther, English thought drank from the old kindred Teutonic sources (once more themselves issuing afresh into the light), giving and receiving, as is natural and due between races so one and yet so diverse.

Scott and Byron, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, Keats, Shelley, began to be heard

among us. And Flaxman was there for the sculpture of our heroes and singers; now that we had again heroes and poets to celebrate.

It was an era of new life; although the powers of death and darkness, storm and whirlwind, were still mighty in the world. As of old, in all our northern spring-tides, the hammer of Thor the Thunderer wakened the earth to song.

And meanwhile, in our little world of Abbot's Weir, life and death were at work.

The feet of little children pattered about the old rooms at Danescombe Manor, and merry little voices echoed among the old trees. The garden terraces of the old house in Abbot's Weir, the Dropping Well and the "Aladdin's Subterranean Passage," became scenes of hopes and delights to a new generation.

Little cousins came to join them, also, from the Vicarage. Once more little motherless children played on the slopes, and along the Leas and the Leat. For during our cousin Dick's absence with the fleet, Patience, his young wife, had died, leaving a twin boy and girl. The strain of motherly care, coming on her so early, had been too much for her tender and anxious nature, and she passed away, leaving the great blank such lives must leave.

Eager, eloquent, questioning voices may soon be replaced. It is the quiet answering voices, scarcely heard except in response, in careful counsel, or in gentle decision, which leave the terrible void of silence.

She lived until the baptism of her babes Piers and Claire and I were sponsors. I had always been drawn closely to her; and she had for me that strange strong affection which so often silently possesses natures that have little power of utterance.¹

Horatio, the boy, was called after his father's hero; and for the baby girl the mother would have her own name joined with mine.

"You will love the little ones, and they will love you," she said, "Bride, Cousin Bride!"

I did indeed love them. Who could have helped it, having a "grandmotherly" heart like mine? Dick was smitten to the dust by the loss of his wife's deep, quiet affection, and was only to be comforted by continual minute details about her babies.

And so it happened that their home was almost as much with us as with Uncle Fyford, to whom the babies were naturally a considerable perplexity.

Mrs. Danescombe was more patient with these little ones than she had been with us.

Indeed, she seemed more dependent and more sympathetic in many ways than of old.

The love for her Francis, which seemed first to have awakened her heart to the joy of loving, brought to her further teaching through the burdens and sorrows, and even the disappointments of love.

Mrs. Dionysia was not at all a person meekly to take the second place. And my stepmother, when she returned from her visits to Francis, seemed to me to cling increasingly to us, and to accept our attention and deference with a gratitude very different from her old way.

Moreover, these visits became rarer, as Francis became established as a popular preacher in a fashionable watering-place, where his exquisite manners and rounded periods made a great impression; and as Mrs. Francis left her village origin farther and farther behind, whilst her father's death left her joint-heiress of his not inconsiderable accumulation of savings.

Mrs. Danescombe never blamed them. She had too long been used to throw a veil over Francis' failings, to hide them from others; and now it touched me to see how she tried to transfer the veil, so as to hide what she could not bear to see, from herself.

Francis' family increased; the spare room in the house diminished. The grandmother's visits became limited to an annual one, and this again had to be limited in extent. There was only one small room,—Francis' dressing-room—when his mother was not there. Of course Mrs. Danescombe was most welcome to it. But she could not but feel she was costing them a sacrifice of comfort whilst she stayed.

And at last, one year, instead of the annual invitation, came a long apologetic epistle from Francis. He and his wife were so distressed; but they had been obliged to make other arrangements in the house. One of the children had to sleep in the dressing-room. Francis had to content himself with a strip of a room on another floor, which really Dionysia could not think of asking his mother to occupy. They must hope for more space in a little time. Dionysia talked of investing part of her property in building a house. But for the present, with the greatest regret, they were reluctantly compelled to deny themselves their annual pleasure, &c.

Mrs. Danescombe gave me the letter to read. I felt an indignant flush rise to my cheek, and could scarcely restrain myself from warm words of blame.

But my stepmother said,—

"You see they have talked it over, and done their best to manage it for me. But they cannot. I will make haste and pack up the little presents for the children, that they may get them in time."

We did not say another word, but I helped her to finish and pack the gifts she had been so busy preparing,—little knitted socks, warm grandmotherly articles of winter clothing, packets of manifold many-coloured sweet-meats, yclept "fairings," picture-books, and some little luxuries Francis had been fond of as a child.

She took it very quietly. But the tears came many times into my eyes, as I helped her. And when the hamper was filled and carefully corded, she sate looking at it a moment, and then said,—

"It will please the little ones."

And then, with a child-like, helpless look, and a quiet hopeless tone I shall never forget, she said,—

"They do not want me. No one wants me."

I tried to comfort her. I said, "We all wanted her—I *wanted her*;" which, little as I could ever have thought it, began to be really true.

But she shook her head.

Then I went back to the subject of Francis, and spoke of the new house, and the room there would be sure to be in it for her. She tried to take up the hope.

"I am afraid I have been too much given to interfering and finding fault," she said, humbly. "Dionysia said so. I tried not to offend her. But perhaps I said too much. And she does not bear much. She naturally thinks of her own children, as I thought of my Francis. I should have remembered better. I suppose I made an idol and am punished."

I don't know what I said then, she touched me so to the heart. I blamed myself, made the best of Francis, and said many incoherent things. But what I felt in my heart, and ended with was:—

"Oh don't talk of making idols. God gave you a child. And you loved him with your whole heart. He was your joy. And that did your heart good, and warmed it all through. And now your love brings you pain. And that does us good, more than anything; the suffering of love. Idols *harden* the heart. Your love *softens* your heart. This is not idolatry. Idolatry is *selfishness*; worshipping anything or any one for *our own sakes*. This that makes you suffer is *love*. God is not punishing you; He is softening,

teaching,—making you so dear and good! You love, and suffer, and yet love on. In what better way, in what way more like Himself, can God teach?"

She did not oppose. She kissed me, and said I was kind, but that I was not to think Francis meant anything unkind.

"One day, perhaps, he will love enough to suffer," I ventured to say, "and then God will teach him."

"Not suffer!" she said, deprecatingly. "Please God, at all events, not *much*. It is not much he has to learn."

We did all we could to cheer her, my father and I. But the "serpent's tooth" had penetrated.

Many an hour we passed in the old Oak Parlour, such as I had never dreamt we could spend there together. I read and chatted to her. She did not talk much. Her range of literature was not large. Novels hurt her. It was so difficult to find any story of human life which did not grate like a saw on that sore heart. In history she had no interest; poetry she felt flimsy. To sermons and religious books, I do not think she attended much; but these were what she liked best. The good words flowed past her like the murmur of a brook; while she sewed, and knitted, and embroidered, for Francis and his children.

And then came a cold; the last blow which so easily strikes down a frame which has lost any strong vital power of resistance.

She did not very much care to live. She hoped Dionysia would one day build the new house, and they would have room for her. Yet *they could do without her*; that was too plain: and that was the unutterable anguish.

She did not much wish to die. It was not clear what heaven could have better for her than Francis had been. And even in heaven perhaps Francis would not need her. But she hoped God would be merciful, and pity and forgive her. And so life could be lived on there or here.

I wrote to Francis at the first symptoms of serious illness, urgently. I thought it would be so terrible for him if he did not arrive in time. He wrote back very eloquent and affectionate messages. But there was to be an Archdeacon's Visitation, and he was to preach the sermon. It was an opportunity of some importance; an honour, he was sure his mother would be sorry for him to miss. I must write again immediately; and if the accounts were not better, he would come by the earliest coach.

His poor mother did appreciate the honour.

"Tell him on no account to lose it for me," she said. "He will come as soon as he can afterwards, I know."

I wrote, in contradiction to her wish, urging him to give up the Visitation, and come at once. But there were no telegraphs and no railways in those days. My letter arrived on the eve of the Visitation. Dionysia had prepared a considerable entertainment. No one could say what might depend on such an occasion, or result from it. He preached the sermon, and started on the next morning.

Mrs. Danescombe did not ask if Francis had come. But she asked every evening if the coach had arrived. And when she was told it had, and no further news followed, she said nothing more; except on the last evening, and then she moaned,—

"I am weaker to-night, and worse. Poor Francis, he will be very sorry."

And then, after an interval,—

"Bridget, poor little Bride, you have been very kind. You have done all you could."

And again,—

"God so loved the world that He gave His only Son. He must have loved very much. It *must* be good to go to Him."

And again, in a feeble voice, as if to herself,—

"Poor dear Francis! He will be very sorry. But, you see, he could not help it. He could not help it. Give him my dear love, and tell him I pray God to bless him with my last breath."

That morning the struggle was over. And we trusted she had found how good it is to be with God.

The next evening Francis came.

He was very much moved. He blamed himself, at first, bitterly.

Then the old habit returned on him. And he began to excuse himself, and to explain to us and to himself how impossible it was he could have done otherwise.

But when all was over, and his mother was laid in the family vault beside mine, the truer feeling came back.

"No one will ever love me as she did," he said to me as we sat alone together in the Oak Parlour—"never again. Would to God I had come the day before."

His sermon at the Archdeacon's Visitation was a great success. It brought him the presentation to an excellent living from the patron, who was one of the audience.

But I believe it brought him a far deeper blessing than that. It had brought him, through the irrevocable loss, through the un-

fulfilled duty, a sense of irreparable, irremediable, ill-return for so much irrecoverable love, which pierced at last through all his self-complacency, and left a sting of remorse and repentance, wakening the real heart within him to the softening discipline of a life-long pain.

There was no more only that smooth, transformed, respectable, but impenetrable larva of an "outside." There was, as Piers always trusted, and I so often doubted, a creature, still undeveloped and feeble, but living, and to live immortally within.

There was no more only the Pharisee, prodigal or respectable, crude or transformed, thanking God for the shadowiness of his sins, and the efficacy of his repentance, and the success of his labours in turning other people from their real sinful sins.

There was the Publican, beating on his breast, in many a secret hour of that inward, irremediable pain; feeling great need of forgiveness, and asking it; and hoping that the unquenchable love which he had returned so ill, which had forgiven and loved to the last, might be matched by another Love, as enduring and as forgiving.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE close of the great melodramatic career of Buonaparte was drawing near at last; a close more melodramatic than any of his bulletins. Or, rather, the drama had passed into other hands; and the melodrama was deepening into true and terrible tragedy.

Wellington, and our little determined British army, were no longer crouching in expectation behind their defences. They were pressing on through Spain; and day after day the coach dashed down the quiet streets of Abbot's Weir, garlanded with laurels for victory after victory—Salamanca, Ciudad Rodrigo, Badajos; sonorous words rang as in old Roman days through the island; and lastly, the significant prophetic name "Vittoria." Vittoria! A great battle won at last on the very borders of France, with the French armies driven before us.

"Mere side scenes," some might say—mere skirmishes outside the great line of battle which, in the spring of 1812, had been terribly advancing in the far north, and was now more terribly ebbing.

Yet it was something to have stood alone as England did against that stream, when all the rest of the world were swept away before it. It was something for Europe, which Europe should scarcely forget: it was infinitely much for England, which England is not likely to forget.

II. N.S.

From March to December that last act of the dreadful drama went on; essentially the last, for after it the doom was fixed, and all was scarcely more than epilogue, merely the last struggles of the dying, the last stroke of the *coup de grâce*.

In May, four hundred thousand men of the Grand Army had crossed the Niemen to crush the great barbaric northern empire; in December, scarcely twenty thousand baffled, beaten men crossed the Niemen again, the Grand Army broken and destroyed for ever; fire and frost sweeping it away as if it had been something elemental, only to be crushed by elemental forces. Hundreds of thousands dying, one by one, on battle-fields, in exhausting marches, of hunger, of cold, of wounds; and, among all the dying, it was said, scarcely one murmur against the man for whom and through whom, in various tortures, and for no purpose, they died. The Triumph of Loyalty (misplaced as it might be), after all greater than the Triumph of Death.

"With Christ instead of Buonaparte, for the King of Kings!" my father used to say, "what might our race have done—what may it not yet do?"

Yet, once again, France responded to the well-known call. Buonaparte, baffled and defeated, with the loss of nearly half a million, not to be hidden by the most grandiloquent bulletins from the thousands of homes whence they were missed, yet had power to gather two hundred and fifty thousand more to encounter the nations at Leipzig; boys four-fifths of them, reluctant and untrained, yet once under the magic of that imperial name and command, able to win the day in more than one hard-fought fight.

Nevertheless, the great destructive power of Napoleon was broken.

It was no more a conflict of dynasties, but a combat of nations. Never was a truer name given to a battle than that of "Battle of the Nations" (*Völkerschlacht*), claimed for Leipzig.

After his defeat there, Buonaparte knew that for him universal empire was over.

Professors, pastors, parents stirred sons, students, congregations to this War of Liberation of the Fatherland. Ancient history, Bible history, ceased to belong only to the past. The old heroic stories lived again, and became a source of inspiration for the defence of all that was sacred in life, more sacred than life. Songs and ballads, strong and fresh as at the dawn of history, rang from the hearts and lips of the nation.

In one sense, indeed, Buonaparte had

created. He had created by destroying. He had renewed through death. At Jena, but seven years before, he had crushed and broken and dismembered the various states of the old Teutonic empire. At Leipzig, he found springing from the scattered ashes a new, patriotic, living Germany. Out of ruin, restoration; out of states, a nation. And against nations the destroyer had no power.

France, indeed, seemed, like the demoniac in the Gospels, still not to be able to free herself from the awful double personality which had so long possessed her. Bewildered, fettered, and bleeding, she seemed still to answer at her tyrant's bidding through her reluctant conscripts, "My name is Legion, for we are many." But even this was soon to cease.

In the South of France, where our Wellington with the first army which had proved Buonaparte's not "Invincible," was pursuing the retreating French troops, paying his way according to the *bourgeois* code of honour of "the nation of shopkeepers;" and, as we heard, welcomed by the natives of the Garonne districts with indications of the old fortresses which our ancestors had once held, and with friendly inquiries why we did not come back.

And in April, at Fontainebleau, Buonaparte signed the abdication, leaving, as most of us then fondly thought, France once more clothed and in her right mind, at the feet of her ancient kings.

Then, in our England, followed three months of rejoicing, such as England has seldom seen. The very skies seemed to rejoice. The old country for a time threw off her veil of clouds, and shone and laughed, as the green English land can shine and smile, through all her sunny uplands, and grassy meadows and wooded river slopes, to welcome the Allied Powers, and her own victorious soldiers, and peace.

Abbot's Weir was beside itself with delight. If England had her Wellington to be borne from the sea-coast at Dover, like an ancient hero, on the shoulders of the enthusiastic men of Kent; and if London had its three nights of illumination and its three weeks of festivity, leading the Allied Powers to think there was no poverty in the land (and also inconceivable plunder in the City); if the House of Commons rose to receive and thank our Duke—for we had now our Duke as truly as our King—while he sat loyally to receive the homage so fully his due; if Oxford had her Greek and Latin gratulatory speeches; we also in Abbot's Weir, in our manner, had our festivities, to us as imposing.

Had not Abbot's Weir also her heroic sons to welcome? And foremost of them was our cousin Captain Fyford, wounded at Trafalgar, and battered by many a stormy day since, on the transport service for the Peninsular Army.

The spirit of old Elizabethan dramatic days had come over us, not imitatively, but by the old inspiration. We were to have something approaching a Masque or Mystery; although altogether ignoring any alliance with mediæval mummeries or papistical pomps.

There was to be a review of the gallant volunteers, and a sham-fight; to end in the triumphal charring of our cousin Dick as the representative of the British forces, and the banishment of Buonaparte (in the shape of an apothecary of small stature and military bearing, great among the volunteers, who consented to be victimised for the public good), to an island in the middle of our river, designed to represent the Island of Elba.

It was a day of great festivity; too really glad and natural to be riotous and irregular. The country poured itself into the town; flowers and green boughs and garlands and triumphal arches embowering the streets and festooning the windows; the farmers and labourers with their wives and children flocking in on foot through all the green and flower-strewed lanes, or in merry groups, on pillions, and in waggons; whilst every town householder kept open house, and tables were spread in the streets. The review of our volunteers on the Down went off in a way to convince us that had Napoleon had his coveted command of the Channel for twelve hours and landed, Abbot's Weir at least would have had little to fear.

On the Down, nature herself entered like the gayest of the revellers into our holiday, lavishing the sunshine of her clearest skies, and from the golden gardens of furze-blossom filling the breezy air with delicate fragrance.

Captain Fyford having been duly honoured in the capacity of representative of the British Forces, and the military apothecary having been safely banished to the Island of Elba, all returned to take their share in the feastings and the speechifyings, and afterwards in the dance in the old market-house. And it was still early in the night when the entertainments were over, and the merry-makers had broken up into various groups, and were scattering through the lanes to village and hamlet, and solitary farmsteads among the hills.

All day the children had been with us, keeping close to me and Claire; rather awed and stilled than excited by this universal holiday, and by this mysterious bursting of the whole adult population into play.

Little Horace and Patience especially, the motherless twins, being timid children, would scarcely let go my hands. They seemed to feel as if the world had been turned upside down, and the serious part of it had devolved on them.

Claire and I had thought Patience a little feverish; and after the dance she went with me to see if the motherless little ones were sleeping peacefully in the old Vicarage.

We went alone together through the churchyard where our beloved were sleeping.

The town was growing hushed and quiet; only, now and then the voices of the returning country people calling to each other, sounded back from various distances along the valley and up the hills.

It was so still, that we could hear the rush of the river as we went on towards the Vicarage garden by which it flowed.

Softly we went up to the children's nursery; and there we found both the little ones sleeping tranquilly in their cots; and Claire and I tucked them up and kissed them, and then went down together into the garden.

"It was a fancy," she said, "but I did not like the motherless little ones not to have something like a mother's kiss and care to-night."

And we went back through the churchyard.

We paused together a little by our sacred places there.

"The mothers, and the motherless!" she murmured. "I cannot bear to feel they are left out. Two resting-places. The children are asleep; and there is quiet here."

"But not sleep or dreams, Claire," I said; "the real life has begun for them. We watch by the sleep of the little ones unseen; and they surely watch by us."

"And yet *this* life is no dream!" she said; that life to her so rich and full and precious.

"Only as compared with the waking by-and-by," I said; "the life they have been awakened to,—my mother and yours; and the mother of those little ones; and the poor mother whose love cost her such anguish; and Loveday, who used to spread her motherly wings over us all."

We stood some minutes silent there, while the quiet flow of the river grew more and more audible.

Then the old church bells chimed out midnight,—the deep silvery tones which sounded from so far away through the centuries.

"Praise God," they chimed, as on the first night of the century.

Since then how many dear voices, then

with us "creatures here below," had passed among "the heavenly host!"

Yet still it was one choir, and one song, to which the old bells set the tune.

We were turning away, when Piers and Captain Fyford came to look for us, and went home with us through the silent streets to the old house on the market-place.

And then Captain Fyford made a request to me, in broken and doubtful words, which at the time seemed strange and scarcely possible to grant; but which I thought of again and again, and at last found I could not help granting.

"It would make so little difference," as Uncle Fyford had said of his first marriage.

Yet it has made all the difference to me.

CHAPTER XL.

So it came about that once more there reigned a stepmother and a motherless little boy and girl in our old house at home.

And that impressive moral tale which was the romance and consolation of my childhood, of how I would behave to little children situated as Piers and I were, had an opportunity of being translated into fact.

"So runs the round of life from hour to hour."

Yet it is never the same round. The outward forms and scenes may be the same; but the whole inward life which makes the real drama varies endlessly. The very sameness constitutes the difference. We need never fear monotony in a world where God organizes every leaf diversely, and creates personalities as individual as Adam's; and in which circumstance, and sin, and conflict twist these into varieties so inconceivable. The type endlessly various; and endlessly diverged from.

Therefore the morals of those very "pointed" tales of my childhood never came precisely into play.

My temptations and my poor stepmother's, from within and without, were by no means the same.

In the first place, my step-children and I began by loving each other very dearly; and if I shrank determinedly, as I did, from assuming Patience's rights and titles, and being called "mother," it mattered comparatively little to them, because it so happened that "Cousin Bride" had long been to them a name expressive of the person who loved them best in the world.

And in the second place, by no compact or command or sanction, it nevertheless came to pass that I had to submit, in the end, to

being called "mother." When or how it began I cannot recall; but I could not forbid to these first-born children the name my own children called me.

The truth would have been rather violated than preserved by my rejecting it, although I often tried to show both Horace and Patience that they were better off even than my own, having always that other sacred and undying love watching over them and awaiting them above.

That first gleam of peace which we had all celebrated as permanent passed away. War came again; and Waterloo and St. Helena.

And the warfare which Loveday had cared for, which, as we believed, she was ever caring for still—was carried on to other stages, and through new combatants, although many of the veterans lived yet to carry on the war.

Faithfully Clapham did its part in the combat; and faithfully the Moravian and Methodist missionaries (with our Amice and Hervé Godefroy among them) did theirs.

Clapham, with its offshoots and dependencies, grew richer and more prosperous; and its generosity kept pace with its wealth.

How could it help growing rich?

Being religious makes people prudent and energetic; being prudent and energetic makes people, in the main, rich. And if being rich does not always help people to remain religious, once more from the depths, from the poor, God calls His rich—rich in faith—and strong, through the prayer and fasting by which only the worst "kind" of "foul spirit" goeth out. Thus healthy air circulates, and the world is kept sweet, by light and fragrance, and by salt and fire.

Clapham held meetings, and brought Bills into Parliament, and subscribed tens and hundreds of thousands, and from its suburban Paradises not only "visited" the prisons, but reformed them; not only gave alms to the poor, but educated them out of poverty; not only visited the sick, but healed them in hospitals and convalescent homes; it allured congregations by the thousand, and set them to work on the millions.

And, meanwhile, in Persia Henry Martyn, sent forth from its midst, toiled, and preached, and died, alone; and left but one convert; but inspired countless other lives.

My cousins married; Harriet the "Reformer" a devoted clergyman who lived and toiled in the missionary field, unpicturesque and illimitable, of the low districts of London; Phoebe went to be the comfort of her husband's country parish; Matilda married a

wealthy merchant, and admired and assisted other people's excellent works to her heart's content; every one of them bearing with them, wherever they went, the sunshine and sweetness of that bright early home, from which little Martha had early passed away, leaving the most fragrant memory of all.

And Amice and Hervé Godefroy, with their Moravians, worked on also in their own place, not exactly prosperous, not growing at all rich, sorely tried often, often failing in health; but sometimes overpaid with such rare, unutterable delights as only such service enfolds; by seeing hearts that had seemed dead wake up, and live, and rejoice, and serve; by seeing sufferings nobly borne and nobly avenged, evil conquered by good,—patient, faithful lives crowned by joyful death.

Some of their slaves they emancipated and sent to the new free colony of Sierra Leone. And among the rest the labour proved, so far, not in vain, that at the general emancipation in 1832, the islands in which missionary work had been most encouraged, found themselves able to anticipate the period of apprenticeship, and to trust the slaves with immediate freedom.

And then their work, as far as they could do it, was done. They had parted with their children long before, to be brought up in the bracing English climate, away from the enervating influences, physical and moral, around them there.

But they themselves stayed till the emancipation. Having put their hands to the plough, they turned not back.

Then they returned, and took a cottage on the hills near us, hoping that the vigour of the moorland air would restore the vigour they— but chiefly Captain Godefroy—had lost.

Their reward was not visibly here; except indeed for that best reward of doing good work, and for the rare blessedness of that incomparable companionship of a perfect marriage during the years which they were given to spend together; years, one of which had more life in it than many a lifetime.

Not on the heights; low among the heavy-laden, helping them to bear the burdens, Amice had thought this the highest. And God gave her her highest; I think also His highest, the place His highest took on earth.

"We need not try to make life hard to ourselves," Amice had once said, speaking of Clapham; "what are the little pin-pricks we can inflict on ourselves? When God wounds, it is wounding, and we learn; learn to suffer as He suffered. And when He heals, it is healing; and we learn more—learn in

our measure to heal as He healed." And so she found it—my Amice, our Amice, the treasure and the succour of us all.

* * * * *

Twenty-five years from that first abolition in 1807, through wars and adversity, and victory and peace, and again through new wars and new peace, that great anti-slavery conflict went steadfastly on, until, in 1832, the Vittoria, Leipzig, and Elba of the first war were succeeded by the Waterloo of the real final victory; the twenty millions sterling freely given by England to redeem herself and Africa from the great wrong; the banishment of the iniquity for ever from all lands over which England held sway.

To the last the veteran leader, William Wilberforce, lived and fought on; at the very last (by one of those weird repetitions of history which read like the refrain of a dirge), like Pitt and Fox in the first campaigns of the war, dying, if not before the victory was won, yet before the day of triumph dawned. And the whole House of Commons followed him to his grave in Westminster Abbey.

The sixty years' war was over; once more, evil had been conquered by good.

A conflict still, as we know, to be suc-

ceeded by other conflicts elsewhere, in the same cause; never indeed to be finished, until the iniquity shall be banished utterly from the world.

And then, and then?

Other wrongs, other slaveries, other warfares, other victories; as long as the source of all wrongs and all bondage remains in man; the great mystery of iniquity, beside which all else that we call darkness is penetrable, the awful possibility of the slavery of selfishness and disobedience involved in the very power to love and obey.

Patiently, for more than half a century, that great anti-slavery struggle went on; the "moral atmosphere," which we call public opinion, slowly clearing and becoming healthy in the only way in which "moral atmospheres" ever do clear and become healthy; not by any volcanic irresistible convulsion, as of the elements; nor by slow inevitable diffusion, as of the seasons; but by a strenuous keeping or restoring of the sanitary laws; by a laborious clearing and planting, and embanking, and draining away of everything that causes malaria; by a few brave and patient men, often at first by only one, refusing to drift smoothly along with the evil current of the times, but pulling resolutely Against the Stream.

The End.

SEASONS.

SOULS have seasons. Youth with spring-time
Breaketh into voice and bloom,
Beareth in her breast the sweetness
Of the golden days to come—
Hush!—a something dawneth straightway,
Openeth a celestial gateway.

Love, with summer. On his bosom,
Ruffled by no changeful wind,
Calm repositeth, full and favoured
All His bounties that is kind:
Yet a silence strangely reigneth
Where the Dove alone complaineth.

Is it that with Love as summer—
All its sweetnesses in view—
He is silent, by the picture
Waked to reading it anew?
Does he, mournful in his gladness,
Bode, "Hereafter cometh sadness?"

Even so. The hill-top mounted,
Straight declineth then the way,
It is fore-ordained of Angels
That the night succeed the day—
After laughter falleth sighing,
After living cometh dying.

Even so. But so 'tis pleasant,
When the soul hath reached its gloom,
When the silence speaketh only
Of the silence of the tomb,
When no more the Dove complaineth
For that ne'er a dove remaineth,

Then, O friends, 'tis well to whisper
Hopeful, to the wearied soul—
Patience heart! the night it endeth,
Way-worn feet have reached the goal—
After sighing falleth laughter,
After Death the great Hereafter.

C. C. FRASER-TYTLER.

IN REFORMATION TIMES:

Some Glimpses of Life at a Great Era.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PAPERS FOR THOUGHTFUL GIRLS."

PART III.—THE BARRETS.

CHAPTER III.—THE SOLID TRIBULATION AND THE MOCKING SHADOW.



LIFE at Chevehurst was singularly uncomfortable, and, as it seemed, unprofitable, during the weeks of early summer which followed Madam

reasonable, and meek as she had always been showed no present disposition to take the squire's comfort; and as he hated to look upon her face, he had to fall back on a continual round of bowling matches, fishing-expeditions, inspection of his warrens, and punishment of rogues and vagabonds, which should keep him as much occupied abroad as possible. Madam Selby banished the squire from his own hearth and chair in the hall bow-window.

Hugh the younger had the recoil of the young from the misfortune which they cannot obviate, and from the grief they can neither fathom nor console. He imagined that he knew only too well what it would be to be even near losing his cousin Joyce; but he could not conceive the wild conflict, the dull despair of being forbidden even to mourn a loss, the deadly pain and shame which shot through Elisabeth when it was brought home to her that she, a good woman, was not like other good women, but had never owned a right to the place which she had filled with honour and joy, while she had sought to glorify God in the tie which now was said to be no binding tie either in the sight of God or man.

Selby's return to her place in her uncle's house. The old squire had twinges of conscience. Bluff and hardy as he was, he could not feel at ease, or fall on proper footing, with the black-robed woman who, though she did not dream of blaming him, and did not complain to him, remained a monument of suffering endurance and patient sickness of heart. The squire was provoked by Elisabeth's fidelity in mourning now, if she had forgotten once; the first Selby had been something like a man, a young fellow with apparent flush of health and life, while his brother Julian was no more than a sickly scholar, emaciated and hectic, so that a single ague or a touch of the falling sickness might cut him off any day.

"He needed her the more," she said.

What sort of argument was that for a woman who set a proper value on herself, and might again have the pick of brave husbands? She was worth even a nobleman's wooing now, and might rise two or three steps in social grade. The more mature woman that she was, the less time she had to waste in pining and pining for what the priest had told her was unlawful. But Elisabeth, godly,

In Hugh's secret heart, though he pitied both Julian Selby and Elisabeth very sincerely, and while he had more esteem for Julian's intellectual and moral gifts than his father could spare, he did think that the dissolved marriage was not quite worth the frantic outcry which was made about it. The couple were almost middle-aged in his eyes—Elisabeth, the younger of the two by a year, must be twenty-nine. They were fast growing old. They had had their day; why rave because its end was somewhat anticipated? Above all, why stand in the way, barring the opening day of others?

Not so argued Joyce, whose wholesome heart was changed to gall by her vehement adoption of her sister's sorrows. If a life-long widowhood, without the rights and privileges of widowhood, were good enough for Elisabeth, a single life was only too good for Joyce. Possibly poor Julian could not altogether help himself—a rueful sufferer by the terrible change which had come over his life and blasted his home. Joyce's heart smote her for unkind judgments of her brother-in-law,

whom she, together with all women, loved since his compulsory sedentary occupations had drawn him into association with them, while his manliness and superiority had continued unimpaired.

But even Julian Selby ought to have known beforehand what might happen, and should have found some redress, and not allowed himself to be beaten off the field with his kind heart swelling in strange sullenness because Elisabeth, being unable to refute the logic of her teachers, in anguish consented to their verdict, and would rather pluck out her right eye than that she, and above all, he, should be written—anathema maranatha.

It was not poor Joyce's way to be unerringly accurate in apportioning censure and awarding retribution. She took the lion's share to herself, ungrudgingly, in proposing its acceptance to Hugh Barret, who rebelled at the morsel. But it must be confessed that she did not thrive on her self-abnegation. Adopted sorrows make, after all, but a spurious experience. When the God of Providence imposes a burden surely He strengthens the back to bear it; and the inevitable nature of the load, with the absence of any lawful chance of freedom, braces the back with the fortitude born of resignation. But voluntarily assumed martyrdom and fantastic consecration, however honourable, and touching to the woes of another, do not of necessity carry strength with them. God wills wisely our several fortunes, and all that man can do is to accept his will, and because of Christ's grace to trust in its perfect goodness. When the two women are grinding at the mill, and the one is taken and the other left, she who is spared must not forsake her grinding in order to go on bemoaning. "What shall this man do?" asks an apostle of the unspoken future of his fellow. "What is that to thee? follow thou me," answers the all-comprehending, merciful Lord. In this sense every man should bear his own burden. There is danger in any other course. Not even the most generous can interfere with what is really another's, and help that other to any purpose, but on the contrary, must hurt himself with a worse hurt than that of body or worldly estate, or even of sweet human affections by intermeddling. So it was, that Elisabeth waxed dumb, so far as fretting went, under the blow which had shattered her roof-tree, stripped her of the companion of her soul, and even of her matronly dignity and repute; while Joyce was peevish, perverse, inclined to rail under the mere reflection of the adversity which she had clutched as her own.

Joyce was cold and distant to her uncle, who had accustomed himself to bask in the sunshine of her busy content and fresh gladness, until he had come to be damped and vexed when he could by no means win her smiles and prattle, after striving in a manner that was positively pathetic; for with all his faults the squire was stout-hearted, and he had been as a father to her.

Joyce was still harder to her cousin, thwarting his overtures and repulsing his approaches. Then, notwithstanding that he had his share of wit, Hugh, while he was higher-hearted, more unselfish than his father, had not his father's patience with the froward girl, whom both father and son loved. He began to be unsettled and sour. He would talk of the reduction of Ireland, and campaigning against the Scots, of voyages in search of new worlds, and even of the attractions and excitements of great towns, while he would scowl at the benefits of country life, with which he had hitherto been well satisfied. Next, the old squire would take up the cudgels against his son; get into a rage, fume fiercely and decline to be propitiated by Dame Wade, his table, his steward, his accounts, his stand of falcons, his leashes of dogs, his barns, or anything.

The whole household was out of trim, as if drifting to disintegration and grief in company with another household. And Joyce looked on as yet with gloomy consent to the result. "Oh, Uncle Hugh," she would silently appeal to him, "what ill had Elisabeth or Julian Selby done to you? Had you no feeling for the girl who so long dwelt with you—your better than daughter—if you had had eyes to value her? My naughtiness pleased you better, but that does not please me to think of. I dare say if you were sick, uncle, I should forget it all, and watch by your bed; but to stir your sack now with rosemary, and play shovelboard with you, and grin in your face as if nothing had happened, I will have none of it, let you hang your grey beard as you will."

It was a sad sign of how broken in spirit Elisabeth was, that she failed to perceive that her wrong was spreading and engulfing others—her young sister, all her old friends—and she did not rise up to prevent the engulment. She was apathetic, unless when she had starts and fits of anguish, and then she would change parts with her sister, and be more unsettled and wayward than Joyce. Joyce had wished Elisabeth to resume the mistress-ship of Chevehurst, but Elisabeth would not consent to this.

"My hand hath lost its cunning except

where another house is concerned," she protested; and when Joyce saw how her mind was bound up with Ditton, she felt that her sister had no living interest in Chevehurst. Indeed, it was as if it were only Elisabeth's body which dwelt without a soul at Chevehurst. Good as she was, and desirous in spite of Joyce's will not to throw her shadow over others, or prove more of a trouble to them than she could help, her heart was all at Ditton, or in London with Julian Selby. When she broke her long fits of silence, and, looking absently into the wood fire, or out into the flower-bordered quadrangle, spoke to Joyce, sitting at her account books or her needlework, covertly watching her sister, it would be to say—

"They will have made the first cheese for the year this week at Ditton. The calves will be part weaned. I wonder how my Lady Suffolk's calf—we called the cow Lady Suffolk because she came from that quarter, and she was a very stately beast—is turning out. The floor-cloth for the summer parlour must have come home. Ah! my foot will never tread upon it, though I chose it, and made a great work about the choice. Julian was always the better of a rug for his feet. I hope that they remember it in London, and see that he has his morning draught flavoured with tansy or borage. Do I forget myself because I hope that? Sure it can be no sin to remember what was once my chief earthly duty."

"Elisabeth," said Joyce, suggesting another idea for her sister's consideration, in order to divert the woe-begone mind from perpetually turning back to re-travel the same round, "are you not thankful that you have been spared the trial of leaving children behind you, or else of parting them from their father?"

"I do not know about that," declared Elisabeth, doubtfully; "they would have been brought up to their marred fortunes, and they might have been a comfort to their father. Many people would have been found with the heart to take care of motherless little children, but who will mind my Julian as I minded him? Oh! God, be good to him and me," she prayed, clasping her hands over her face, and bowing herself under her affliction; "give us our reward at last, unworthy as we are, for it was to keep him and me to thee, that I left my love, my husband."

"I would, Joyce, that the Reformed Church were not so sweeping in condemning all religious houses into which lone women like me might take refuge, to be no more tempted by the sight of our lost joys in the possession of others. In such a retreat a woman might

occupy herself with her prayers and works of charity, and at last be at rest." So Elisabeth said one day when she was more like herself, and more concerned with her future.

"Let us walk over to the parish church this afternoon, Elisabeth, and hear the clerk reading the Bible to the people who have gathered to listen, after vespers," Joyce proposed, eagerly fain to entice the desolate woman's foot over the threshold.

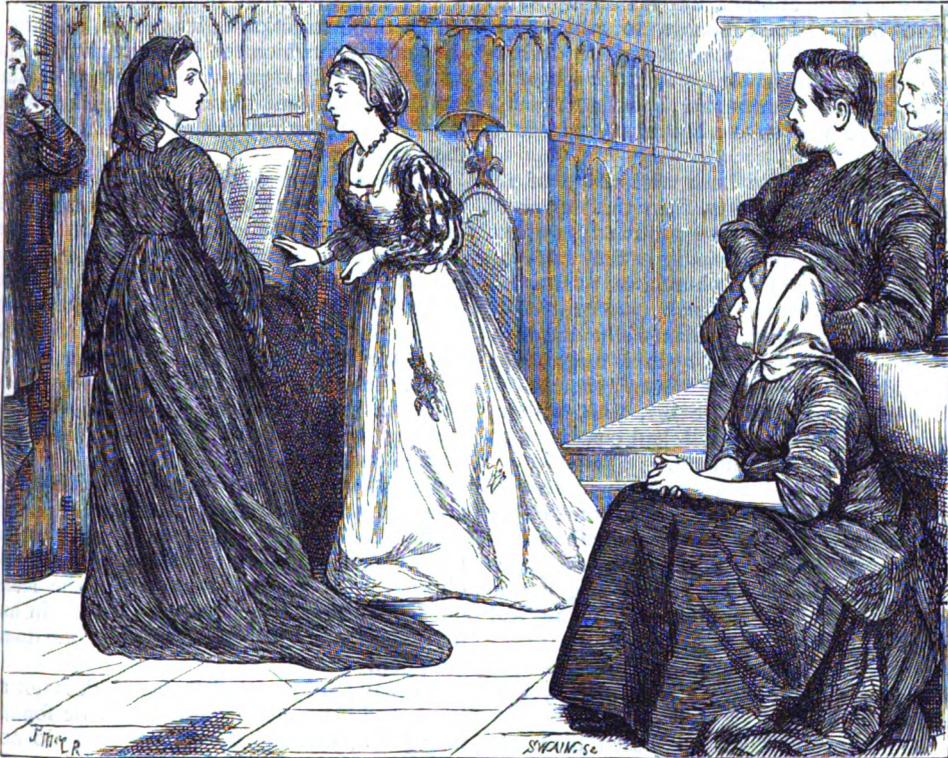
Elisabeth consented, and the two young women took the field path, which was so short, and so near home, that they did not fear to follow it without an attendant, and which terminated in a stile, a lych gate, and a little grey church of Norman architecture, with the vicar's small house adjoining. The path was through the pasture, where the long meadow-grass was beginning to wave in an approach to its June luxuriance, and where red sorrel, black plaitain heads, amber king-cups, and white ox-eyed daisies were already nodding. Colts and heifers were treading up to the fetlocks in their sweet juicy food; larks, willow-wrens, and plovers had their nests in tedded tufts, or under tall stalks of ragwort. Presently the cultivated pasture passed into one of the warrens, into which so much "good English land, because of the value of fur," was retrograding, in defiance of acts of parliament. There the short, bare turf was fragrant and gay with purple wild thyme and golden cowslips, while it was full of burrows, into which living grey-and-white balls were for ever scudding, and haunted by shrill screaming sand martins and lapwings. Like all places in a state of nature, it had a wild, inspiriting freshness. Close to the stile and the lych gate there had once been a pilgrim's holy well, possibly connected with the foundation of the church on that spot. Vigorously reforming hands had thrown down the arch and parapet of the well, so that they had half choked the fountain, causing it to bubble up hysterically, and to overflow its old bounds, with no order or result save that of perpetual oozy discomfort.

"Poor well! thou hast fared no better than some of us," said Elisabeth, pausing and dipping her fingers into the spent water; and then, shaking her hand free of the soiling drops, she added quickly, "but it was no more than thy desert, for thou pretendest to heal what thou couldst not so much as touch. I remember I once sought thee in behalf of a friend, and thou didst cheat me like many another. I owe thee a grudge, yet even in thy best days thou didst not pretend to heal a wounded spirit."

The thatched lych gate still bore its pious inscriptions, carved on its brown wood :—
 “The Place were thine Honour dwelleth.”
 “My Father’s House is a House of Prayer.”
 The iron-studded door of the church stood open as when the empty niches were filled with the figures of saints, and there was a daily stream of wayfarers bound to leave their votive wreaths, present their offerings, and do their penances ; fulfilling the irksome obligations of their enforced round before each shrine. The people were now taught to pray at home, to perform their daily tasks, and

rule their hearts and lives, instead of wandering from chapel to chapel, lavishing their substance on robes to the Virgin and St. Lucy, or a silver groat to St. Anthony, or a rose-noble to St. Nicholas, according to the degree and means of the worshipper.

But in the cool dark depths of the church there was a considerable number of persons resting at the foot of the pillars, and on the steps of the pulpit, waiting to see whether Master Nye, who had been sent for to some distance to minister to a sick person, or his clerk, who had accompanied him, would re-



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turn in time to read a lesson for even-song. These people were of different ages and ranks, and impelled by different motives. There were tottering old women,

“ Gray sisters of a day gone by,”

dependent on Master Nye’s bounty, and as desirous of pleasing him as of pleasing any old friar or sacristan by attendance to their devotions—listeners for the sake of the loaves and fishes. There were keen looking, middle-aged men, bent on getting to the rights of the theological disputes which were rending the

country, and on keeping their own with the arguers on the opposite side, in every marketplace and village ale-house ; listeners, like the old Athenians, in search of some new thing with which to foil their next rival in talk at home or abroad. There were young men, fiery and speculative, though they were in a condition little removed from that of hinds ; farmers’ sons and village artisans, early loosed from the few ploughs which remained in the soil, and from the smithy and cartwrights’ shops, coming to the new doctrines and to the Bible as to a mint of social and political

rights; listeners who, if they could no longer hope to take Christ and make Him a king, trusted to draw helps to material prosperity and watchwords for earthly ambition from his Word. And there were a few listeners, both men and women, old and young; but most of them were clad in mourning cloaks and hoods, or with the traces of care and sorrow and longing on their wistful faces. These were they who, through much tribulation, had reached even their present lowly station in the general assembly and church of the First-Born.

Though its interpreter was absent, the book into which all the congregation sought to look by the eyes of another, was manifest. With oaken brass-clasped boards, to which was fixed the chain that bound it to the desk, it lay open and unguarded. But, though some of the inquirers went up and handled it covetously, none was so clerkly as to read it to his fellows.

There was a little hush and rustle of respect for the two ladies from the manor of Chevehurst as, in the comparative dusk of the lengthening afternoon shadows, they came up the middle aisle of the church. A manor was a manor, however religious opinions might differ, and the ladies, Madam Selby and Mrs. Joyce, were well regarded by their neighbours, rich and poor. There was even general sympathy for poor Madam Selby, who, without having thought to do evil, had consented to receive a heavy punishment.

The sisters did not enter their seat in church. Joyce went and spoke to some of her acquaintances in the group; Elisabeth walked softly to the desk, and turned over the pages of the Bible with her finger, seeking in the holy book for the healing which she had missed in the holy well.

Suddenly an impulse seized her—she looked up and around on the company with her haggard face.

“Good people,” she addressed them abruptly, but with modest firmness, “would you that I should read a lesson to you? The Scriptures are free. I may serve till the clerk comes.”

A little murmur of surprise and assent, alike at the condescension and the capability of the speaker, arose from the hearers. No one objected, or cried out that such a deed were sacrilege. Only Joyce stepped quickly to the side of Elisabeth, with eye fixed loyally on her sister to be ready to step into the breach at whatever cost, and relieve the reader should she give way.

But Elisabeth did not even falter; it was as if she had left her shy, retiring nature, with

her sorrows, behind her. She read, in a silvery voice, passage after passage, and story after story, choosing, with an instinct or inspiration of selection, what was most comprehensible and applicable to all.

Think what it must have been for Christian men and women to hear, with the eager interest of novelty and the marvel of a fresh acquaintance, the stories of Joseph and his brethren, of David and Jonathan; the parables of the Prodigal Son, and the Good Samaritan? It was not that the Roman Catholic faith did not include such histories and parables, but that in the corruption into which it had fallen when it neglected nearly altogether the instruction of its people, and from the manner in which the Bible narratives had been overlaid by mediæval saints' legends, the simple and sublime records of the Bible were largely lost to the nations who upon it founded their faith.

In these lessons there was really nothing to meet the wants of cunning time-servers, of turbulent or subtle controversialists, of the rising democrat and Ishmaelite fighting for his own hand—only for the weary and the heavy-laden sinner was there rest, only for the single-hearted and the truly noble was there the losing of life in order to find it again, the self-renunciation for the purpose of being in the Father and the Son, and of working with and for the whole family in heaven and earth.

Yet all who listened were more or less fascinated by the words thus spoken to them, and desired to have them spoken again. Elisabeth, withdrawing and returning home as unobtrusively as she had come, while she leaned on Joyce's arm, felt a little lightened in her heart. This act in behalf of others had done her good.

“I may read again when the clerk is not at hand, and if no better reader can be found, may I not, Joyce?” she asked. “I do not think I am barred or unfit. What think you?”

“I cry God-a-mercy on the men who are clerks if you be unfit,” protested Joyce.

After that day Elisabeth went regularly, morning and evening, to the parish church, and gave good help to the singing when there was no call for her to read. Some one has said that all English men and women sang in those days; and Elisabeth had not only the natural advantage of a rich, full voice, but Julian Selby, a master of music, had skilled her in the science. Master Nye was grateful for her assistance; but, though she was obedient and deferential to Master Nye, and fully believed in and respected him as a true physician,

who had not shrunk from wielding the operator's knife in her service, somehow weak human nature recoiled from familiar intimacy with him and his, and Elisabeth and he were never nearer to each other than a faithful pastor and a loyal member of his flock. In place of entering his house after the daily services, to rest and consult with him and his wife and daughters, Elisabeth never sought farther rest than what she could get in the church porch, where she would sit for half an hour at a time schooling herself to patience and resignation.

CHAPTER IV.—A SURPRISE.

SEEING Elisabeth sitting alone one hot summer noon, the sole living object among the dead lying under the stones of the churchyard around her, and looking, in spite of what young Hugh Barret had hastily judged her middle-age, wonderfully young, this same Hugh, returning from the great Chevehurst sheep-shearing, was moved to turn aside and join his cousin. He was the more impelled to do so by the circumstance that, whether or not it was a mellow illusion produced by the full flood of light without, the face looked to him as if there was a crown of peace on the worn forehead, while a faint smile hovered about the lips, which had been so long dragged down with the woeful sentence they had allowed themselves to echo.

For the moment Elisabeth struck Hugh as being nearer to content than Joyce, so that the reluctance, half impatient and half delicate, of the young man to come in contact with her great misfortunes, fled, and he sat down beside her.

Elisabeth fairly smiled as she welcomed him. "Come, Hugh, and tell me what you have been about? I never see you here, to get a quiet word with you, except on a Sunday."

Hugh looked a little convicted of negligence; for the early reformers had recovered the zeal of the early Christians in assembling themselves together. Matins and evensongs were no longer utterly neglected in parish churches—no longer a mere form calling together no more than the parish priest and his household.

"I am out of sorts and in trouble, cousin Elisabeth," he muttered. "I am not able to bring my mind to bear upon lessons here."

"Ah, but that is just the reason why you should come," alleged Elisabeth, looking far away across the misty flat of the warren.

"Ay, with regard to some troubles," answered Hugh shyly; "but mine finds no encouragement there," and he glanced into

the church at the book on the reading-desk. "Methinks I am childish, or guilty of idol worship," he added quietly and wisely.

"But the Bible is not for wise men and saints, but for the sinful children of men," persisted Elisabeth. "There is reference to you, Hugh; come and see."

And she took him by the hand and walked in, and pointed out how Jacob loved Rachel, and counted the seven years during which he served for her but as one day, because of the love he bore her. "And there is notice of desolate women like me—women parted from their husbands," she explained simply. "There was Michal, the daughter of Saul, who was in worse hap than I am, because she was not only taken from David, but given to another, and taken from him again and restored to David; and see, Hugh, how gently it is recorded that this last poor husband, though he did not resist—how could he against the voice of the king and judge?—followed her, weeping as he went. I fear me, if there had not been such notices in the Bible, I too might not have found grace to come to it and get my portion in it."

"I cannot understand it, cousin," protested Hugh, in a sudden burst of confidence. "We might have all been so happy, and here we are set against each other, because of no fault of ours, as it seemeth, unless it be that of an excess of affection and suffering in each other's pain. Can this be the will of God?"

"'I am not come to send peace on earth, but a sword,' the Lord said to his disciples," Elisabeth reminded him. "I think I see that there must be periods of special confusion and suffering while the light as yet struggles through the darkness. If so, there must be victims whereof it may be said they are only too much honoured, if they will but see it, that they, in their weakness and errors, are selected to know anything, however little, of the fellowship of His sufferings."

"But you, who were the pattern of wifely tenderness and virtue—no wonder that it makes my Joyce mad that your enemies, among the scum of the earth, should have it in their power to point at you as fallen from your estate, deceived, and undone."

"It is hard to bear," owned Elisabeth with a deep sigh, "but am I the only poor woman in this realm who, without guilt, may yet be reviled if some have the heart to revile? As for poor me, I have not many enemies; but I know I was set up, and might have grown even more conceited in my fancied hero if I had not been rudely pulled down. Even good wine will settle upon the

lees and ferment foully, and to be let alone is sometimes the awfulest sentence of all. God knows best. I have always the comfort of being avised by thy old friend Julian Selby. Surely you did love him, Hugh; never was such a kindly or gifted man, and he is a virtuous and God-fearing gentleman, though a sorely stricken one."

"You are a good soul sent to better us, after all," declared Hugh, reverently drawing her arm through his to take her home, when Joyce saw the two coming through the gateway. She looked down on Hugh from her window not disapprovingly. "Yes, Hugh, be good to her, it sets you well," she affirmed merrily, though she subjoined immediately, "but give over seeking to get round me. I cannot endure the thought of marriage—God's institution. So it might have been in Eden, but here it has been so bandied about, forsworn, degraded, that it may have lost God's mark and favour utterly for aught that I can see."

CHAPTER V.—TRUCE AND TRUST.

THE even tenor of Elisabeth's way after she had settled at Chevehurst was much disturbed one day by the arrival of a special messenger bringing a letter to her from her renounced husband.

"Dear Elisabeth," the letter set forth, for Elisabeth in place of refusing to read it, caught greedily at the perusal "(for I may call you dear, though no longer wife), since I wrote to you in my deepest dolour, turning even against you in my pain when all seemed over, as I dared not deny, a new authority hath, to my great relief and comfort, entered on the scene. I can say no more than that no man, not even your uncle or Master Nye, will contradict its potency. I propose to travel down, armed with this authority, to Chevehurst, craving sight and speech of you to confer on the fresh feature in our case.

"Yours still to dispose of, my Elisabeth, for the few days which may remain to me, Julian Selby.

"Do not look for me within the week, as I must travel slowly."

"What has come to him?" cried Elisabeth, all stirred and breathless with re-awakened doubt and yearning. "Can the King's Majesty have done aught in our behalf? Alake! he could do nought in his own. I must send my duty to Julian and see him, and hear what he has to say. Neither kinsman nor priests can forbid that which is his right, though he had never been anything more to me than the poor boy Morris's brother. Let

me see; what does he write of travelling slowly? and his handwriting, which used to be fair and clerly like everything else he did, is an unsightly scrawl. I am mortally afraid this trouble has been too much for him, and he is sick to death. Oh, love, love! live and let me know that you are breathing common air with me, though I may no longer bask in the sunshine of your presence."

"It is cruel thus to toss her back and fore," protested Joyce indignantly.

"What can the fellow mean?" frowningly questioned the old squire.

"She is his in heart and soul, though all the priests in Christendom agree to sever what they once linked," asserted young Hugh with meaning tones.

But when the litter which bore Julian Selby was carried within the gateway of Chevehurst, and he was assisted out of it, neither Elisabeth nor any one else was left to speculate any longer on his meaning, or to debate what was the supreme authority he had cited which had given him a title to be there. Death was in the litter and looked out of the traveller's hollow eyes, though they were sparkling with a species of joy. The failing sands of Julian Selby's life had been shaken to the last grains by the storm which had divided him and his wife. During the few weeks they had been apart the feeble flame of his life, which she had fanned assiduously, left to itself, had sunk, and flickered down to the socket.

"They would not let you live with me, Elisabeth, but they will let me die with you, and I have come to die," he said to her; and at that strange comfort the woman echoed his words in a cry at once bitter and sweet. One in death, if not in life. United in death, so often the only solution of life's miseries—the end of the whole matter—or rather, the glorious beginning of new cycles of glory, honour, and immortality.

Elisabeth, after the first shock, quickly recovered herself. With great quietness and fortitude she nursed Julian Selby in his last days. Restored to what had been in a measure the source of his life, that faint life leaped up a little, though it was plain to him and to all, that this was but a stage in its transfer. During the brief respite of these painless, refreshed summer days, however, the pair had blessedly peaceful communion with each other, and with the friends who stood around, looking on them with awe-struck faces and stilled, softened hearts. Julian forgave all interference, dictation, censure, acknowledged every right of kins-

man and priest, and appointed the old squire, who groaned inwardly over the appointment, to watch over Elisabeth's interests in that heirship of Ditton which Julian Selby was resolute in willing to her. It was little to return to her for all it had cost her; but Elisabeth would take it from him for his sake, and reside there in honour and dignity, while she shed his and her bounty softly, like dew on the mown grass, in the place which had known alike their happiness and their misery.

Julian selected the ministrations of Master Nye, who came and went from the sick man's chamber with moist eyes, and a fervent statement that he had never been favoured to join in a more moving service, or seen a man and woman who more meekly gave God the glory, and appeared in a fairer way to heaven.

The calm hope shining in these two faces was a rebuke to the family divisions.

"Julian would fain see everybody happy before he goes, Joyce," pled Elisabeth with her sister, looking as serene in her lily pallor as if Julian Selby were once more a bridegroom, and she his bride going with him to a surer bridal home. "Canst not please him, Joyce, and please our uncle by binding yourself to take good care of the old man who has been kind to us—and very kind to you—and so draw his spirit, as God will, up to higher regions as he goes down the hill of life? I shall be back at Ditton, and I do not think that I shall ever quit Julian's place more, till I be laid to sleep beside him in the chancel of Ditton church. Canst not do it? Nay, wench, dost not rather pine sore to help to make young Hugh, who is your true lover, the good and noble man, that I devoutly believe and trust it is in him to be, instead of goading and flouting, and destroying the lad as you bid fair to do? It is not like you, Joyce, to be so hard. 'Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, and I

will repay,' even though we had not forgotten and been at peace. Cannot you forget? or must you force us to remember still and mourn that we have innocently marred both your nature and your fortunes?"

"If I could but get back my trust, Elisabeth!" lamented Joyce, shivering in her isolation. "I have lost my trust in man."

"Nay, an' it be as bad as that, if you cannot forgive and trust the brother whom you have seen, I fear me you cannot reverence and trust the Father whom you have not seen, any more than you can love Him in the same strait. Pray, Joyce, pray, and we two will pray that your faith in man may come back. I dare not charge you further to make it up with Hugh in such a temper, for what is marriage without trust? Ah, sister, all life is a trust; death itself is a trust," urged Elisabeth.

But when argument was stayed, and Hugh himself stood aloof tenderly to allow those who had so engrossed and disturbed the family life at Chevehurst to pass on, hand in hand, even into the dark valley where they were to part, Joyce's proud, staunch heart broke and yielded, and her trust came back in a flood. She owned that God, who rules in heaven and earth, did all things well, and that man, God's vicegerent, with all his errors and falls, was still entitled to the human award of magnanimous amnesty, ever-fresh faith, and fond fidelity. Then Joyce, restored to her right mind—to patience, content, and sweet humble affection, saw and confessed that she too had been very wrong in her wilful unmercifulness, sought to be forgiven by her uncle and Hugh, desired nothing better than to atone for her sins against them by loving and serving them all the days of her life, and making Chevehurst, as Elisabeth had made Ditton, a home of godliness, virtue, and peace.

LIEUTENANT MOLYNEUX'S ADVENTURES ON THE DEAD SEA.

BY THE LATE JAMES FINN, M.R.A.S.

ON the last day of August, 1847, a letter from the Consul-General, now Lord Strathnairn, notified to me that a party had started from H.M.S. *Spartan*, for the Jordan and the Dead Sea; and it recommended that the Pashà of Jerusalem should send some soldiers up the line of the river, to meet them and ensure their safety. I had

heard of the project a few days before, from some English travellers, but nothing definite as to the mode of carrying it out.

On receipt of the letter, Mr. Critchlow, the architect of our new church in Jerusalem, and I, started off ourselves with four men of the Bashi-bozuk, to look after the adventurers.

We were not above an hour away from Jerusalem, but just at the brow of the descent to the Hhand el'Azariah (commonly called "the Apostles' Fountain"), when we met two Europeans excessively bronzed by the sun, and one of them, a tall powerful young man, announced himself as Lieutenant Molyneux, of the *Spartan*, and his dragoman named Joseph.

Turning aside from the road into a field, he stated that he was in a state of much anxiety, for the boat with her three fine fellows, volunteers from the frigate, had been assailed by wild Arabs, half-way down the river, near Abu 'Obeidah, the property plundered, and the men turned loose into the wilderness. He was broken-hearted on their account, and for the failure of the expedition so far. The boat, however, had been spared, and was brought down the Jordan opposite to Jericho by the man in charge of it after leaving Tiberias, and an Arab picked up by the way, and he had hoisted a blue ensign over the petty tower of Jericho, as a signal in case the men should wander down in that direction: only it did not seem probable that they would do so, for he had, while with them, taken particular pains to explain that, notwithstanding all the windings of the stream, the Jordan's course was substantially parallel with the sea coast, running from north to south; he therefore considered it probable that they had taken a westerly direction over the hills, to reach the Mediterranean.

His object in coming now to Jerusalem was to consult with the Consul, as to what might be done in respect to his men, and to get what assistance he could in carrying out the second part of his researches, namely, that upon the Dead Sea.

I decided upon returning to the city for the night, as it was near sunset, and getting a reinforcement of soldiers from the Pashà. So with my Kawwàs I galloped on ahead of Molyneux and the rest, in order to have the city-gate kept open for them on arrival.

It was the season of Ramadàn, and I just reached St. Stephen's gate as the sentinels were about to close it, poor fellows, with their breakfast waiting before them. The castle gun gave the signal of sunset, when eating might begin, as my horse's hoofs rattled over the pavement towards the Seraglio. I insisted on seeing His Excellency Zareaf Pashà immediately, and found him with one of the Effendis, just sitting down to the pilâf. The story was told in brief, out of pity to the faint and

fasting creatures, and merely asking for more soldiers I took leave, but returned after a couple of hours with Molyneux, to impart fuller details.

At first the Pashà flatly refused to give any further help, for he said, the district complained of might be probably out of his jurisdiction: how could he know whether it was so or not? and then again the robbers were savages. "Do you not know that the Bedawen are not men but beasts?" (*haiwân-ler*)—however, he at last promised us ten Arnaouts with their Aga for the morrow.

During the evening Molyneux obtained the services of a Maltese in the city, one who said he had spent some years as a sailor, and might therefore be useful in rowing the boat upon the Dead Sea: and then got a good night's sleep, which was much needed after the cares and sleeplessness of some time past.

On the 1st September we left Jerusalem early with the Arnaout Bashi-bozuk, who had awaited us outside at Sitté Miriam, the reputed Sepulchre of the Virgin Mary, under the command of a Yuz-bashi, or "captain of a hundred" (in Scripture language, a centurion). He was a Bosnian, named Mustafa Aga; and on starting from the trysting place the two pairs of tiny kettledrums were echoed along the Mount of Olives. The Aga was mounted on a good road-horse, with scarlet saddle-cloth and fringes, also strings of small silver pieces (*kesh-kesh*) and silver chains about the head, besides a turquoise ornament hanging from the nostrils. The fighting horse, however, was a finer animal, arrayed in equal state, and led before us by a mounted groom—a most absurd parade, as it seemed to us, for the kind of service we were engaged in, but perhaps not entirely without use among the barbarians of Jericho.

Descending to the Plain of the Jordan (the Ghor), our British ensign was seen flying over the tower. It was attached to an Arab spear tufted with black ostrich feathers.

The tents, having gone on before us, were already pitched, and on his arrival the Arnaouts formed in line and saluted their officer, by holding their muskets upright from the saddle in the left hand, and giving the Oriental salaam with the right. In a short time we were seated by his side at the stagnant tank, and found that no tidings had arrived about the seamen. The two men from the boat, who had been stripped in company with the sailors, and beaten by the Arabs, gave their evidence, which was simple enough

—they had been greatly overpowered by numbers. So it was resolved that we should march up the Ghor during the night, after the Ramadán breakfast, by moonlight, to avoid as much as possible the heat of the day in that region.

Molyneux and I lay down to get some rest, with the thermometer at 97° Fahrenheit in the shade, but our sleep was disturbed by the tramp of horsemen arriving. These were Dr. Schultz, the Prussian Consul, and his cousin, Mr. Weber, who had come to offer any assistance in their power; but alas! their horses, besides being tired, were evidently of a kind unfit for such an expedition as we were bent upon, and this was at once understood.

So we all lay down once more to rest, Bashi-bozuk, Prussians, and English, till one o'clock, when the moon rose over the Moab mountains: then the kettledrums beat the *reveille*, small cups of coffee were administered, and we were on horseback in a few minutes more.

Having got a reinforcement from the tower, we now mustered sixteen soldiers in the party. Nothing could be more romantic than our single file, preceded by the music (not altogether undeserving of the name in so wild a place and at such an hour), winding among the thorny reb'k trees, and when we emerged upon the open space, the accoutrements glittering in the moonlight (such moonlight!) and the line of shadows *moving* along the ground at our bridle hand.

"I see them on their winding way,
Above their ranks the moonbeams play;
And nearer yet and yet more near
The martial chorus strikes the ear."
HUBER.

At daybreak a few small birds sung sweetly in the wilderness, but after sunrise the heat soon became oppressive. We made no halts, but kept on—on—on—almost in silence; Molyneux occasionally, however, giving signals on a railway whistle, to which the lost men had been accustomed.

We now and then fell in with single persons or small parties of kelp-burners, but they all ran off at our approach, and hid themselves among thickets of large thorns or canes, or in dried water channels. At length, by dint of shouting out promises that no harm should come to them, two beings, something resembling human, showed themselves, but nothing was learned from them; they could or would tell nothing.

We advanced until the Wadi Zerka (Jab-bok) was visible before us, so that we must nearly have approached the locality of the

disaster. At length the soldiers complained of their horses being fatigued, and the commander represented that as they must be back at Jericho by night, there being no other place to go to, it was impossible to proceed further, we would not stay there in the wilderness. So we halted for a short time, each man under the belly of his horse for the benefit of some small shelter from the sun, and then mounted for the return.

It was cruel work for our men under the fast of Ramadán, and my Kawwás, although his face was covered with the Arab kefiéh, barring his eyes, had his eyelids so swollen from the effect of hot reflection from the light-coloured marly ground, that he could scarcely see at all.

Near the site of 'Ain Dook, a copious stream—the Docus of 1 Macc. xvi. 15, where Simon Maccabæus and his sons were assassinated—we rode under the branches of five several trees of the 'Ooher, or *Asclepias gigantea*. I think some of them must have been twenty feet high. There can be little, if any, doubt that the fruit of this tree is the far-famed "Sodom apple." The size is that of a large apple; it is fair without when ripe, but easily bursts to the touch, and is found to contain nothing but a few black seeds and a small quantity of soft white filaments like silk, of which the Arabs make matches for their rude guns.* These trees are numerous in Upper Egypt: but Josephus was only aware of it existing in his own country. Tacitus followed him.

In the distance we saw numerous fires of the kali-burners, while the very air was quivering with the sun-heat around us. No wind, but frequent little columns of sand twirling upwards from the plain and travelling slowly forward from the south, till they broke and subsided on the ground, only to be followed by others. At one time seven of these were in sight, and at another time four.

We reached our tents between one and two o'clock P.M., in twelve hours from our departure, having marched probably fifty miles without a meal, and almost without halting, in an atmosphere that resembled, more than half the way, the air issuing from an oven.

Then came food for us Europeans, and sleep till night, which when it came was hotter than the preceding one.

After dark the village people got up a *fantasia*, in honour of our Aga. On the roof

* The nauseous qualities of smell and taste ascribed to the "Sodom apple" by the ancients, belong rather to the apple-looking colocynt found near the Dead Sea, trailed upon the ground. (See Tristram's "Natural History of the Bible.")

of the tower a bonfire was made, and the women perpetrated an extempore song with a thrilling chorus (the Zughreet), dancing and waving their long sleeves about in the red light, and clapping hands as they sang—the leader beating time with her pipe-stick.

When this officer came down to us for arrangement of operations on the morrow his choristers followed him with their dinning performances, children's voices mingling with the rest, till we could scarcely hear each other speak. At length they were dismissed.

The Aga asserted that two of his men nearly lost their lives in leaping over a marshy channel during the day's excursion, pursuing the Arabs to get information for us.

We learned that our Prussian friends had returned to Jerusalem, after visiting 'Ain Dook, and comparing the site with some documents in their possession, relating to property of the Teutonic Crusaders during the era of the Latin kingdom.

At night two large tarantulas were killed in our tents.

On Friday, the 3rd, we had a delicious walk before sunrise. The last palm-tree of Jericho, "the city of palm-trees" (Deut. xxxiv. 3), has now only its trunk left, and that is decaying rapidly towards the ground. The blue doves or pigeons are so abundant that it would seem as if one might subsist there by means of a fowling-piece, without stirring many yards from the tent-door. These birds come down from the holes in the rocks of the Quarantana mountain, and pick up relics of the village harvest, which is mostly of Indian corn, and repeated several times in the year.

After breakfast we set off for the Dead Sea, with a few of our Jerusalem Bashi-bozuks, to meet the boat, which had been removed from its mooring at the ford of the Jordan, into the lake, and placed not far from the mouth of the river. Nearing our destination, as the marl became softer, we observed numerous footprints of large birds and wild quadrupeds.

Reeds lined the banks to the height of above five feet, but when they take to trailing on the ground these often measure twenty or thirty feet in length. The breeze coming to us over the surface of the lake was intensely hot and dry.

The fall of the Jordan into the Dead Sea is a spot rarely visited by travellers, but I had been there before, with a Jerusalem party, who encamped nearly a week at Elisha's Fountain.

A tent was now pitched for us on the

beach and kept open to the water—thermometer at 94° Fahrenheit inside the tent—and the lines, leads, &c., were got ready for use in the coming researches. A fire was lighted, but this had to be made with reeds, thorns, and branches brought from the river side, inasmuch as the debris of trees lying along the beach were incombustible, owing to their saline incrustation derived from the water. The Bosnian Aga sat very comfortably smoking his chibook inside, or occasionally peering through my telescope at the Moab mountains, particularly at a patch of green millet in one place, where he naturally inferred there must have been people guarding it, and perhaps observing us.

Some wild fowl were shot while flying over the lake, notwithstanding that the ancients have assured us that nothing can fly over that water and live: these would have survived the flight had they not been shot. They were delivered over to the cook.

After the respast Mustafa Aga amused himself with ball practice at a peg stuck in the ground, but always failed to hit it till I lent him my rifle, when he as uniformly succeeded. The Aga, the Maltese, and I got into the boat, and I had the gratification of taking, for a short turn, the stroke oar of a British man-of-war's dingy, the first ever launched upon the lake Asphaltites. When the sun fell low we landed from

"that bituminous lake
Where Sodom stood,"

and I bade farewell to the adventurers, promising to return on Monday morning, this being Friday evening. Two soldiers remained as guard with the party, the rest returned with the Aga and me to Jericho.

The sun went down, and we wandered among labyrinths of the chalk and marl hillocks, six of the party separated from us. We stopped at 'Ain Hajlah (the Beth-hoglah of Joshua xviii. 19-21, and where, in 1847, our then party chased and slew one wild boar out of a family of seven), and drank of its crystal fountain by starlight, then marched on, firing muskets and beating kettledrums, as signals to the stragglers; the Aga riding up each successive hillock on the look-out.

I slept at Jericho.

On Saturday, the 5th, I got to Jerusalem, after three days and nights without unclothing, and sent off letters to the *Spartan*, which we learned had arrived off Jaffa.

Letters came from Captain Symonds on Sunday, and also from the consular-agent at Acre, giving intelligence that the three sea-

men were safe on board, having made their way back from Abu 'Obeidah to Tiberias. The assailants had been forty or fifty in number, and one of our men had been struck on the head with the butt-end of a gun while preparing to fire his pistol, and had fallen, stunned, into the river. The three were stripped to their trousers, and the wounded man carried off by his companions. They made their way into the wilderness, northwards, living on berries, and only going to the Jordan to drink at night.

Having this information, I naturally wished to communicate it to Molyneux, but the Pashà and the Major of the troops being asleep, no Bashi-bozuk messenger could be obtained. I therefore dispatched one of my kawwâses alone with a letter. By daybreak on Monday two lieutenants from the *Spartan*, sent on by the Captain to meet and cheer up Molyneux, were in my house, having succeeded in overcoming the scruples of the sentinels at the gate, as to their admission at that hour.

By noon they and I left the city, with one man, neither a kawwâs nor a soldier, bound for the Dead Sea; but, arriving at Jericho, and turning aside to fetch a blanket out of my tent—behold!—there was the dingy with her spars all lashed within, and two camels kneeling by her side. There, too, was Molyneux himself. The meeting of the brother officers was touching enough: there was much to ask, and much to tell.

Molyneux had spent two nights and a day and a half upon the lake, and discovered that the Maltese scarcely "knew one end of an oar from the other." The weather had been sometimes very rough, the water running high under certain currents of wind, issuing through crevices from between the mountains, and then subsiding with wonderful rapidity—the thermometer sometimes 130° Fahrenheit out of the sun, and the atmosphere one of hot steam, inducing thirst, drowsiness, and depression of spirits.

The party had become much browner in countenance since I left them. Molyneux's eyes were highly inflamed, and he looked worn by labour and anxiety.

We had a dinner together beside the rill coming down from Elisha's Fountain, after which they sent up a rocket with silver stars, in honour of the occasion, and wondered what the Arabs across the Jordan would think of it.

I slept in my tent upon a piece of matting, with a rice bag for my pillow, pistols at the right hand, rifle and fowling-piece at the left, while the kawwâs, who had taken down the letters, lay wrapped in his cloak at the door.

II. N.S.

At early morning, on Tuesday, a strange scene was witnessed when the camels rose from the ground with the boat slung upon poles between them. Imagine a broken common with prickly shrubs upon it, irregularly scattered: mountains behind—the trunk of headless palm-tree—British officers, and Arab men, women, and children looking on, the latter skipping at the fun, and some unclean babies screaming with delight at the snarling and growling of the camels.

The officers escorted the boat by a road which for the first part differed from ours, on which they found the ascent more gradual, though somewhat longer, and all reached Jerusalem in safety. They remained there till the 10th. Molyneux employed the interval in making up his journal, and they left us for Jaffa by the road to Lydd, that being the easiest for conveying the dingy.

They arrived at Jaffa with the boat, which was as sound as ever, and the crew set up three cheers on her mounting the deck, and vowed she should never be washed again, but keep her slime of the Dead Sea as a memorial.

On reaching the station off Bayroot, fever seized poor Molyneux, and increased in spite of medical skill. He was removed on shore to the house of the Consul-General, where he had two physicians in constant attendance; also a third was summoned from Damascus, but the latter only arrived when there was no more hope; on the 3rd October he died.

Meanwhile, in Jerusalem, Acre, Damascus, and Bayroot, every effort was made to get the Turkish authorities to punish the offending Arabs; yet to this day they are not chastised. One thing, however, which the Turks could not do, which I am sure they were not able to do, was effected by humbler means.

On the 30th of September I learned from the Rev. Mr. Nicolayson that a native Scripture-reader, named Michael Murkus, employed by Bishop Gobat across the Jordan, on hearing that some English travellers had been plundered by the petty 'Abbâd people, went to their Shaikh, and represented the heinous nature of the crime that had been committed, as well as the awful retribution that must necessarily follow from the hand of the mighty English nation; whereupon, after secret deliberation among the chiefs, he was told to go early next morning to a certain hillock described, and lying beside a large stone he would find the booty. He accordingly went there, and taking up the articles carried them to the Governor of Nablus, from whom I received them in Jerusalem, and forwarded them to the frigate.

The Musheer-Pashà of Bayroot had furnished, though unwillingly, our expedition at its starting with a *buyuruldi* (order) to all governors and chiefs, for facilitating the operations; and after the disaster the military commander in Bayroot sent orders to the officer at Acre to see redress obtained—so we were told. Yet he of Acre, and he of Jerusalem, when pressed, pleaded afterwards that they had received *no orders*, but only letters of *recommendation* to do what was necessary. Among them nothing was accomplished.

It was unfortunate that our brave adventurer and his advisers had no sufficient knowledge of that ingrained custom of Arab life known by the name of *ghuf'r*, which means the right of the occupant of any territory to exact toll from strangers passing over it, in return for which he affords protection. And events have shown that it was absurd to suppose that the Arabs would acknowledge the mere name of Turkish authority. The people to whom Molyneux did pay sums kept their word faithfully, but on both sides those sums were regarded as payments for tasks performed or services rendered. And at length a time arrived when exorbitant

sums were demanded, and Molyneux had no one to appeal to.

A nobler specimen of a chivalrous Englishman than Lieutenant Molyneux it has never been my lot to meet with. His stature was considerable, as well as his muscular strength; and I remember the pleasure with which we listened in Jerusalem to the account of his negotiation with the 'Abbad leader on the first demand being made. The latter vaunted, in the manner of all savages, of his own personal prowess and the number of guns he could muster beyond those of his attendants present. Our Briton produced his men and their weapons, then placing a mark against a tree, took a revolver and hit the mark thrice in succession, explaining that he was able to do the same infallibly for thirty times.

The Arab only gravely persisted that he must have his money, or they should not pass further in the morning, and rose up to depart, whereupon Molyneux, in wishing him a good evening, gave him such a grip as extorted from him something like a groan; and the effect was that on the morrow he took care that our hero's back was turned before he ventured to meddle with the boat.

STRIVING TO ATONE.

HE left a happy fireside :
 His parents' hearts were proud ;
 For what of evil could betide,
 Even in the city's crowd,
 The child whom prayers had follow'd—
 As shadow follows cloud ?
 He fell : companions round him
 Their specious lures did weave :
 In the distant Bush he seeks with pain
 His error to retrieve :
 Alone, within their cottage home,
 His parents sit and grieve.
 Their heads are bent so lowly,
 Their hearts beat high no more ;
 Their only wish to hide their shame
 Far from their cottage door.
 He vows to make a home for them
 On far Australia's shore.
 He works—none could work harder—
 He counts the months and days,—
 Till from his well-won wages
 He such a sum may raise,
 As pay their passage out to him,
 To try new work—new ways.
 At last, at last, the sum is won !
 With victory in his eye,
 He mounts his horse and gallops on,

Until he comes anigh
 A little station-house, whereat
 The letters often lie.
 He slackens pace to calm his breast,
 To ask if there may be
 Some word for him.—'Twas needless care ;
 For quick espied is he,
 And in his hand a letter put,
 Dismayed him utterly.
 His parents dead : he all but faints,
 And turns once more away ;
 Leaving the maid to wonder how
 He had no word to say ;—
 To fancy 'twas a lover's death
 Distressed him so that day.
 He turned and wept, and hastened home,
 Anew to strive and plan ;
 But ever with a saddened look
 Bespoke a broken man,
 Who does his work in sheer despite,
 But doth not all he can.
 And yet ere long the answer came
 To these fond parents' prayers :
 He found the Way, the Peace, the Life
 That waiteth, unawares,
 For those whose pride is humbled low—
 All overcome with cares. H. A. PAGE

THE EDITOR'S ROOM.

I.—HOME NOTES.

ACCIDENTS.

“AND they that rejoice as though they rejoiced not”—would seem to be the motto given us by Providence for our holiday season. First, the awfully sudden death of the Bishop of Winchester, impressing men far more than if he had died of apoplexy or heart-disease, because it seemed so unlikely and almost unreasonable that gifts so remarkable, and powers so rare of influencing and delighting his fellows should be extinguished in a moment through the stumbling of a horse, and because there was so appalling a contrast between the beautiful scene, the pleasant ride, the happy holiday, and the valley of the shadow of death. Then in one part of the island there came a thunderstorm which for vehemence and length of duration, as well as the destruction it caused of life and property, was unprecedented in the memory of this generation; the fiery element, escaping apparently from all control, abandoned itself to every form of tumultuous revelry, and spread death among men, women, and cattle; or shook the nerves of persons in delicate health, so that in place of a family group rejoicing over a child born into the world, there would be found in their home a dead mother and still-born babe. And then followed the railway accident at Wigan, mysterious in its cause, awful in its results, and impressing the whole community the more that many of the victims were hastening to enjoy their holidays at the homes of dear friends, and that on this account there was a much larger proportion than usual of children, and of children of the same family. Soon though such things may be forgotten by the general public, and swiftly though the newspapers may bring up new subjects to engage attention, they are not without their deep silent effect, at least in the case of many. They lay a fresh foundation for those appeals from the pulpit which are founded on the shortness and uncertainty of life, and for those arguments which the manifest vanity of earthly things supplies for securing a more abiding portion. We do not doubt that the remembrance of them will linger in the case of many, in the form of a subdued, chastened feeling in regard even to the lawful pleasures of life; a feeling that it is necessary to hold them so loosely that we shall not be struck with consternation, however suddenly we get the summons, “Arise, depart, for this is not your rest.” Such lamentable events, too, in their very darkness and horrorfulness, furnish a striking foreground for the picture of heaven; in vain the agitated mind looks for rest and soothing to any earthly scene; the only true resting-place is that so touchingly delineated by St. John: “The Lamb in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them to living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”

NEW BISHOPS.

“One goeth and another cometh.” The vacant see of Winchester is to be filled by Dr. Harold Browne, Bishop of Ely. The name is well known in the theological world as that of one who has been a powerful defender of vital truth, and who, while leaning somewhat to the High Church, is neither a Romanizer on the one hand, nor a Rationalist on the other. At a recent conference in his diocese, in referring to the documents lately presented to the Bishops and others by the four hundred and eighty clergy and the sixty thousand laymen, he remarked that Hooker, in the sixth book of his “Ecclesiastical Polity,” had exhausted the subject of the Confessional, both as to its theory and its history, and that he thoroughly agreed with his views. In regard to the alleged tendency of Bishops to connive at Romanism, he declared that he believed there was not much ritualism in his diocese, that in examining candidates he took pains to see that they did not hold Romanizing views,—in point of fact, he found more tendency to rationalism than to Romanism, and said that he did not exercise his patronage in favour of such men. The successor to Dr. Browne in the see of Ely is to be his examining chaplain, the Rev. Dr. Woodford, Vicar of Leeds, of whom the *Guardian* says, “Dr. Woodford is a Cambridge man of good degree, a popular preacher, and a High Churchman.”

BEQUEST TO THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

The Established Church of Scotland has just received what is probably the largest money gift ever given to a Church in the lifetime of the giver. The donor is Mr. Baird of Cambusdoon and Auchmedden, and the amount is five hundred thousand pounds. A few years ago, Mr. Ferguson of Irvine bequeathed a still larger sum for the benefit of the nonconformist churches in the west of Scotland, but Mr. Baird has not waited for his death to make his wealth available for good. Mr. Baird is one of a family connected with the iron trade who have all acquired great riches, and he has for a long time taken an active interest in schemes of Christian philanthropy connected with the Established Church. He states in the short deed of trust which he has executed that he has been moved to do this by seeing how much destitution of the means of grace prevails in densely peopled districts, to overtake which, he is persuaded that the territorial plan and endowments are necessary. He expresses a dread of those unsound views which have lately become prevalent in so many quarters, and he provides that his trustees shall not devote the fund to the support of persons who show that they are failures. Whether it be possible to combine the stability of endowments with the self-regulating elasticity of a system that pays according to results, will be interesting to observe. But all must hope that the generous donor will find his expectations amply

fulfilled, and that, as he has provided the means, the Church will find suitable and earnest men to fulfil his wishes, and turn this scheme into a great source of blessing.

WESLEYAN CONFERENCE.

The Wesleyan Conference has been held this year at Newcastle. Newcastle has many associations with Wesleyanism, and the Conference has felt itself at home. The growing influence of Wesleyanism is manifest from the place which its proceedings are now securing in the public press; the *Times*, for example, both in its reporting and leading columns, striving to do justice to its operations. The usual work of the Conference was gone through partly in the public meetings of the committees, and partly in the meetings of the Conference itself. Thus the various operations of the Connexion were brought under review; approved candidates for the ministry were set apart for their holy work; and next year's arrangements for the distribution of the pastors were announced. In the building of chapels and defraying of debt on buildings, no less a sum than £300,000 has been spent. The committee of review of missions was a scene of very great interest. Among those who delivered addresses was a converted Friar from Naples, and a converted Brahmin from India. At the meeting of the committee of review of the Theological Institution, Mr. T. P. Bunting took occasion to urge his views for a more thorough recognition of laymen in connection with the business of the Conference—an arrangement to which he attaches the highest importance.

II.—GLANCES ABROAD.

SUPERSTITION IN FRANCE.

The mania for pilgrimages advances in France. A new journal, *Le Pèlerin*, is devoted to the advocacy of the cause. At Lourdes the flow of people is enormous; the directors of the railway have sagaciously lowered their fares; the *trains de piété* are constantly arriving; *objets de piété* are sold everywhere, and boys and girls are offering to visitors to say a prayer for them for a couple of *sous*. The rush of people, and their apparent earnestness, are so great, that the priests are congratulating themselves on the return of the devotional condition of France three hundred and fifty years ago. The superstitious direction in which, however, the religious feeling of the country runs is very deplorable. So much earnestness turned into a more scriptural channel would, we may believe, be productive of great good. But what can we expect of a movement that aims as its great object at putting the whole of France under the protection of the Virgin, and firmly believes that could this be accomplished, its safety is secure? "When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah saw his wound, then went Ephraim to the Assyrian and sent to King Jareb: yet could he not heal you, nor cure you of your wound."

Whatever comes of France, the Italian Government have determined that there shall be no pil-

grimages in their country, putting the prohibition on the ground that it is not for the public safety or interest to allow great gatherings of the people, except for the purposes of the State.

APPROACHING DISRUPTION IN REFORMED SYNOD.

According to the French correspondent of *Evangelical Christendom*, the disruption of the Reformed Church of France cannot be far off; the Government, it is said, are soon to issue a decree authorising the promulgation of the Confession of Faith voted by the Synod. Should this be done, the minority of the Synod, holding rationalist views, would then be completely at the mercy of the majority, who would cut them off, property and all. This to many appears an unjust proceeding, so far as temporal interests are concerned. The Free Churches are urging a separation from the State, and equitable division of the property. But the Reformed urge that the effect of such a step would be that many of the congregations would be unable to support a pastor, and would be left as sheep not having a shepherd.

THE STATE-CATHOLICS IN SILESIA.

In Germany, in addition to the revolt of the Old Catholics, the Church of Rome finds itself met, in Silesia, by another body of malcontents, who call themselves State-Catholics. An address was recently presented to the German Emperor by a large body of Silesian Catholics, in which they declare themselves utterly opposed to ultramontane pretensions and aggressions, and prepared to stand by the State in opposition to the encroachments of the Jesuits. The principles which they maintain are—1. Opposition to Ultramontanism and Jesuitism; 2. Opposition to the encroachment of the Church on the rights of the State; 3. Maintenance of connection between Church and State; 4. Prohibition of the use of ecclesiastical services by the clergy for political purposes; 5. Freedom of conscience and Christian love to regulate their relations to Alt-Catholics and other co-religionists. According to the correspondent of the *Guardian*, who bestows so much attention on such subjects, this revolt against Rome is a very serious one, though it rests on different grounds from the Alt-Catholic movement, and it indicates the bitter opposition, even within the bosom of the Roman Catholic Church, to which the prevalence of liberal views will expose the ultramontanists in their efforts to make the ecclesiastical power wholly independent of the civil.

PROSECUTION OF DR. SYDOW.

It may be remembered that some time ago Dr. Sydow, who is a leading pastor in Berlin, delivered a conference or lecture, in which he denied the pre-existence of Jesus Christ, and used derogatory language on the authority and inspiration of Scripture. Being taken to account for this by the Consistory of Berlin, he was found guilty of attacking "the foundations of Christian doctrine as revealed in Holy Scripture, and affirmed in the general Confessions of Christendom," and deposed from his office. Against

this sentence Dr. Sydow appealed to the Superior Ecclesiastical Tribunal, which has reversed the sentence of the Consistory, so far as to substitute a censure for his incaution in place of the sentence of deposition. The ground of this change is very peculiar. The sentence is one "of severe blame, on account of the great scandal caused by a public conference, but which was not delivered during the exercise of his functions." Dr. Sydow is replaced in office because, though he denied the divinity of Christ, he did not do so in canonical hours! One is reminded of the story of the prince-bishop, who, being rebuked for swearing, said that he swore as a prince, but not as a bishop. The Roman Catholic journals are triumphing over this decision, declaring that "Protestantism shows itself so infected with the venom of irreligion, that it dares not even expel a pastor who denies the divinity of Jesus Christ."

SUNDAY IN THE VIENNA EXHIBITION.

The *London City Mission Magazine* for August contains an interesting account of the exertions of their agent, Mr. Weylland, to secure that English and American exhibitors should not have their stalls and cases open on the Lord's Day. In previous International Exhibitions a testimony for the sacredness of the Lord's day was borne, by the Exhibitions in London being wholly closed on that day, whereas in Paris, the English and American exhibitors abstained from opening their stalls. The same gentleman, Mr. Weylland, who had been instrumental in securing this result at Paris, was sent on a similar errand to Vienna; and, having obtained the sanction of the British Ambassador at Vienna, he proceeded with his mission. As to Sabbath observance at Vienna, he found it at the lowest ebb, the shops being all open, and men and women too at work upon the buildings in the course of erection, the women performing the coarse work which is so often done in this country by Irish labourers. When he visited the Exhibition the Sunday after it was opened, he found hundreds of men and women employed about it in this way, and in the vast Rotunda and foreign courts, great numbers of work-people and exhibitors were busily engaged. But on passing into the British courts and sections, there was happily an expression of Sabbath rest. All the exhibitors were absent, and such of their exhibits as had covers were covered over. Still, in the course of the day a few exhibitors appeared, and were proceeding to work, when Mr. Weylland called their attention to the example of their brother exhibitors, and asked them to join in the national testimony to the day of rest, which, more or less pleasantly, they finally did. The Americans, too, were generally of the same mind. On the second Sunday after the opening, when admission to the Exhibition had been reduced to a guinea, and the erections were densely crowded, when continental exhibitors were there in large numbers, much of their machinery in action, and when all was excitement, work, and pleasure,

"in the British and American portion of the transept, and in their sections, there was a Sabbath calm. Not an exhibitor was to be seen. Many of the cases were covered, and others remained undressed."

"You will rejoice to know," writes Mr. Weylland, in one of his letters, "that among our countrymen employed in the Exhibition there is proof of spiritual good. Several of the workmen to whom I gave Bibles or portions of the good book, have spoken to me of the great matter of personal salvation, and seem anxious to be brought into the liberty of the sons of God. One of them who has charge of work of great value, told me that he has yielded himself to the Lord, and he is giving proof of this by joining in Christian effort. He now gives a quiet but bold testimony, and has accepted a supply of tracts for circulation among his companions—a first fruit, I trust, of good resulting from a published Gospel in this Exhibition."

Meetings similar to those held in Paris by the late Lady Harriet Cooper for the benefit of English girls serving in the refreshment rooms, or otherwise connected with the Exhibition, have also been held, with encouraging results.

There is some indication of the Vienna workmen taking up the question of Sunday labour. One Sunday lately, seven hundred shoemakers refused to work, and it was observed that a larger number than usual of shops were closed.

III.—JOTTINGS FROM THE MISSION FIELD.

SPIRIT OF THE ANNIVERSARY MEETINGS.

We had intended to give some notices in this number of the last report and meeting of the Church Missionary Society, but our space being curtailed, to make room for title, index, &c., we must postpone this subject to our next publication.

MADAGASCAR—THE WORK IN DETAIL.

Mr. Stribling and Mr. Matthews, missionaries of the London Missionary Society, have sent some interesting accounts of their work in the country districts of Madagascar. One thing impresses one very strongly after reading these letters—how very much yet remains to be done before the professing Christians of these districts are Christians in very deed. Occasionally they seem to have come on a good and earnest man; but much ignorance and not a little indifference seem to have been usual characteristics of the people. In training native preachers to preach; in reforming the psalmody, and introducing simple English tunes for the singing of hymns, in place of the unsuitable complicated native tunes; in establishing a system of weekly offerings; in urging regular attendance at the Sabbath services and the faithful observance of the day of rest; as well as in preaching themselves, superintending the issue of medicines and promoting ordinary teaching, the missionaries find a vast deal to do. Mr. Matthews laments that since

he came to the island he has not known of one decided case of conversion to God. People will ask him who the Queen of Sheba was; how Satan came to make war in heaven; how Melchizedek could be without father and mother; but they do not ask, 'What must I do to be saved?' Though they have given up their idols and become nominal Christians, there is the utmost need of an outpouring of the Holy Spirit to turn them into living Christians. For this there is the most urgent need of prayer. Indeed the people must be regarded as in a very critical state—having abandoned their old beliefs without having come in any true sense under the power of the Gospel.

Yet, as we have said, interesting cases of real life are found. "The town of Fiarenana," says Mr. Stribling, "is an especially interesting one; from it two of the Christian army of martyrs (Andriampaniry and his wife) went forth during the reign of Queen Ranavalona I. to suffer death by fire at Faravohitra, the spot now so conspicuous by the English Children's Memorial Church. A sister of these martyrs is still living, and was present at my recent visit. Their son also is still living (Andrianaivoraony), and is the senior preacher, and Andriana, or noble of the town. He is a thoroughly earnest, humble-minded Christian, ready to do anything in his power to advance that religion for which his parents so nobly laid down their lives."

JUGGERNAUTH AND THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT.

We learn from the Calcutta correspondence of the *Times* that the question whether it is the duty of Government to permit the Juggernaut car, or other cars, be dragged through the streets, when persons are ready to throw themselves before it and sacrifice their lives, has been engaging the attention of the officials. The Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, Sir George Campbell, has made a report on the subject, in which he states in substance that among the mass of the people the practice is unpopular, and that there is no need for the Government being very squeamish about the affair. The Government of India, agreeing with that of Bengal, have come to the conclusion that the Nuisance Act gives authority to stop all cars dangerous to human life, and the responsible magistrate has received a discretionary power to stop all cars which he deems dangerous to human life, and in which Act he will be supported by the Government.

IV.—OUR MEMORIAL RECORD.

THE BISHOP OF WINCHESTER.

Dr. Samuel Wilberforce was undoubtedly one of the most prominent and gifted men in the Christian Church. A many-sided character, with sympathies of the widest range, he had something in common with the different schools of the English Church, leaning to the Evangelicals in doctrine, and to the High Church in discipline; and it has been remarked as singular that funeral sermons have been preached

on him in both High Church and Low Church pulpits. As a preacher he possessed remarkable ability, his intellectual qualities being greatly aided by the singular fervour with which he uttered his message. His untimely death has produced everywhere a profound impression. It is a remarkable fact that within the last few years so many Bishops have died a violent death. Archbishops of Paris have been either shot in the barricades or murdered in prison; Bishop Patteson died the death of a martyr; Bishop Cotton was accidentally drowned; and now Bishop Wilberforce has been killed by a fall from his horse. Events are never ceasing to happen showing how, in Providence, the most momentous results are made to flow from the most apparently trivial causes.

REV. DR. MORGAN OF BELFAST.

Dr. Morgan for a long time sustained in Belfast a position of singular honour and usefulness. Devoting himself with rare industry and singleness of heart to his pastoral duties, and exercising his ministry for a long period in one of the largest and most influential of the congregations of Belfast, free from political or partizan bearing, his name became the synonym for all that is venerable and of good report. There was no one in the Presbyterian Church of Ireland so worthy to fill the post of Convener of the Foreign Mission Committee, which he held to the end, Mr. Fleming Stevenson being his colleague during the last few years. He has passed away amid the deep regrets of all good men.

REV. ROBERT AITKEN,

a very powerful revival preacher, a Scotchman by birth, a clergyman of the Church of England, though, thoroughly in sympathy with the Wesleys, who opened their pulpits to him, in which he preached with vast success. "He had," says the *Western Morning News*, "a great heart and a mighty soul, and he was literally absorbed and possessed by the one great object of his life, that of persuading men to forsake their evil ways, and to accept of Christ as their only Saviour. His appeals were truly marvellous. Excited to the highest pitch by his subject, no less than by the presence of the large and attentive audiences that hung on his lips, and who were frequently bathed in tears and choked by sobs, he became thoroughly impassioned." His ministry was quite of the type of Wesley and Whitefield, and not without similar fruits. An attempt to gain admission into the Wesleyan ministry having failed, Mr. Aitken took a chapel in White's Row, Spitalfields, which he occupied for a considerable time. The last twenty-four years of his life were spent as incumbent of Pendeen, Cornwall. "Had he added calmness of judgment to his force of character and zeal and perseverance, he must have attained a high place in the Church. . . . In earnest piety, good works, and a godly zeal for the present well-being and final salvation of mankind he was second to no man."

CHRISTMAS, 1872.

ONE NEW YEAR'S NIGHT.

CHAPTER I.



LT was in the month of May that Alice Baird returned from India. Already, in her short nineteen-year's-old life, it was the second time she had made that journey. First, sixteen years ago, when she had travelled, a sumptuous baby in the care of an embroidered and bangled ayah; and now, when she came, a very airisome young lady, state-cabin passenger, under the particular escort of the captain, and the especial care of the stewardess, to say nothing of the honorary chaperonship of the brevet-major's wife, also travelling home in all the bliss of furlough.

She had enjoyed just three years of Indian life, poor motherless Alice! After thirteen years of incarceration in a rising scale of first-class "homes for Anglo-Indians," she had fluttered for just three years in the Calcutta sunshine, riding in the "Maidan," dancing at Government House, and flirting with all sorts of military and civilian youth. A glittering unprofitable life, whose only enjoyment had been excitement! And now her father had married again, and she was sent home, as it seemed to her, to a living grave.

Mr. Baird had spent all his matured life in Hindoostan. He had gone out a hard, worldly-moral young man, with the wife of his first love. That wife lay buried up in the hill-country, in a grave he had never seen. And Mr. Baird had turned back to his work, and amassed money and gained position.

If Mr. Baird had lived in England, he would very likely have remained a worldly-moral man to the end of his days. There are many people whom the outward influence of Christianity keeps up to that point. Most things have a little heat whilst the sun shines

on them. But if it be dangerous for a Christian to be isolated from his exterior helps and privileges, what must it be for the worldling? If the garden of the reclaimed heart wastes in such a wilderness, are not rank and poisonous plants likely to spring up and flourish in the natural heart? And so when Mr. Baird married a second time, his marriage and his wife were such as he would never have thought possible in the decent days of his cold, self-contained youth.

One strain of right feeling remained. He would send his daughter home. The poor man did not believe much in God. He often laughed at the idea of converting the surrounding heathen—conversion was to him a chimera—but he never suspected that the passive influence of paganism had almost converted him to its own deadly level. He thought church-going was nonsense, and Bible-reading waste of time; and though he kept a seat in a fashionable Calcutta chapel for his daughter Alice, she was left free to use it or not, at her own ungodly pleasure. But he was shocked when he found that Alice was not horrified at that last and worst step of his, which profaned home, and put a poor lost sinner in her dead mother's place; and that all her anger, to which she gave free vent, only rose over the loss of her own pre-eminence. Had she been nobly grieved or justly indignant, he would probably have derived a spiteful delight in keeping her in her filial post. But her indifference staggered him. Nobody could tell what such a girl might come to. He felt inclined to admit that the old scorned paths of religion were worth something after all, if only to make safe walking for the young women of one's household. He resolved to send Alice home to her mother's brother. Rathburn, on the borders of the Tweed, would be wholesomer for a girl than Calcutta, in more ways than one.

Alice had, perforce, obeyed him, but with a very bad grace, and she was now on the last stage of her journey. The gallant captain and the obsequious stewardess had been parted from in the London docks. She had seen the last of the brevet-major and his wife at York, and now she was seated alone

in a coupé. She was not the least interested in the sweet, smiling country through which she was flying. Four railway novels and three comic papers represented the literary gatherings of her journey north of London. She had glanced over them, with the result of feeling "bored," and was lying back with her eyes closed when the train slackened, and the guard shouted "Rathburn," "Rathburn."

In sleepy bewilderment she jumped up and looked out upon the little station, while a tall young man stepped forward from the little waiting group of white-capped women and sturdy ploughmen, and lifting his hat, with a pleasant smile said, "I think you are Alice Baird. I am your cousin Archibald Anderson."

"Our trap is waiting for you outside," he said cheerily. "I will gather up your things and look after the luggage. You go away and take your seat, for you must be tired." And he proceeded to pick up Alice's travelling literature.

"Never mind that," she said impatiently. "I shan't want those books any more. Leave them where they are." And Archie Anderson obeyed, wondering in his boyish heart what ways these were, for in his quiet home books were bought with great consideration and treasured with tender care.

The cousins were soon seated side by side in the homely gig. Archie scarcely knew how to address this fine lady, the first specimen he had ever met of that order of women whose hearts are in their jewel-case, and whose heads are in their flounces. With one sweep of her eye, and one tone of her voice, she had managed to convey, even to his simplicity, all a woman of the world's contempt for the shy country lad. It is but fair to admit that had she not been his own cousin, and a stranger thrown upon his hospitality, Archie in his turn would very contentedly have left her to herself.

"I hope you will like Rathburn," he said, awkwardly.

"I should think it must be dull," Alice responded, looking from right to left.

"Oh no, it is not," he hastened to assure her. "There's more life here than in Lumglen or Talawick, though they're bigger. There's a reading club that meets in the Town Hall once a week all the winter, and there are all the interests about the three churches. I'm taking you into the town by the bonniest road, though it's a bit further round; but I want to give you a good first impression. They are well-off people in these big houses."

Alice still stared about her in silence. The neat freestone buildings had seemed but cottages to her spacious Indian notions, and she wondered how anybody who could possibly be called "well-off" could choose to live at Rathburn.

"Yon's the Free Kirk, where we sit," said Archie, pointing it out with his whip. "It's built on the very spot where uncle Donald preached in the open air in disruption times. He was your uncle as well as mine, Alice."

Alice would have understood her cousin as well had he been talking in Greek, and in many ways it was not unnatural that it should be so. The pity was, that her ignorance was not that of a cultivated, kindly mind, watching for every chance of enlarging its borders, but the crass ignorance of a vain and selfish girl, measuring the whole world by its own narrowness, like a short-sighted person denying the very existence of the landscape that stretches beyond his own imperfect vision. And Archie was greatly relieved when the pony pulled up at the home-door, and Alice was fairly delivered up to the welcome of her uncle and aunt and the rest of the little household.

She followed Mrs. Anderson to her chamber with much such feelings as a prisoner must go to his dungeon. She would have respected her aunt a great deal more had a servant been sent to do the honours, and she unutterably despised and abominated the prim blue-chintz bedroom, with its spindle-legged chairs and dim old prints, while she passed over as quite unworthy notice the great beau-pot of flowers, with which some kind soul had decorated the window-sill in her honour.

She had taken her northward journey by such short stages, that she could not plead fatigue, and as soon as she was left alone, began to divert herself by rummaging out a boxful of her finery, with which she proceeded to bedizen herself for the "tea-dinner," which she was told was in readiness.

"I wish there was a girl in the family, and I would kill her with envy," she said. "It's hardly worth the trouble to astonish the two louts of boys; but still it's a pleasure to dress just for the sake of the thing."

The operation took nearly an hour, for Alice had her full share of Anglo-Indian helplessness, and scarcely knew how to proceed without two or three dusky attendants, upon whom to vent her irritability.

She found the family all in the parlour waiting for her. Her uncle was seated a little apart from the rest, playing with a fair-haired boy, who sat perched upon his shoulder

flourishing the stick of a drum, which had fallen to the ground. Besides her aunt, and the two cousins, Archibald and Alexander, there was also a young girl, who was introduced as "our neighbour and dear friend, Helen Cumming." She arose with extended hand to meet Miss Baird, but was instantly repelled by an overwhelming bow, while the child, with the naiveté of his years, forestalled Alice's determination not to kiss him by sliding down from his elevation and burying his head on Mr. Anderson's shoulder.

"That little one isn't our own, Alice," explained her uncle, as soon as he had pronounced the blessing over the simple, bountiful table. "There was a bad railway accident at Talawick about a year ago, and many people, husbands and wives together, were killed. There was provision made for the children, but instead of spending it getting them into hospitals, the neighbours took them up among themselves. It will be homelier for the bairns. We took two — this little laddie, and a baby girl, but she's never been here yet, having been boarded with a foster-mother on the hills. We expect her in two or three weeks. Ask the bairn his name, Alice."

"Oh never mind, uncle; don't trouble him," said the girl.

"What is your name, my lad?" asked Mr. Anderson himself.

"Wullie Bruce," pronounced the little Scotchman, making a solemn pause in his oat-cake.

"And who are you?" asked Helen Cumming, whom Alice had already decided that she should "hate."

This question was evidently a harmless family joke. "Wullie Bruce" clearly felt him-

self the hero of the occasion, as he answered, deliberately,—

"I am my aunty's youngest boy,
I am her comfort and her joy,"

and was rewarded by a hearty laugh all round.

"Who taught him to say that?" Alice condescended to ask.

"He got the verse out of an alphabet-book," Helen explained, "and said it first of his own accord, one day when a visitor came, and asked, 'Well, and who are you, my little man?'"

"Oh, won't he tell another tale when the little girl comes!" said Alice. "I daresay he'll be ready to pick her eyes out."

"Truly, the un-renewed heart is always given to jealousy and anger," Mr. Anderson observed gravely; "but Christ's law of love is simple enough to be learned even by such babes and sucklings as our little Willie here."

Alice felt herself somehow rebuked, as much by the silence of the rest of the circle as by her uncle's words. Gentle Mrs. Anderson took needless pity on her.

"The boys have been quite impatient to see you, niece," she said. "They are always so anxious to hear

about far-away, strange countries. I like to hear of them myself. You must tell us all about India."

"Oh, there is nothing that one can tell to people who have not seen it," Alice answered impatiently. "There are just plenty of black servants to do everything that one has to do for oneself here, and it's too hot to go out in the middle of the day, and there are chutney and curries on every table. One never thinks of dining without a curry."



"You must teach me how to make curry, Alice," said Mrs. Anderson.

"Oh, I don't know anything about making it, and I don't care for it much myself, either," responded the ungracious visitor, who had no idea of that generous high breeding which delights to accept little kindnesses, because it understands the pleasure of giving them.

"Have you brought back any pictures of India?" inquired Mrs. Anderson.

"No—not one. Yes, I forgot, I have one. I had a drawing-master when I first went there from school, and he gave me a little sketch of a temple, and I think I have that among some other rubbish somewhere in my trunks. I brought away every shred that belonged to me; I was determined that nobody but myself should have the pleasure of throwing away my litter."

Another awkward silence. It fretted Alice, but she had not the least idea that it could possibly be caused by any expressions of hers. She considered she was making a very fair show of her shrewdness and spirit. Such ideas, couched in such language, had always gained her the applause and flattery of the "beaux," who had hitherto been her "public opinion."

Directly after tea, Helen Cumming proposed taking her over the house and making her acquainted with all the details of her new home. Alice indifferently consented; she would have declined altogether, but for a mean and mocking inclination "to spy out the barrenness" of the land.

"You act quite the daughter of the house, Miss Cumming," she said as they rose from table.

"She's a' but ane," observed Aleck. Aleck had carried everything before him in Rathburn Academy and Edinburgh High School, and therefore could afford to indulge himself in his dear old Doric vernacular, which he kept safe among his learning, and secretly loved as much as a mother's letter in a hamper of class-books. Aleck delighted to puzzle conceited "Southrons," by alternate pure Greek and old-fashioned Scotticisms. It was his form of patriotism. "The bodies are sae gien to think that naeboddy wad speak Scotch, wha kened ony better," he would say. Aleck—small, slight, and quaint, with no redeeming point of form or face, except the grey eyes that were sometimes so keen and sometimes so tender—was much of a mystification even to his own watchful parents.

Alice did not catch what he said, and would not ask him. He was the only one

who had not addressed her personally nor made the least effort to entertain her.

She would not pretend to admire the domestic treasures and curiosities in which Helen hospitably strove to interest her. She laughed at the old china, and pretended to mistake a rare family heirloom for a spoiled willow-pattern plate. She disparaged the flowers—they all looked half grown and faded after those she had been accustomed to; not that she had cared for flowers in India. She despised the neat and pretty pieces of fancy-work, executed by divers dead aunts and cousins, as well as by Mrs. Anderson herself. The idle girl, who never did anything, presumed to wonder how women could waste their time over such rubbish. Finally, Helen opened the piano, and asked if she could play.

"I learned, of course," Alice answered; "yes, and I played a little after I went back to India, and I rather liked it. It was nice to have the gentlemen turning over the leaves for one. But I can't play without my music, and it is all packed in a trunk that I need not trouble myself to unlock for a long time."

"Perhaps I can find something you will know among this music," Helen responded with cheery patience, and Alice came and stood beside her as she turned over the heap.

"It all seems old enough to have come out of the ark," she observed.

But she knew nothing, and would try nothing, till they lighted on a stray sheet which had been sent as an advertisement by some enterprising publisher. It was an Italian song full of vocal flourish and quackery, and Alice trilled through one or two of its gymnastics, convincing Helen, as she wished, of the compass and quality of her voice. Then she sat down and ran her fingers up and down the notes once or twice,—then stopped.

"I cannot play at all on such a worn-out old thing as that," she said scornfully. "But won't you try,—I should like to hear what you will make of it, though I suppose it won't affect you so much, if you're used to it."

"As you say you don't know much of Scottish ballads, I will sing one," Helen said, with the patience somewhat predominating over the cheerfulness of her tones. And she chose, "There is nae luck about the house."

Helen sang sweetly, and with a truth and delicacy of expression that would have been beyond her hearer's utmost effort of appreciation. But Alice made no such effort.

She lay back in the sofa, closed her eyes, and wondered which of her fine *déshabillé* dresses she would sport next day. But she caught enough of the song to understand its drift.

"Strange, isn't it," said Helen, "that this sweetest song of a wife's love and joy should have been written by an old maid?" Helen's voice was low and thoughtful, tender with the pathos of the truth that the soul so often gains just as much as the life misses.

"Dear me! it shows how much she must have wanted a husband," said Alice, in her hard, flippant tone. And Helen sat down in silence, and felt that Alice herself must start the next topic.

"Whose portrait is that?" Alice asked presently, pointing to a small miniature that hung close beside the great arm-chair.

Helen was thankful that they were alone and in the twilight. "Don't you know there is another member of the family?" she inquired, in a slight flutter. "That is Hugh, the eldest son, who is in the West Indies, but he is expected home next winter."

"Well, I hope the world will have brushed him up a little," said Alice. "Anyhow, he will surely be something like a man. These two here are terribly hobble-de-hoyish, though I think that Alexander could be impertinent if one gave him a chance."

Helen said nothing.

"And so you wear a ring," Alice observed with reckless forwardness. "Do you mean to say you are engaged? Where did you pick up a young man in Rathburn? I thought it was an old maid's town, for whenever I asked Archibald who lived in any house, as we came through to-day, it was always some Miss Greig, or Scott, or Bruce, or something."

"I am engaged to your eldest cousin, Hugh Anderson," said Helen, with a quiet dignity, that actually awed even Alice Baird for just five seconds!

"Dear me!" she ejaculated, "and so Mrs. Anderson is to be your respected mamma-in-law! I suppose you think you are obliged to come in and do the civil to her; but don't you find it a terrible bore? It will be fine fun to watch you both, making believe to be so affectionate, while all the time you are hating each other like poison."

"I am sure your aunt loves me, and I know I love her. Why should we not?" Helen asked, a little indignantly.

"Oh, you need not think it," Alice replied, with a smiling confidence of superior wisdom. "Mothers always hate the women whom their sons marry. They're so jealous of

losing the first place with their own dear child. In India, I used to encourage the old ladies to pour forth their confidences to me. Used not they to cry down and scandalize daughters-in-law, that were far better born and better bred and richer than themselves. The poor old souls never imagined I could see through it, and indeed I helped them out with their abuse, for the young wives were often very uppish and distant to me, and it was always a bother to see them taken in first to dinner. But I don't wonder at any of it. I'm sure I shall hate my mother-in-law to be, and I know I shall hate my future daughter-in-law. It's nature."

"Then it is very bad nature," said Helen decidedly; "and certainly it is not grace."

"Oh, if you begin to talk religion," Alice interrupted, "I drop the argument, though I don't know what religion has to do with it. Mrs. Colonel Bigg professed to be a very pious woman, but she was dreadfully overbearing, and insulted her sons' wives so much, that her sons would not let them visit her. But now tell me what Hugh Anderson is like, and do you expect to live in Rathburn after you are married?"

"I do not know," Helen answered meekly. "We shall live wherever it will be best for Hugh's business."

"Oh, are you one of the dear good souls who make believe to have no will of their own, in order that they may get everything their own way? Do you know, Helen, if I had not let my father know that I was particularly anxious to stay in India, I don't believe he would have ever sent me away here. But when he found I was so determined, he thought I must have some reason for it, and he just made up his mind to thwart me. And I had a reason, Helen. I wanted to stay there, because Somebody else was there. You don't know how attentive Somebody used to be. I always behaved ever so cruelly to him, because it was such fun to see how he took it to heart. He often drank a great deal too much wine, because he told me it was the only way to drown the misery I caused him. Poor fellow! But he only worshipped me more and more."

"I fear he could not have been worth much better treatment than you gave him," said Helen drily; "but still the worst man merits a decent dismissal."

"Don't you begin to preach to me, Helen," Alice retorted, "because I know beforehand it is only out of envy and spite."

"Girls, girls," cried Mrs. Anderson from the foot of the stairs. "It is time for you to

come down to worship." And Helen at least was highly delighted to obey the summons.

"What a time those tunes do take singing!" Alice whispered to Helen, when the little family service was over, "and I listened all through the prayer because I really expected uncle would particularly allude to me. I shan't trouble myself again. Come in, again, to-morrow, dear, and now, good night!" And without waiting to see Helen out, she ran off to her own room.

"I left you two lasses alone this evening," said Mrs. Anderson to Helen, "because I thought it would make Alice feel sooner at home to be free to chatter how she chose to a young thing like herself."

"I hope you take to our new niece, Nellie," observed Mr. Anderson.

Helen looked up and smiled brightly. "I should not think she has had a very happy life yet," she said. "I daresay there are a good many gay worldly people out in India, and perhaps she has happened to be thrown into a set of that kind. But she will soon grow happy here."

"What do ye think o' her, Archie man?" asked Aleck, as the two brothers went together to their chamber.

"Mony ane speers the gate he kens fu' weel," answered Archie, who not having a sufficiently learned reputation to dare to be anything but as English as possible in public, occasionally revenged himself by being the Scotchest of the Scotch when in the strictest retirement. "Dinna ask a man to speak when ye ken fine he's nae guid to say."

"Wadna ye hae liket her for your good sister, Archie?" asked Aleck slyly.

"Are ye thinking o' giving me a chance of luikin' on her in that licht, lad?" retorted Archie. "I'm thinkin' ye'd find her gey auld in the heart, and real feckless wi' the hands."

"Hech, ane never kens," said the incomprehensible Aleck, "she'll be better when she's weel enough. Ye ought to be thinking o' how to do her gude, Archie; you, that's a Sunday-school teacher!"

"I could not have patience with the like of her," observed Archie, returning to gravity.

"Isna her soul worth as much as any ither body's?" asked Aleck quaintly. "Isna she gaun to heaven or hell as fast as auld Luckie Weaver, or that little lad Patterson?"

"But what good would I do if I read the Bible to her as I can to Luckie, or offered to teach her the catechism as I teach Bob? She would laugh in my face, and it would do more harm than good."

"Do ye think ye canna wear religion ony

ither gate than on your tongue?" asked Aleck; "an' do ye think yer tongue itsel canna speak it except when it's reading or catechising? Man, if ye think there is nae hope of doing gude to a puir lassie, set down her lane amang a household that professes and delights to serve the Lord, why suld ye gie yer bawbees to send oot a puir missionar' a' by himsel, amang countless pagans?"

An argument in bed is always a very convenient affair, because if you do not answer the unanswerable, it can only be supposed that you have dropped asleep. This time Archibald did not answer.

Another dialogue had been going on downstairs.

Mr. Anderson had lain down on the sofa before the dying fire, while his wife went to and fro on her little final household businesses. She glanced once and again at her "gude-man," and saw that he was thoughtful, and with the fine instinct of five-and-twenty years of happy unity, did not need to be told what he was thinking.

"Wife," he said at last, "I'm afraid we've let the world into our fold. There will be thoughts and words and ways that have not been in this house before. I knew my poor brother-in-law's child could have had no Christian training, but I fear I never before rightly felt the inspired truth that the carnal heart is enmity against God—not indifference but hatred—not mere withholding from, but an actual fighting against. I see the devil has his own moralities and religion, and even his own peculiar scribes and Pharisees. Is it right to our own young ones to take in this poor white pagan, wife?"

"Where else can the lassie go?" asked Mrs. Anderson simply. "I would take hali my bairn's regular dinner to give to a stray bairn that was starving, and I don't know that we would be right to be more selfish over their spiritual meat."

"I should not be so exercised if she were friendless and penniless," said Mr. Anderson, musing, "but when we got the offer of a hundred pounds a year to just board the lassie as ane o' ourselves, I aye thought that it would be a fine help, just as I'm failing, and the lads are beginning to want their start in life. I should have thought it was the Lord's way of helping us, if she had been the simplest bit lassie with an inch of faith in man, wherein one could hope to plant faith in God! But this scoffing, heartless quean! And if we are getting profit by her, it makes me fear we may not be single-hearted in our wish only to do her good, and our faith that God can keep

her from unsettling our own children. I wuld trust my boys out on the Frith on the stormiest night trying to save the drowning, because then I'd know they were in God's hands, and I had a right to pray for them. But I wuldna trust them there for a mere wager of a million pounds. Wife, wife, tell me what we are to do in this strait, for a woman's mind, like her step, goes light and safe over many a peat moss where a heavy man would lumber about and sink."

Mrs. Anderson put down the basket of aired linen, which she had borne in her hands as she stood. She kept silence for a moment.

"We mustna turn away the lassie," she said. "It will be no harm to turn away the gear. Give seventy pounds a year to the Indian missions. Just give it without a name. We shall be freer and evener with the lassie when the thought of it is put quite out of the way. And yet we shall be great gainers, for I'm sure, gude man, you've often longed sorely for the luxury of giving."

"Be it so, then," said Mr. Anderson, laying his hand fondly on the bending shoulder that felt so frail beneath his touch. "But well know I, it is given at your expense and Helen's, for you twa will have all the brunt of the airs and tantrums of this niece of mine."

"Ah, well, they'll keep me younger," answered his wife, with her soft laugh: "it often seems to me that it's when we're left to settle down in our own pet ways and habits, be they never so good, that we begin to want spectacles and to tak the gout."

Then they crept softly up-stairs, lest they should disturb their guest, little thinking that she still sat before the mirror trying new modes of dressing her hair, and reflecting—

"I will take care not to let myself be ordered about and kept under. They will not try it too much, for fear of losing my money. What a blessing it must be to them!—enough to keep up the whole house, I should think. What a 'goody' girl that Helen is! but then, poor thing, she has never had a chance of being anything else. It must have been quite a treat to her to hear my lively conversation to-night—no wonder she was so sedulous in attention to me."

And sweet Helen, in her simple chamber in the next house, sat writing busily till long after midnight. For the West Indian mail went out next morning, and she was resolved that her letter to her betrothed lover should not be one line the shorter, because she had devoted her usual time for writing it to "entertaining a stranger."

Verily the worshippers of the god of this world "have not known, nor understood"—"a deceived heart turns them aside, that they cannot deliver their souls, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?"

CHAPTER II.



AND so the other little orphan has come," said Alice Baird, as she came on little Willie, sitting, with a toy in his hand, in one of the passages, when she had been an inmate of the house for some days. "Who are you now, Master Willie Bruce? You won't be the pet any longer; you'll have to give up everything to your little sister."

Willie considered for a moment, with his strong under lip.

"I'd break it all in two, if I tould," he said, and Alice put her own meaning on the speech and laughed heartily, till he went on in his quaint judicial way.

"Only little sissy can't be 'aunty's youngest boy;' but I'll be 'comfort,' and she'll be 'joy,'" and then he rose and broke away from Alice, and ran down the entry shouting in his highest treble—

"I'm still my aunty's youngest boy,
I'm her comfort and sissy's her joy.."

Alice stood suddenly up, as people do under a sharp surprise. It was her first revelation of a possible state of mind free from the envy, hatred, and uncharitableness of all the morbid self-seeking that kept her own heart like the troubled sea. This was no fruit of mere infancy. She remembered her own childhood, and the bitter hatred she had felt for her poor ayah's infant, because the ayah had adorned it with one of her own bangles, which her little mistress had coveted for herself.

"Well, we must be as we are made," Alice said to herself, "and I suppose some people are born angels."

Anything to comfort oneself to remain lazily as one is! When the secrets of all hearts are revealed, it will be marvellous how many persons have gone to hell, because

they persuaded themselves they were obliged to go there!

This was the first slight shock received by her contemptuous self-satisfaction. And from that day she grew more and more to regard the Andersons, not, as at first, as people utterly beneath her, but as people entirely different from her. Every difference between them and her she began to impute to this radical dissimilarity. It was because they were so different, that the quiet life and regular discipline which seemed so delightful to them was so intolerable to her. It never even occurred to her whether this quiet life and regular discipline might not have produced much of the difference.

Under this new feeling she grew terribly restive. They seemed to her to do nothing that they did not like, for they seemed to like just what they did. Why then should she not also be "a law unto herself?" That scriptural phrase had happened to fall upon her ear in the midst of some Sabbath reading. She never listened to anything, so that it must have surely been some evil spirit which repeated this in her ear. And she caught hold of it, and constantly quoted it, parrot-like, as ungodly people are given to quote what they learn from the devil's collection of "Texts suitable for one's own case."

She would not kneel at family prayers. She would not attempt to sing. She would look straight at whoever was giving out the tune, to try to put them out. She would not darn her stockings. She would not tidy her hair before she came to breakfast. She would read in her bed at night. She would not make herself civil to the family visitors, but managed to scrape an acquaintance with some neighbours of doubtful reputation.

"I should know what to do with her if she was one of my own," said her uncle, almost grimly.

"If being one of your own she was like she is, she would be in a much worse way," Mrs. Anderson pleaded gently; "but she has been brought up so differently. She has known no happiness except in things that she cannot find in Rathburn. We must let her have as much freedom and change as possible. That will make her take more easily to the restraints that must remain."

If Alice "took" to any of the Anderson household, counting it as inclusive of Helen, that one was Archibald. His was one of those quiet substantial characters that present no aggressive point. A granite character, not of that finer marble, of which is made the picturesque or sublime statuary of the world,

but rather the strong enduring boulder on which such statuary is raised for admiring eyes. Archie was not "original" like Aleck; but Aleck had once or twice winked his wonderful eyes, and said that all his originality consisted in saying what Archie thought, and understanding what Archie did. "He's o' the sort that makes the world go round," Aleck would say. "He's sae deep that he doesna frichten the deil himself, who was a fool from the beginning and for all his politics, and hasna yet learned that his own worst enemies arena those who come wi' a flourish of trumpets and an open declaration of war."

One sweet day in the very early autumn, Archibald and Aleck took a holiday to accompany their cousin to Talawick Bay. They went on the coach as far as Lumglen, and walked on to Talawick, through the Talling woods. The leaves were just beginning to fall, and lay like tarnished gold beneath the sunlight that flickered down the long green glades. The whimper of a little burn beside the path, the patient coo of the cushat, and the harsh notes of the "corbies," made up one of nature's sweetest songs. Perhaps the peculiarly soothing scene was not without some influence on Alice, or perhaps it was the reaction after a fit of extraordinary waywardness and passion, or it might be the reassuring commonplace of Archie's cheery conversation, but anyhow she felt rather more kindly than usual. She even waited without grumbling while he dug up a fern for Helen, and actually condescended to own that a certain rare moss was "very pretty."

Then they came out upon the "seascape" of the Bay. A semicircle of sea, enclosed by black beetling rocks overhanging a little strip of shingly shore.

"What a day for a row!" said Archibald to Aleck as they all rested together on an overturned boat. And he took off his hat, and bared his forehead to the delicious sea-breeze.

"I can't understand what pleasure there is in boating, and especially on the horrid sea!" his cousin answered. Yet some more genial influence was certainly upon her, for she added, "But don't let me keep you from it. I can wait here till you come back."

Archibald shook his head. "It is quite safe to-day," he said, "but in rough weather this is a dangerous bit. Mother's only brother was overtaken here in a squall, and drowned. And when we were quite little children she made us promise never to go out on Talawick Bay. I remember my brother Hugh said, 'But what would we do if we saw any one drowning

there?' And mother said, 'Then, of course, you would go, but never go only for your pleasure.' And we promised her."

"But I daresay she only meant while you were boys," said Alice.

"I don't know," Archibald answered. "I never asked her."

"You are sure it is quite safe to-day?" Alice inquired.

"Oh yes; it often is."

"Then, Archibald," said she quickly, meaning to be very kind, "there is nobody to tell her if you go to-day. I never will. And she will not think of asking you, because she



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knows I hate the sea, and she will be sure to think I would not let you leave me."

"No, Alice, thank you," Archibald answered, quietly; "but I would not do behind my mother what I would not do before her face."

"But it is hard you should have to give up your pleasure," she said, unwilling to resign

her sympathy, perhaps because its sensation was an agreeable novelty.

"That is a very little thing to give up, Alice," Archibald replied.

"This is always the way," she cried, petulantly, "you are all so good that I can't be kind to you."

"Oh yes, I'm sure you can," said Aleck,

breaking his long silence. "Yesterday morning I walked up and down saying that a button had come off my shirt-sleeve. I wanted you to offer to put it on, and save me from interrupting my mother, who was ben the house makin' a pie."

"Pooh, I don't want to put on buttons," Alice answered angrily. And so she let the new pleasant feeling of "comradeship" escape her. But many wiser people than poor Alice are mortally affronted if another ventures to decline a boon that would be a deadly injury.

It was two or three weeks after this, that Alice suddenly rose up from reading a London newspaper, went straight to her room, and scared the whole house by a fit of hysterics. People heard her all down the quiet street. Helen Cumming came running in, and the doctor arrived before he was fetched.

"It has surely been something not right in her health that has made her so fractious all the time," said innocent Mrs. Anderson.

"My poor sister, nor none of my people ever took such fits," observed her husband, as if to relieve his family from any suspicion of uncomfortable hereditary disease.

"But then they had not travelled about as she has," remarked old Miss Cumming, Helen's great aunt, who had never even been to Edinburgh. "It's all a new thing, this travelling, and one does not know what it may do. I'd like to see its effects on two or three generations before I try it myself. But I know one of my cousins went into hysterics because her family would not allow her to marry a man who drank; and her mother dismissed their servant and made her rub the floors and furniture, and she soon got well after that."

Something in this practical precedent and prescription seemed to give Aleck a new idea, for five minutes after Archie found him diligently reading through the "marriage" notices of the *Times*, which Alice had half-crumpled and thrown down in a corner.

"This is it, Archie," he said, and read—

"At Calcutta, Lieutenant Smith, of the — Regiment, to Kate, daughter of Captain Forbes, of the — Regiment."

"Do you suppose he was her sweetheart?" asked Archie, interested and confidential.

"A woman aye has ane, when she's naething better to do," observed Aleck.

"I wonder if she really loved him! Poor Alice!" said Archie.

"Spare your pity, man. When a woman's lost her heart, and only finds it broken and

thrown away, she doesna tell 't to the town-crier."

"I'm two years older than you, but I wish I had half as much sense. 'I shall never wear your bonnet,'" said Archie, quoting a quaint national proverb.

Aleck looked up at Archie with some of that indescribable pathos which occasionally dashed his dry humour: "When the brain's big, the heart's aft heavy wi't," he said in his favourite vernacular. "But we needna waste mair words wondering, for here is Helen, and I daresay she will know something mair of this matter."

Helen did know, for she had reluctantly received many further confidences since that night of Alice's arrival. She looked at the newspaper, and was obliged to own that Aleck's shrewd guess was right.

Helen resigned herself to bear Alice company in the sentimental retirement in which she spent the whole of that and the following day. Poor Helen was dreadfully bewildered by Alice's incoherent and contradictory communications. She had never loved the lost lover; she had quite misunderstood her feelings concerning him. She had loved him enthusiastically; she could never survive it; she would never love another man. He had loved her to distraction, and only married in his despair of ever winning her affection in return. He had been a deliberate and heartless deceiver. From all of which Helen wisely drew the right conclusion that Lieutenant Smith would be astonished to hear that he had ever been supposed to go beyond an unmeaning flirtation between an idle man and a frivolous girl.

Alice amused herself for awhile by the perusal of every soft-sighing poem that she could find. She even opened the old piano, and sang a few sad songs; but imaginary mourning is too great a strain to keep up long, and then, deprived of the best fond fancy on whose unwholesome food she had fed her imagination, her state became pitiable.

She alone was miserable, among contentment and happiness, whose only shadow was sympathy and regret for her. She did not know it herself—for selfishness and self-will are bad paths to self-knowledge—but there were times when she longed to be as Helen Cumming was. She knew she would never have had the patience that Helen had shown towards such a torment as herself, and it only stirred in her a bitter feeling that felt like restless hatred and animosity—yet which really was the hard, sour germ that might ripen into love. There were times when she

nearly softened. There was that fair Sabbath afternoon, hot and bright as stray autumn days sometimes are, when she sat moodily at her chamber window, and watched the Rathburn people coming out of church. She had heard the dim, softened sounds of the far-off psalm, and now the congregation were coming out with its music in their faces. Humble, lowly people, all of them—careful, struggling, of no account in this world; and yet as Alice watched them that afternoon, a door in her heart opened to hear a voice whisper, that the gay dress, and the brilliant society, and the prosperity and “fulness of bread” in which she had rested, beside their “peace which passeth understanding,” were but as a child’s mimic bank of gilt buttons and tokens compared with a king’s treasury. She even owned within herself that she longed to go down-stairs, meet the household party on the threshold, throw her arms about her Aunt Anderson’s neck, and own that she had been wrong and miserable. But she said to herself that to-morrow she would repent of such folly; it was just weakness. If she wanted to be a little more companionable and teachable, it was easy to be so without such enthusiastic penitence.

Ah, many people since Saul of Tarsus have “kicked against the pricks.” Poor Alice went to bed that night with a self-righteous reflection that she had cast out some evil demons of obstinacy and malice, and did not know that unless some active love has come in their place, they will only return and increase in strength in the swept and garnished heart.

Only the next morning, sleeping late as was her custom, she was awakened by happy laughter in the summer-house beneath her window. Peeping through her curtain, she saw Archibald and Helen Cumming within, with letters in their hands. They had evidently read them before, for they were in no eager haste, but were just going over them again in sheer enjoyment and thankfulness.

She could distinctly hear Archibald’s voice. The letter had been addressed to Helen, but contained such general good news that it had become common property.

“I quite expect to keep my new year in Rathburn,” Archibald read. “I shall arrive at Southampton, and travel straight north, but do not endeavour to expect me on any definite day, for I will not arrive in a ghastly fashion, at some uncanny hour of the night, but will break my journey in such a way as to walk in among you, a reasonable guest at an appropriate time. I have a trunk packed

full of presents, for besides little family remembrances, I am bringing over many simple curiosities that are destined to give our own future home a polite ‘air of foreign travel.’ I have decided, with your consent, that we shall settle at Talawick. It has good rail and steam connections, that will suit me admirably for the journeys that my business may force me to take occasionally, and I shall go on such, with all the lighter heart, knowing that the wee wife is safely left in a familiar place, near her own people and mine. If Archie is over at Talawick shortly, he can give a glance at that pretty cottage overlooking the bay, and if it is to be let, and you feel as kindly to it as I do, he can bespeak it for me from the winter term. I shall only give you grace to remain Helen Cumming for as long—or I mean as short—a time as it will take me to get the house in order. You need not mention trousseaux nor any such things, for, besides my own private opinion that you have had long enough already for such preparations, I shall only quote from Aleck’s stock of proverbs, that ‘a bonnie bride’s sune buskit.’ As soon as I land I shall go to the Southampton post-office in the sure expectation of finding a neat little letter addressed to ‘Mr. Hugh Anderson, to wait till called for.’ Archie can write one too, if he likes, for I am greedy in the matter of letters, and the faithfulness of my home-correspondents has fostered the appetite immensely.”

“No wonder she’s so sweet and amiable,” said Alice, dropping the curtain with a shake. “No wonder they all are. They have everything their own way. All so fond of each other; all living together, or coming home to live together. All thought so much of by everybody. It is easy for them to be good! Look at me! Never mind that, I’ve money and fine dresses, and all that hollow rubbish. Here I am, turned out of my father’s own house, because my father has married a woman he should not have married, and made a scandal that of course hangs about me wherever I go. And the man that I cared for, or that cared for me, or, at any rate, that made himself pleasant, he goes and marries somebody else! It is natural that I should be miserable and passionate. What do I care for prayer, or Bible-reading, or any such things! They wouldn’t if they were me. It’s no wonder they can love God, when He gives them all they can want or wish. Let the tide set the other way, and then they would repine and rebel as much as anybody else!”

Satan is the same now as when he went up among the sons of God and asked—
 "Doth Job fear God for nought?"

CHAPTER III.



IGH**T** as were the hearts of the Anderson household that winter-time, Alice contrived to make herself felt as a very appreciable burden. Causelessly unhappy people are never such a curse as in times of joy and gladness. They are like a

black stain on a wedding-dress, or a dead flower in a nosegay, worthless and disgusting, yet able to spoil so much.

And Alice's uneasy conscience made her very restlessly and persistently disagreeable. It destroyed the selfish animal good-humour which she had hitherto occasionally enjoyed. It might be partly a sign of spiritual growth and life, though an unpleasant one, like a baby's fractiousness at teething-time.

The Andersons were thoroughly Scotch people, of Scotch feelings and habits. They did not keep Christmas in the English fashion, because they had not been accustomed. Their little household festivities had always been reserved for that New Year-tide, when they now hoped to have their beloved wanderer again among them. But they kept Christmas in its truest and best sense of remembering their brotherhood with the poor and suffering, to whom the first of the "hard weather" comes like a blast from the grave. Besides their contributions in cash and kind to their church charities, Mrs. Anderson and Helen both exerted their wits and kindness to give some little bit of genuine pleasure to every "poor body" they knew.

"The Bible says that man does not live by bread alone," said Mrs. Anderson; "and if flannel and coals warm the body, I'm sure a

little tea or snuff or a new book warm the very heart."

Alice would not interest herself in any of these quiet Christian charities, nor did she say a word in allusion to English Christmas customs, till late on the evening of the 25th, when she observed, bitterly,—

"One does not know what one may come to. I never thought to keep Christmas in a house without going to church, without a bit of holly, or a turkey, or a plum-pudding, or a carol. But, of course, your charity is so busy out of doors, that it is quite above considering the feelings of those within."

"Oh, Alice, I am so sorry!" Helen cried sincerely. "If you had only said a word! You see we never think of you as English. We only associate you with Scotland and India, and forget that you were brought up in London. We never thought of it, though I know that is no excuse, for I should have thought of it. If you will try to forgive me, Alice, we will remind your aunt to have Christmas plum-pudding on New Year's Day, and I will decorate the rooms with evergreens, and we will all keep our happy day together, and you must try to forget the different date."

"But New Year's Day is just New Year's date—a fresh sheet of almanac and new account-books," pouted Alice. "Now Christmas means to me the birth of the Saviour, and the manger, and the shepherds, and all sorts of sacred things."

"Yet even Christmas Day is not Christ's real birthday," Helen pleaded gently. "It is only a day chosen by some churches to keep them in remembrance of his taking the form of a servant, and coming among us. Christ's real birthday, for us, can only be the day when he enters into our hearts, and takes our sins upon himself, and gives us his grace in their stead. But, Alice, try to forgive me, and I will make up all that I can, for forgetting your very natural feelings."

Oh, how Alice grudged and scorned, when, in a few days, Helen came in loaded with holly and fir, and made a long garland that was to go round the room, besides smaller ones for every picture and looking-glass. One moment Alice would have liked to go up to her and kiss her, and thank her for such goodness to such a hard-hearted, cantankerous wretch as herself. And the next minute she hated her, envied her, despised her—judged her as hypocritical, sly, and self-seeking in her very kindness. "She can't like me," she said to herself. "Why should she wish to be kind to me, except to make a display of heavenly forgiveness and long-suffering to

her admiring future family-in-law?" And yet Alice knew in her inmost heart, that if Helen had grown indignant and indifferent beneath her constant patter of spite and arrogance, she would then have asked, "Where was her Christian patience and forbearance?"

It was early on the morning of the last day of December, when a telegram came from Hugh Anderson. "Arrived at Southampton. Got your letters. All well."

"He will be in Talawick by the midnight train, and will be here by breakfast-time on New Year's Day," said Helen, with a very glory of happiness shining in her face.

Nobody did much in that house that day. All their glad preparations were made, and they were too unsettled in their eager joy to attempt more than going to and fro about the rooms, putting last fond needless touches.

"Hush, isn't that a coach drawing up?" asked Mrs. Anderson breathlessly, as they all sat round the evening fire, Helen on a low stool at her feet, just where the hand of the elder woman could easily stray down on the girl's soft brown hair.

"No, mother, it is only the wind," said Archie, "and it could not possibly be Hugh, for he cannot reach Talawick till midnight, even if he landed in time to catch the earliest train."

"He would do that if he could," observed the mother, happily assured. "But—there's that sound again!"

"It is nothing but the wind," Archie repeated; "hark—you hear it die away by the side of the house. I have noticed it before when a gale is first rising. It will be wild weather to-night."

"Then, thank God, Hugh is off the sea," said Mrs. Anderson, "and may He help and keep every mother's son still out and upon it."

And then they kneeled for their usual "worship," and the head of the household offered a thanksgiving for the son "brought in safety through the perils of his journey," and prayed for "his comfortable and happy arrival at his father's house."

Truly, that was a wild night. Perhaps it was something of the eagerness of expectation that kept the Andersons and Helen wakeful, but even Alice could not sleep for the dashing rain, and the roaring relentless wind. She grew frightened, lying in the darkness, and rose and stole away to her aunt's room.

"God is in the storm," said Mrs. Anderson gently.

"But there is danger," Alice sobbed;

"houses are blown down sometimes and people are killed."

"Yes, dearie," her aunt replied. "I never taught my children not to fear, by saying there was no danger. I only told them it was all in their Heavenly Father's hand, and they were as safe in the tempest as in the calm."

It grew stiller towards morning, and presently the grey light stole in. By breakfast-time Alice would have been almost ready to deny that she had been agitated the night before.

Breakfast-time, but no Hugh.

"He missed the morning train yesterday," observed Archibald, and Mrs. Anderson and Helen both said eagerly that of course they had not expected him—only they had thought perhaps he might be in time.

Presently an old neighbour came in, and sat down, and talked for a few minutes. He seemed grave and pre-occupied, and would not listen to any of their playful railery about his being their "first foot." He said that somebody who had come in by the coach from Talawick, was saying there had been a bad shipwreck in the Bay last night—a Swedish ship had struck on the rocks, and it had gone hard with her. Then he went away.

He had scarcely gone before another neighbour appeared. This was somebody whom the Andersons did not see very often, a reverent, austere man, with a soul as strong as his giant frame, and as little capable of shrinking from hardest tasks. Gentle Mrs. Anderson was a great favourite of his, and had a vast respect for him. She began instantly to tell him how they were looking out for Hugh.

"We thought he might be at Talawick last night," she said.

"He was at Talawick," said the stern Scotchman, with a solemnity that ran to every heart in the room. "He was at Talawick. Oh, woman, woman, God gie ye strength to feel that sair tears ne'er need fa' on a hero's grave, an' that Heaven is a bonnier place than e'en ane's ain fireside!"

Was it for a second, or for an hour, they all sat in silence? None of them ever knew. Pass by that agony of sorrow. Who but God could bear to gaze on those parted quivering lips that never murmured, on those tearful eyes that mutely said, "Thy will be done." Alice Baird could not bear it. She went up to Helen, and threw her arms round her neck, but Helen drew gently—oh, so gently—but firmly away. No comfort could be taken yet except from the Hand that had

given the blow, and Alice rose and went softly from the room.

Hugh had arrived in Talawick at the time his mother and Helen had hoped. He had found the foreign ship labouring in her great strait, and the Talawick men, in the absence of one or two of their leaders, had seemed uncertain and wavering in their help. The only boat that was big enough to breast the waves was old, and scarcely seaworthy. Volunteers to man it hung back, except one old man—a former man-o'-war's man. Hugh Anderson had stepped forward, like the gallant gentleman that he was.

"I've not come all the way from the Indies to stand and watch men drown, at my own country-side," he said. "I'm going—for one, and God be with me."

And then others had pressed forward, and the little craft was launched. It brought off all the Swedes, except one or two who had been already washed off. They had a sore struggle to get the old, heavily-laden boat back to shore. Again and again waves broke over her. The old man-o'-war's man was brought in to tell the little he knew to the father and mother.

"It come up ahint me," he said. "Them poor furriners was down in the bottom, half-drowned aforehand, and holding on to what they could. It come ahint me, as I say. I saw It in his eyes. I think he know'd he couldn't stand another of 'em, fur, says he, lookin' straight at It, and kind o' through it, as I've seen men look at harbour-lights ahead through the storm—says he, 'Mother always said I might.' I don't know what he meant, ma'am, but them was just his words. And then It came. And when it was gone by, I rights myself again, and there's them poor furriners and there's my mates. But the gentleman's away. An' it's my honest belief, as have kept the sea man an' boy forty years come Lammas, that out of rough old Talawick bay that there gentleman went up to sit down in glory with every admiral and captain that has served the kings and the King o' kings, sin' the navy fetched the temple-gold for King Solomon."

Evening came again. The sad terrible New Year's night that was to have been so gay! Alice had stolen once or twice to the kitchen, and whispered to the tearful, shocked servant-lasses. But she had always returned to the solitude of her own chamber.

Darkness fell, and Alice still sat in the cold with a heavy shawl drawn tightly round her. Suddenly, striking her ear, like a familiar sound rousing us from a hideous

dream, a bell rang. It was the accustomed signal to call scattered members of the family to the household worship.

Awestruck, she stole down to the garlanded little parlour. The servant-lasses were just passing in, and she hung back and entered behind them, and slipped into a seat near the door. The "ha-Bible" lay as usual open before her uncle, and with faltering voice he read a few verses that came in the ordinary course of reading. It chanced to be one of those wonderful psalms, within whose wide range there is a sympathetic touch for every human mood. It was hard, hard for him to go through it, but it was his brave sign of submission and fortitude. And he did it. Then closing the book, he said as usual—

"Let us sing to the praise and glory of God!"

But he could do no more. The psalm remained ungiven out. There was an awful silence in the room. The two young men's heads were bent low over their books. The mother's face was hidden in her hands. The servant-girls and Alice sat paralyzed. Alice could not dare to raise her eyes upon the tragedy of agony before her, but sitting, gazing mutely at the ground, she caught sight of the little kitten beneath the table, still decked in the gay red ribbon that Helen had tied about its neck that morning. That loosened the tension of her nerves, and she would have burst into bitter weeping for the dead man whom she had never seen, but at that moment a sweetly strange voice was raised in that softly solemn strain, which has soothed so many sad and suffering scenes—

"The Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want;
He makes me down to lie
In pastures green: He leadeth me
The quiet waters by."

It was Helen. The sorest-stricken deer had got the soonest to the Fountain of Healing. She sang through one verse alone; in the second, Aleck's head was raised, and he had joined. Mr. Anderson and Archie were a little later, and Alice heard even her aunt's thin quaver in the concluding lines—

"And in God's house for evermore
My dwelling-place shall be."

Neither Alice nor the servants joined their voices. Some unconscious influence withheld them. The sweet incense of the hearts God had bruised went up to Him unmingled with any commoner sacrifice.

They knelt down in prayer. One moment's silence, and then the father's voice, clear as ever, only very soft and low, as if the sense of God's nearness was strong upon him—

"Lord, we thank Thee. We prayed ac-

cording to our littleness, and Thou hast answered according to Thy greatness. We thanked Thee for a short and terminable preservation of our dear one, and Thou hast given him the fulness of glory for ever and ever. We asked Thee to bring him back to us, and Thou hast taken him to Thyself. We looked forward to happy days with him here: Thou saidst to him, 'Come up hither, that where their treasure is, there may their heart be also.' Comfort Thy handmaiden, whom Thou hast smitten in the days of her youth. Continue to strengthen her as Thou hast strengthened her to-night, and let her grow in grace below as—Hugh—grows in glory above. Help Thy servants, from whom Thou hast taken one of the props of their age. Give our other sons renewed courage to follow their brother to heaven, as they were proud to emulate him on earth. And make us gentle and patient and open-hearted in our sorrow, so that we be not unlovely and morose in the eyes of our friends who dwell within our gates. O God—Father God, who gave up Thine own Son for our sakes, for His sake hear us! Amen."

* * *

There was a soul born that night in that house of mourning; for Alice Baird kneeled down at her bed-side, in floods of penitent tears, and prayed God to forgive her for all the wickedness that she could never, never forgive herself. She no longer denied that no mere human nature, no mere calmness of fortune had produced the sweet and hallowed dispositions against which she had rebelled with such fierce envy and uncharitableness. She was at the mercy of every trifling wave of circumstance and temperament: they were on a Rock, which no storm could shake. Out of the little blue bed-chamber, which had so often been the self-imposed prison of a morbid, selfish spirit, there rose that never-unanswered cry—

"God be merciful to me a sinner!"

* * *

Alice proved the genuineness of her penitence by forcing no sharp confessions on hearts sore with sorrow. She lived her confessions instead. Do not think her useless hands and thoughtless head suddenly became deft and wise, nor that her pampered temper ever became quite as bright and sweet as Helen's. But from that day, amid all her blunderings and

helplessness, she began to live for other people, and for God in them. Mrs. Anderson and Helen, active and even-souled as they maintained themselves through their trial, were still a little absorbed, and perhaps shrewd Aleck was the first to see the change. It came in silence, and he helped it without a recognising word. Only how often he appealed to Alice for small favours! And how patiently he waited while she bungled over little duties of his gloves and buttons which the others would have done twice as well in half the time!

But there came one cool, still autumn afternoon, when Helen and Alice walked together through Talling Wood, and out beside Talawick Bay. It was four years since the Swedish ship had gone down on those treacherous rocks, and Helen had passed into the pale grey and deep violet tints which will be her "everyday wear" all the rest of the days of her mortal life. People often remarked "that these suited her so well, one could not fancy her wearing anything else."

One may be quite sure there must have been many sacred confidences between those two, before Helen would bring Alice to walk arm-in-arm with her, and watch the sun go down over Talawick Bay.

Alice was going away from Rathburn. Her father, widowed a second time, and quite broken in health, was returning to England, determined not to come near his native town, but to settle in some southern watering-place, where he might find Anglo-Indian society. It would be a dreary, trying life for his daughter, alienated from the Christian love and fellowship that she had learned fully to value, and isolated with an ungodly, selfish valetudinarian. But though Alice had already shed many tears of parting sorrow, no word of fretful regret had escaped her.

"I am only so thankful to God that He brought me among you, Helen," she said, as they walked together, facing the solemn crimson sunset, that has a different meaning for every eye that gazes on it. "For you and all the Andersons preached me the only sermon which my hard, vain heart could possibly have heard. Well shall I always understand the full force of King David's repeated adjuration, "O worship the Lord in the BEAUTY OF HOLINESS."

A SONG OF THE CITY.

I'VE got a secret, do you know,
 To tell you as we go along ;—
 They're not good folks that live down here,
 They'll give you nothing for your song :
 I'd learn a new one soon, you see,
 Let's settle what the song shall be !

I've got a secret, do you know,—
 The song we'll settle by-and-by ;—
 They don't care much for music here,
 They shut the window there, up high ;
 It's never worth to come again,
 And stand here singing in the rain.

I've got a secret, do you know,—
 Oh yes, I'm going to tell you soon ;—
 How well God lights up all the world,
 Down goes the sun, up comes the moon !
 I wonder how the world would fare
 Without the lamps He hangs up there !

I've got an angel, do you know ;
 A splendid angel, all in white ;
 I've seen her often—she comes out
 Just with the little stars at night :
 And that is just the angel's way ;
 Who ever knew them come by day ?



I've got an angel, do you know ;
 I've seen her times, and times, and times,
 I've watched till all the lamps are out
 Beside the railings, near the lines ;
 I love to see her face a bit,
 Because God's face has looked in it.

I've got an angel, do you know ;
 A face so white and eyes so blue :
 I've seen a lady like her once,
 Who goes in by the same door too ;
 She bought my primroses one day,
 Though they were withered all away.

Mine is an angel, though, you know ;
 She's always dressed in white, you see ;
 The lady wears bright pretty things,
 Though she smiled sweetly down at me ;
 But mine is always saintly white,
 And goes out watching of a night.

I've got an angel, so, of course,
 I'm never frightened now to sleep ;
 I think of how she's standing by,
 And what good watch her face can keep ;
 I'd let her go and watch by you
 If angels could watch over two.

MISS CHARLOTTE'S PRIDE.

I.

I COULD never make out how Miss Charlotte, my handsome, high-spirited young mistress, came to marry Squire Allworthy. I think she must have had some disappointment, but of that she never spoke to me. Mr. Allworthy was a good deal older than she was ; for she was only twenty-one, and he must have been near fifty. Her father was at first much opposed to the match, but Miss Charlotte's heart, or if not her heart her will, was set on it, and no arguments nor persuasions could move her. Mr. Allworthy was a rich man, kind-hearted, and genial, with a pleasant word and a smile for every one ; his character stood high, and his family was good ; in short, there was no objection to take hold of, so to speak, and in a matter of age young ladies are supposed to please themselves. It is not becoming in servants to talk about such matters, and I never would have said so but at this distance of time ; but I wondered secretly to myself how Miss Charlotte, who was by far the cleverest of the family, should fancy Mr. Allworthy, who never seemed to talk or think of anything but dogs and horses. How well I remember being in the parlour for some reason while the young ladies were all there, busy discussing some wonderful books which were then coming out, written by no one knew whom at the time, though I have since heard that they were novels by Sir Walter Scott, and better than any books of the kind that were ever written before or since. Presently Miss Charlotte turned to Mr. Allworthy, who had been very silent while they were talking, and asked what he thought. He said he had never read any of the books, and evidently hardly knew even the names. There was no such great harm in that, I thought ; but I shall never forget the look of contempt which passed over Miss Charlotte's handsome face, nor the scornful way in which she turned from him, and went on talking to her sisters. And yet she married him. The wedding was a gay one ; but in spite of flowers, and smiles, and glad words, I could not get that one scornful look out of my head, and the thought pressed upon me that the marriage would not be a happy one.

Time went on, Miss Charlotte married and went to her own home, and I remained to look after her brother's children, and often thought of her, though I had seen and heard

but little of her, excepting the successive births of four children, and of the early death of two of them. Almost immediately after the sorrowful death of the young squire's wife, and he had gone away for a change, and I was alone with my poor motherless children at the Hall, Mrs. Allworthy came to spend some days there, and make acquaintance with her brother's children. Her husband did not accompany her, but he was to fetch her home at the end of a week. Directly she came into the nursery, I felt sadly sure that my thought on her wedding-day had been a true one, and that she was not happy. There is something very different in the sudden, frank grief which would only have been natural to see upon Mrs. Allworthy's face on coming into that sad house, and the stern, set look of habitual unhappiness which I saw there.

There was nothing frank or natural in Mrs. Allworthy's manner, as she came in, held out her hand to me, and then bent to kiss Nelly and the baby Arthur. It was so steady, grave, and composed, so much as if she had been long accustomed to hide her real feelings carefully away under a thick mantle of pride and indifference, that my heart died within me as I looked at her. Could she be really my Miss Charlotte ? She looked taller than ever, and more upright ; her long black dress had a stiff rustle in every fold, which sounded ominous, her face was pale, and every trace of youth and girliness had vanished, leaving only a grave, stern woman in their stead.

If it had been possible for me to be more downhearted than I was at that sorrowful time, Mrs. Allworthy's presence would have made me so. She had a way of roaming restlessly about the house which fidgeted me so that I could have cried out with the annoyance. The frost had given way at last to rain and sleet, which came pitilessly down with very little intervals, for nearly the whole first week of her stay. I can hardly bear, even now, to think of that dreary time. My only comfort was in my baby. Miss Nelly was old enough to break my heart by crying pitifully now and then for her mamma, but little Arthur was nothing but an innocent, joyous baby, full of dimples, and smiles, and cooing laughter, and he could comfort my heart when it was at its sorest with his pretty ways. Whenever there was a lull in the bad weather, Mrs. Allworthy would go out and pace up and down the broad terrace walk which was

in sight of the nursery window, and there I used often to watch her, longing to go and ask what ailed her, and yet not daring to do so. At last she spoke herself. It was one wild evening, after I had put the children to bed. She had been up in the nursery watching baby in his bath, and now they were both asleep, and she was standing by the fire, listening seemingly to the rain, which was every now and then blown sharply against the window panes by the fierce gusts of wind.

"Hannah," she said suddenly, "my first little girl was very like Nelly."

"Was she, ma'am?" I said pitifully.

"Very like," she repeated, the hard lines of her face softening as she thought of her little angel-daughter. "She had the same pensive eyes, and serious, sweet smile, though she was only three years old when she died."

"How long ago?" I asked softly, thinking it would do her good to talk of it.

"Three years," was the reply, with a weary sigh, "and Mr. Allworthy thinks that is long enough to forget."

"To forget!" I echoed in astonishment.

"Yes," she said bitterly; "to forget so far as to go out, and look cheerful, and enjoy life when one's heart is broken."

"Oh! Miss Charlotte," I exclaimed, with tears, "not broken! Don't say that. You have children left."

"No daughter. My boys will leave me; and I shall have no daughter to be with me and cling to me when everything else is gone."

"You will have your husband," I said timidly, for I had remarked that she hardly ever mentioned his name, and when she did, she never called him "my husband," only ceremoniously, "Mr. Allworthy." "You will have your husband," I said.

She was silent; but I saw her face change. The features, which had relaxed, and over which the fire-light had cast something of a tenderer glow, took of a sudden a look of harshness and pride. She turned her face a little more towards me, and it looked sharp and hard.

"Yes, Hannah, I have a husband, as you say," she replied slowly, "but he does not understand me. You know nothing about it."

I was shocked at the cold, indifferent tone she used in speaking such words. I could not be silent. Maybe I had been indulged in the happy days that were gone, but I determined to speak out, and to take my chance of her anger.

"Miss Charlotte—I beg your pardon—Mrs. Allworthy," I said, "no man in my

opinion would understand his wife loving her children better than her husband."

She looked up at me, and a great flush, the first bit of colour I had seen in her face since she came to the Hall, rose up to the roots of her hair. I was afraid she might forbid me to say anything more, so I went hurriedly on. I felt that some experiences I had so lately passed through myself had added many years to my age, and had given me an insight into a good deal of which a year before I was ignorant; although of that, of course, she knew nothing. I went on however.

"Miss Charlotte, you are not happy." I could not help calling her so, when I was so troubled about her, and loved her so dearly.

"Is it likely I should be?" she said, the flush fading.

"I do not know why you should not be, with so many good things round you, and so many to love you."

"So that is your idea of happiness!" she said scornfully; "good things round me, and many to love me! What if those very things weary me instead of making me happy? What if I long to be rid of them, never to see them again, so that I could have the one thing I have lost?"

"Then, miss," I said, "I think you are just wanting to choose what no one in this world can choose, and finding fault with Providence."

"I find no fault with any one or anything," she said gloomily, sitting down, and letting her hands drop on her lap. "I only want to be let alone, and—if Letitia had lived, and I had died, that would have been about the best thing that could have happened, Hannah."

I could not yet bear that name mentioned. I burst out crying. Miss Charlotte got up and came to me, but she shed no tear herself, and I very soon forced back mine, and dried my eyes.

"Oh, Miss Charlotte!" I said, "how can you speak so? What is the matter? Won't you tell me?"

"Nothing that you can mend, Hannah," she answered.

"Telling one's troubles sometimes mends them," I persisted. "I can't bear to see you so changed from what you used to be. It's not only that you are thin and pale, but the very look on your face is altered."

"I do not look so amiable as I did, Hannah, you mean," she said, with a kind of smile; "I feel that without a glass."

"You have grown to hide what you feel," I went on, "and to pretend you don't care for anything: and oh, my dear, that is a

bitter mistake! Don't go on so; it is killing you!"

"Hannah, you are talking of what you do not understand. I have very little feeling of any kind left, I believe; there is no pretence in the matter, and no one else has ever found out what you fancy."

It was no fancy, I knew that; and I felt too that she had a certain pleasure and relief in talking to me, though she was seemingly so bent on keeping me in the dark. I thought I should find out the truth if I went on, so I said—

"Your husband comes to-morrow."

She started up.

"Yes, he does," she said; "but I shall not see him."

"Not see him!" I cried in dismay.

"No; I have made up my mind not to go home again for a time. You are right. It is killing me. Listen, and you shall hear all about it."

She would not sit again, but paced up and down the room, speaking under her breath.

"You know I have lost two children—girls. The first was hardly two years after my marriage, and I thought my heart would break then, but it did not; for my two boys were born, one after the other—noble children, Hannah, but not like my first-born. Well, then another daughter came to bless me as I thought; a fair little blossom with violet eyes, like Nelly's, and a serious, shy face, that enchanted others besides me. She lived for three years. How I loved her! Love is no word for my feeling, it is poor and commonplace. I could not bear her out of my sight. She filled my whole heart, till it overflowed with very rapture. And she died. She caught a cold, and the cold turned to inflammation, and she was torn from me. I was mad, I believe, for a time, or insensible; for I don't remember what I said or did, till one day Mr. Allworthy came to me and asked me to come out with him, and when I refused, he said I ought to make an effort to shake off my sorrow for his sake, and to remember my other children. *His* sake!" she repeated, with inexpressible scorn in her voice, "what had he ever been to me that I should forget my darling for him? My other children! The words nearly drove me wild. I could hardly bear the sound of their voices. I told my husband to go and enjoy himself without me, and to do what he liked with the boys; for I would never interfere or trouble him, and then he gave way to a storm of anger which only made me despise him. What right had he to be angry? He could

not comprehend deep feeling of any kind—I knew that. He had sorrowed for my Agatha, but had soon wearied of sorrowing. But he might have left me in peace, and have made himself happy as he liked." She stopped with a gasp as if for breath, and then went on. "I listened to what he had to say, and made no second remonstrance. I was not rebellious, Hannah; he can never say that of me. I did everything he wished—received guests again, gave parties, and went here and there as usual, and my husband is not yet satisfied. He complains that I do not make his home cheerful to him. Well—how can I, with this gnawing pain at my heart? Now I am once free, Hannah, I cannot—will not go back. I will ask Herbert to let me stay here for a time. Oh, if you knew the relief!"

She stopped her restless walk and sat down, fastening her eyes upon me with a look which seemed to say—

"I am prepared for objections, and expect them, but they will not move me."

This was worse than I feared. She was destroying her own happiness and her husband's, and would blight that of her children if she persisted in her determination. I remember feeling quite overwhelmed at the misery which I saw she was preparing for herself, and at my want of power to save her. I resolved to make one trial, and to appeal to her love for her children.

"What will become of your boys," I asked, "if you do not go home?"

"They will remain where they are, I suppose," she said; "they are too young to go to school. They will come and see me. I am not going to separate myself from my husband, Hannah. I shall do nothing that the world can lay hold of."

"You are sure then," I said, "that your husband will agree to your plan?"

"I don't think he will care much about it. He will be puzzled, and angry at first—"

"And rightly so," I broke in. "Oh, Miss Charlotte, you cannot be in earnest! You do not know what you are doing!"

"Do I not? Well, at any rate, I *am* in earnest, and nothing you can say or do, Hannah, will move me."

Nothing that I could say. But I had one refuge left; and when she was gone, I prayed for her with many tears.

II.

The next morning I saw nothing of Mrs. Allworthy till twelve o'clock, when I heard the door-bell ring, and knew that her hus-

band had arrived. Presently she came in with a note in her hand.

"Hannah," she said to me, in a cold, careless voice, "I have a headache, and I am going to lie down in my room. I do not wish to be disturbed. Will you give this to Mr. Allworthy?"

One glance at her face told me that I should never move her now. I took the note in silence, and went down-stairs.

Mr. Allworthy was standing in the dining parlour as I entered, and turned quickly round, evidently expecting to see his wife. He was not much altered from what I remembered him on his wedding day. He was always a fine-looking man. Now he was a little stouter and more florid in complexion, but that was all. He certainly did not look troubled in mind, for his expression was placid and cheerful, as unlike his wife's gloomy, restless face as possible. I lost my sympathy with him at that first moment, but I regained it afterwards.

"Mrs. Allworthy bade me give you this letter, sir," I said, holding it out to him.

He took it, looking bewildered, as he turned it over in his fingers without opening it. "Where is Mrs. Allworthy?" he asked of me.

"Up-stairs, lying down, sir," and I made haste and left the room before he could ask any more questions. Very soon after I had returned to the nursery, I heard, as I expected, the dining-room bell ring, and the butler came to bid me go down-stairs. I obeyed with a good deal of unwillingness, for I felt how awkward and unpleasant the interview would be. When I got into the room, and saw Mr. Allworthy's face, I pitied him, but I could understand Miss Charlotte better. There was no anger, only a weak, puzzled look of distress. I would much rather a husband of mine had knocked me down than have looked as he did. Oh, my dears, never you marry any one whom you cannot thoroughly look up to and respect. No woman ever did so yet, who had not bitter cause to rue it in one way or another.

I stood at the door to hear what he had to say.

"Do you know anything about this letter?" he asked, nervously folding and unfolding the paper in his hand.

"I think I do, sir," I answered.

"What does it mean? I think you knew Mrs. Allworthy before she married; I think"—he paused, evidently ignorant of what I knew, and afraid of saying too much.

A sudden resolution came to my mind.

"Mrs. Allworthy has told me, sir, that she wishes to stay here for the present, and that note is, I believe, to tell you so. She is not well now, and is lying down, but she finds the quiet of this house suits her and does her good. She tells me she has been very unwell—indeed I can see that—and she is better already here. A change is sometimes such a great thing, you know, sir, for mind and body, and I haven't a doubt that when she feels equal to going home, you will see a great improvement for the better."

Heaven help me! I had sore doubts as to whether she ever meant to return at all, but I would not suppose such a thing possible. My mind was made up. I would not rest until I had tried to bring husband and wife together with a better understanding between them, and to do this, I must never show that anything like a separation, or even a misunderstanding, had so much as entered into my thoughts or theirs. Mr. Allworthy's brow cleared a little as I spoke.

"She has been poorly," he said, "I know. A change may be the right thing; but where is she? Can't I see her?"

"Not now, I am afraid, sir," I answered boldly. "Mrs. Allworthy had a bad headache this morning, and is very likely asleep. Can I take any message you would like to leave?"

Poor Mr. Allworthy fidgeted and looked disturbed, but presently said half to himself, "Well, I suppose it's best—best leave her alone, and perhaps she'll come round."

"Oh! yes, sir," I said cheerfully; "depend on it, she will. She'll come round in her native air, and be as well as ever she was in a little time, with patience and quiet."

"Well, well, Hannah, I'll write. I've often heard my wife speak of you—you'll take care of her—you'll give her my letter yourself, and not let any one talk. People gossip so, you know; and they might think it odd that I came here and went away without seeing her. Hang it! I think it's odd myself!"

"I'll take care, sir," I said emphatically; "you may trust me."

"That's a good girl, and, on second thoughts, I won't write, I'll send a message. Just say that I'm glad she's better, and that I'll drive over again with the boys soon—and give her my love," and Mr. Allworthy put his hand in his pocket. I drew back instinctively, guessing his purpose, and when he brought out his hand again, and held it out to me, I felt the proud colour come into my face. It was the first time I had been offered money, except as fair wages.

"No, sir," I said, "I never took money in my life for delivering a message."

"Well, well," he said, putting his hand back into his pocket; "no offence. I'm very much obliged to you, very much obliged indeed. I'll just have a bit of dinner, and then go. And, Hannah," he said, as I was leaving the room, "be sure and give her my love, and tell her I'll bring the boys over."

I went away, thinking that if he had not much "gumption," as my Uncle David would have said, yet he had a kind heart, which should have begotten kindness in return.

Well, two days passed, during which Miss Charlotte wrote to her brother for leave to remain some time longer at the Hall, and by the end of the week got an answer, begging her to do just as she liked. Mr. Herbert asked no questions, and expressed no surprise. The loss of his wife had quenched all feeling but grief for the time.

III.

I watched Mrs. Allworthy daily, but could see very little, if any, change in her looks or manner. She was still cold and unobservant, her face always wore the same expression of haughty, clouded indifference, and she seemed to take the same kind of sullen pleasure in pacing up and down the terrace walk in the garden, till she was ready to drop with fatigue. I was surprised at first; for she had talked so much of the relief it was to her to be left to herself, that I had expected it to work some change in her face.

But I soon guessed that she was dreading her husband's visit, and that I might wait in vain for any signs of improvement while that hung over her.

He came one cloudy, chilly afternoon when the sky was stormy, and the earth all moist and vaporous—a day when, for my part, I thought it needed all the warmth and sunshine of kind words and loving voices to make up for the cheerlessness of everything in the outside world. I was at the window when I saw the chaise drive up, and Mrs. Allworthy, who was in the nursery, heard it, as I could tell well enough by the sound of her catching breath. But she sat quite still, as I saw, without turning round to look at her.

"Here is Mr. Allworthy, Miss Charlotte."

"Very well, Hannah."

The voice was so quiet that I did turn round then, and I should have been better pleased to have seen any amount of agitation than that cold, cold face. It told me that her determination was not one whit altered,

and that pride had now come to help her to nurse her stubborn grief.

The bell sounded, and I wondered what she would do. To my surprise, she got up out of her chair, put the baby, who had been on her lap, into my arms, and gathering up her heavy, black drapery, went slowly away—down-stairs. I should have been glad, if she had not worn that face—so handsome and so cold; but with that I knew there was no hope. While I sat wondering, doubting and fearing, I heard childish steps and voices on the staircase, and two noble-looking boys of seven and eight years old, came into the room.

"Mamma said we were to come and see you and our cousins," said Charley in a frank, joyous voice. "Oh! what a pretty little girl!" and he stopped short at the sight of Miss Nelly, who, frightened at the entrance of strangers, and now still more abashed at the boy's sudden exclamation, shrank behind my chair, her little fair face all one sudden blaze of colour.

"See! this is your cousin too, sir," I said, showing him the baby in my arms.

"I don't much care for little babies," he said, after one look, and then ran to the window; while Geoffrey gently stroked the little Arthur's head, and looking at me, whispered earnestly, "Is mamma coming back home?"

"I do not know," I said, feeling quite disconcerted under his look. "I'm afraid not."

"Is she not well yet?"

"No, sir."

"Poor mamma!" And the gentle, little, thoughtful face clouded over.

It seemed to me as if that cloud was the beginning of the blight with which their mother was preparing to darken her boys' lives through her own wilfulness. I tried to dispel it by talking to baby, and getting him to look and crow at his cousin, but the young face kept its gravity.

In the mean time his brother was trying to coax Miss Nelly out of her shyness, and had succeeded so far as to beguile her to the window, where she stood, listening with grave eyes, while he talked about the war, and battle, and fighting. Most boys were all agog to be soldiers then, and I could see that the constant talk about the war which he must have heard had filled his mind and fired his spirit. In the middle his father's voice was heard calling, "Charley! Geoff!" He gave Nelly a hearty kiss, and was off in an instant, while little Geoffrey stopped a moment to say good-bye to me, and then followed his brother.

I waited for what would follow. I heard the chaise drive off, and then Mrs. Allworthy come up-stairs; but she did not stop at my door, but turned off to her own room and remained there till tea-time. After tea she came into the nursery, and I could see in a moment that she had thrown off a great weight, and with it a good deal of her gloomy reserve. She played with the children, and would hardly be induced to let Nelly off her lap when it was bed-time. She asked me about her boys—what I thought of them—and talked of them and their boyish ways more freely than she had ever done to me before. When she said “good night,” and left me, I sat down to my needle-work with dismay at my heart. It seemed so cruel for her to be happy when she had, as it were, driven her husband and children away from her—so heartless!

There seemed so little hope for the future. The task I had set myself looked hopeless and wild. Nevertheless, I looked it steadily in the face, and tried to think what was best to be done; and I could see nothing for it but time. Perhaps when she was perfectly free to be as sad as she liked, she would cease to want to be so; and if all opposition was at an end, she would not care so much for indulging her own will. She might get tired of being let alone, and go home with a prayer for pardon on her lips of her own accord. You see I was building upon the natural contrariness of human nature, half unconsciously, and quite naturally. I was right so far, but I did not know how strong a thing pride is, nor how tightly it can hold its victims, hardly letting them go even when they are crushed and heart-broken in the struggle with their tormentor.

Well, weeks passed, and Mr. Herbert was still away. The first soreness of my grief for my dear, dear mistress was healing, but there were moments when the sense of our loss—of my double loss overwhelmed me, and I felt lonely and desolate beyond expression, as if my life were ended, and I could never know real joy or grief any more in this world. When these moods overcame me, I used to try and turn my mind to some other subject; the children, and what their future lives might be, or Mrs. Allworthy—more often the latter.

IV.

Six weeks had passed since that last visit from her husband. She had not seen him nor her children again, and although the change for the better had not passed away, and she had grown gradually more cheerful and natu-

ral, yet I thought I could see that she was not so satisfied. She still took those restless walks on the terrace, communing, I fancied, with her heart, and perhaps striving faintly with the pride that was making her miserable. I used to watch her as she came up to the eastern end of the terrace, which was just underneath my window, and then, turning round with a quick, decided movement, walk steadily along to the western end, and then turn again. Her head was bent down, seldom raised for so much as a minute to look at the turf, the trees, or the sky; but there was no faltering purpose or weakening spirit in those vigorous unswerving footsteps, though the very habit betrayed uneasiness of mind, and a spirit not at peace with itself; and at the end of an hour or so she would come wearily in through the glass door, looking utterly spent and pale. Her mind was stronger than her body—always.

In all this time she never alluded to our one talk about her circumstances, and, of course, I never mentioned it. I think she would have liked me to do so, and that she was impatient at my silence, but I held my tongue and waited.

One day—it was late in February, and the weather was still damp and gloomy—I was pacing about the gallery outside the nursery-door with baby in my arms, for the children had colds, and I had kept them indoors, when I thought I heard sounds in Mrs. Allworthy's bedchamber, which was at one end of the gallery, and, pausing outside the door, I distinctly made out the sound of a sob and suppressed weeping. That evening she came to me, as she often did, when the children were asleep, and I was at work in the outer nursery, and sat down by the fire.

“Don't you want to know, Hannah,” she said abruptly, “what my husband said to me when he was here last?”

I don't know how it was; she had plenty of reserve and pride with most people, plenty very often with me, and yet sometimes she would cast it entirely on one side, which was what encouraged me to do what I could to help her.

“Yes, Miss Charlotte, I do wish it, though I should never make bold to ask,” I said.

“Well, you shall hear without asking. At first he seemed to take it for granted that I was going back with him, which I was quite determined not to do.”

“Ah!” I said quickly, “he supposed you were better already, but I told him I thought it would take longer to do any real good.”

You see I had taken my line of action, and

was resolved to keep to it. She looked at me a little doubtfully, and went on speaking.

"He was astonished when I let him know that I was not going to do as he supposed, and then he began to be angry, and asked me where I was going to live, and I told him that Herbert had said I might stay here as long as I pleased; that I was happy here, and that I desired nothing better."

"Gentlemen are so impatient, Miss Charlotte," I said; "it's the way with them. They don't consider that ladies are not so strong as themselves, and want more time to recover from an illness or a shock of any kind. It's thoughtless of them," I said, with simulated indignation. "I couldn't myself approve of your going home just yet—say for a fortnight—that would do great things, please God." She looked at me again, not doubtfully this time, but with rising pride and anger, but I worked on steadily.

"I fixed no time," she said. "I told him that I wanted to be let alone, but he would not understand; he never did," she said bitterly; "he began to argue. I sent the boys away and listened. If he had shown the least comprehension of what I have suffered, I think I would have gone with him, but he did not. He spoke as if he were the sufferer, and I—well, almost as if I were a criminal. I think that has hardened my heart."

"No, not a criminal, Miss Charlotte!" I cried looking up at her, full into her eyes this time, as she stopped speaking. "Not a criminal; you mistook him. Only weak and nervous still, and not quite fit to go home to your duties—to your husband and children. Stay another fortnight, Miss Charlotte, and then go home. Would you like me to write to Mr. Allworthy?"

"No, no; why does he not come and see for himself, or send the boys as he promised?"

"Perhaps he has been expecting you," I said, feeling sure from this question that she could not be so indifferent as she appeared, and that her heart was yearning at least to her children.

"Let me write," I repeated. "I will say that you will come in a fortnight's time, but that you are not equal to coming before."

"Why are you so anxious I should go, Hannah?" she said suddenly.

"Because I think you must be wanted," I said gravely. "Your husband and your boys must both want you. Little Master Geoffrey asked me if you were coming, and looked very grave when I said 'No.'"

I could see that her countenance changed

when I mentioned the boys, and her hands which lay on her lap trembled a little, and moved nervously.

"It is a long time not to see them," she murmured.

"Yes," I said, "and a long time for them not to see you. Then I will write and say they may expect you this day fortnight."

"You are very pertinacious, Hannah, and a little forward. You always were as a girl. You must do as you like," and she got up slowly and went into the inner room and stooped over Nelly's little bed. Her face was flushed, and she said nothing to me as she passed out of the room, in answer to my good night. But I did not mind. Poor thing! she had had a struggle to give in to me, and I could well forgive any irritation of feeling against me in consequence. I sat down and wrote my letter before I went to bed, and posted it early the next morning, before she could change her mind. It was four days after that letter was posted that I was seated in the nursery as usual. It was now nearly the end of March, but the long stern winter was not yet at an end. It had snowed in the night, and the ground and trees were half hidden in their white mantle, and the air was cold and piercing. It was much too cold for my children to go out, and I was holding baby up to the window to amuse him, when I heard horses' hoofs coming fast up the road which led to the house, and soon there came in sight a horseman, riding at full speed. As he came nearer I could see that he was splashed from head to foot, and had evidently ridden far and furiously.

I knew directly I saw him that something had happened. It was but a short, short time since I had been startled by similar sounds and a like sight. No tidings could be what those were to me, but they might be worse to others. The very certainty made me calm. I gave the baby to the nursemaid and went down-stairs to meet and stop the messenger before Mrs. Allworthy should be alarmed. I went out at the front door, and as he came near I held up my hands to stop him. I remember how the sun, which had been shining palely a minute before, was suddenly darkened by a cloud, and what a chill came over my whole frame as the man stopped his jaded horse, and held out a letter.

"For Mrs. Allworthy," he said, and that was all.

I motioned to him to go into the stable-yard, for my teeth chattered too much to let

me speak, and I went back into the house with the letter under my apron. There was no occasion for me to trouble myself about the way in which I could give it to her, for when I got into the hall she was there. She had been startled too, I suppose, by the unusual sounds, and had come out of the breakfast parlour. When she saw me she held out her hand, and I put the letter into

it. What use was there in keeping it from her for ever so short a time? She knew and I knew that it contained bad tidings of some sort. We neither of us spoke, but I followed her into the room she had just left, and stood near her as she opened the paper. It contained only a few lines. She read them, and then sat suddenly down, and I knew that a mist had come over her eyes, by the groping



way in which she held it out to me. I read it quickly. Master Charles had had an accident—was insensible, and Mr. Allworthy wished his mother to come immediately.

I rang the bell to order the carriage and post-horses, before I looked at Mrs. Allworthy. When I did so, I saw that she sat quite still, her hand pressed over her heart, and her eyes looking before her, at nothing. When

I spoke to her she turned them on me with a look of only half understanding. "I was going, Hannah, was I not?" she said piteously.

"Yes, dear Miss Charlotte, you were," I cried, "but you must come up-stairs with me now, and get ready to go *immediately*. Mr. Allworthy said immediately. The carriage will be here in less than an hour."

She repeated the word "immédiately" with a shudder, and got up, but staggered when she tried to walk, so that I was obliged to support her with my arm, and lead her upstairs. I put up a few things for her, put on her bonnet and fur cloak, and then went for some wine. The housekeeper brought it, dressed for a journey, and whispered to me that she was going with Miss Charlotte,

which relieved my mind, for the poor thing was not fit to go that long drive alone. She drank the wine, and then sat still as before—waiting. In a shorter time than I had supposed possible, the carriage came to the door, and everything was ready. She got up, and went down-stairs, this time without support. I helped her into the carriage, the door was shut, and she was gone. The



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husband and wife would be together again shortly, but this was a way I had never thought of!

Well, you may suppose how anxiously I waited for the housekeeper's return, and when she came she brought the sad news that Master Charlie had only lived a few hours after Mrs. Allworthy's arrival. He had fallen from a tree he was climbing, and died

from the hurt to his head. He never recovered consciousness—never spoke, nor knew his poor mother. She was bitterly, terribly punished!

I heard from time to time of long fits of depression and silence, which made me fear for her reason, while I hoped and prayed that she was being gradually led, through a fiery furnace, as it were, to see the mistake

of her life in its true light, and to humble herself into resignation. Poor thing! She did not learn it then, nor for years afterwards.

v.

It was summer before Mr. Herbert came home; bright, warm weather, bringing with it something like a return of cheerfulness to our weary hearts. His sister, Miss Ann, came with him, bringing Master Geoffrey. My poor master! He sent for me to bring the children to him, but he could not speak. He could hardly bear the sight of them, I could see, and yet he would not let me take them away, but sat with Miss Nelly on his knee, softly stroking her hair, and looking as if years had passed over his head since his wife's death. And it was true that in suffering he was years older. Nothing ages like sorrow, and though my master was a Christian and bore his sorrow as a Christian should, it turned his hair white, and drew lines on his face which deepened and strengthened as time went on, and made him a melancholy and stern-looking man to the end of his days.

Mrs. Allworthy I learned had given herself up to her own sorrow, and had been so neglectful of her husband, and so sullenly forgetful that he too had lost a son, that at last his easy temper had been provoked, and he had spoken hasty words which had been bitterly and resentfully remembered against him. It was a state of things that could not last, and Mr. Allworthy had not resisted his wife's proposal that she should leave him. He was generous to her even in his anger, and provided a house for her at some distance, and a liberal allowance. With regard to his son, he was firm. The boy might visit his mother, but he must live at home, as inheritor of his father's property. Many a woman is proud enough till a child stands in the way, and then she generally humbles herself without much difficulty. But Mrs. Allworthy did not. She had hardened her heart against her husband, and that seemed to have perverted her whole nature. Miss Ann said that she asked nothing and complained of nothing; accepted what Mr. Allworthy offered, and shed no tear when she kissed little Geoffrey and wished him good-bye. Miss Ann begged for the boy, whose little heart had been half-broken by his brother's death. She asked to have him with her for a time, and his father consented, and to avoid the gossip of his neighbours, and the despondency which was creeping over him, and which was so foreign to his nature, he shut up his house and went to a small property he possessed in

another part of the country. And so it was that Miss Ann brought her nephew to her own house, and he was daily at the Hall.

The little boy was very sad for a long time, very grave and silent, and Miss Nelly would try in her sweet way to comfort him. Often, as I have watched the two children seated together on the lawn, I have thought that he was the more orphaned of the two.

vi.

Our lives crept on very quietly for a long time after this. Miss Ann still lived on in the Manor as it was called, and to me there was always something very resting and soothing in the sight of her gentle, good face, and in the very feeling of her presence in the house, for of course she was often at the Hall. I think Mr. Herbert felt it so too. She had always been his favourite sister, and he was often loth to let her go home even when she had been at the Hall the whole day, and I had orders to keep a bed-chamber ready in case she ever wished to sleep, which she did on two or three occasions of childish ailments in Miss Nelly. It was from her that I learnt about Mrs. Allworthy from time to time. First, that she was living very quietly at the house her husband had given her. Then of a visit Miss Ann had paid her with little Master Geoffrey, and how she had cried so bitterly, and owned herself wrong, but had passionately refused to say as much to her husband, or to allow Ann to do so. Later still, I went down myself, taking Miss Nelly, who had had the measles, for a change. I was shocked to see the alteration that her own wilfulness had wrought in her, and to find also that her health was in a very precarious state, and that she refused to see a doctor, or to hold counsel with any one. She was fairly in a way to kill herself, and when I found that she did not sleep, and yet took constant, wearying exercise, and eat scarcely anything, I could hold my tongue no longer, and fairly told her that she was acting wickedly both to herself, her husband, and child.

"Not to my child," she said, "nor to him! He is better without me; better never to have known his mother!" And she cried till I thought her heart would burst, and I had to beg and pray that she would quiet herself for the sake of her health.

We stayed there three weeks, and Miss Nelly, who was now eleven years old, and Master Geoffrey, used to pass most of their days in wandering about together over the great commons with which the place was surrounded. Master Geoffrey went to school

now, and was still a grave, silent boy—clever beyond his years as I was told, and as full of thought and tenderness as a girl. I always believed that he understood his parents' unhappy position, and thought about it and brooded over it, at an age when most boys would have known little, and cared less about any such matter. After circumstances showed that I was right, and that his mother's fault had already cast a shadow over his young life. But I am only going to tell you of her now. I thought I was sure that she pined secretly for the power of going home, and I wrote to Miss Ann to tell her so, and I mentioned the delicate state of her sister's health, which indeed gave me a great deal of uneasiness. She had a cough which seemed fixed, and she had grown to look thin and flushed, and her hands were deadly white like a person in a fever, and she was weak and listless, quite unlike her family, who had always been full of life and eagerness and activity. I was more uneasy than I chose to confess even to myself. I did not get any answer to my letter for some time, and while I waited for it I could not keep myself from planning for Miss Charlotte to go back to her husband. Sometimes I thought I would write to him and tell him how ill and wretched she was; sometimes that I would start off myself and see him, and explain how matters stood; and oftener I pleased myself with the idea of going with her to her home where Mr. Allworthy now was, of her unexpected arrival, and of the reconciliation which would take place between the husband and wife, separated for five years. The idea grew and grew, and I thought of it, dreamed of it, and prayed about it, till it became more than an idea—a fixed plan which I was resolved, God helping me, to carry out.

I thought Miss Charlotte's pride was nearly worn out of her by this time, or I should never have dared to make the bold stroke I did. But it was more than I could bear to see her pining away her life all for the want of one miserable word which I might speak.

It was late in July; still, brilliant weather, when Master Geoffrey had to go back to school. Children of his age—he was but twelve—should never have found out that their parents can do wrong, but he had. When he kissed his mother, I saw him lift his eyes for a moment, with a puzzled, questioning look to her face, and when he got no answer to his look, only a long embrace which almost broke into a sob, and then an instant return to the old, quiet self-restraint, which was so infinitely more pitiful than the

most violent tears could have been, his own face took again the expression of sweet patience, which was growing to be settled there. After he went, I began to act up to my resolution. I never could bear to be quiet when I had once made up my mind.

I went to Miss Charlotte and told her that she was very poorly. I knew it, however she might choose to deny the fact, and that she must have change. Would she come with me? She began to tremble as I asked her the question, for she was no longer strong enough to hide all she felt as completely as she used to do. She looked up at me as if she were going to ask a question, and then dropped her eyes again suddenly, and said nothing. I went on enlarging upon the fineness and warmth of the weather, so suited for travelling, and how I would leave Miss Nelly under the care of Miss Charlotte's own maid, if she would let me be her travelling companion. I never spoke a word of *where* I wanted to take her, and she never asked me; but she knew, and I felt that she knew, though we neither of us wished to acknowledge it to the other. After that I never said anything more about the journey, but prepared for it, silently and quickly. I think it was strange now, that as I did so no misgivings of any kind entered into my thoughts, no fears of how Mr. Allworthy might receive his wife, nor any doubts about the wisdom of the course I was taking. Miss Charlotte's maid was very fond of Miss Nelly, and readily undertook the charge of her, gladly giving up to me any preparation of her mistress's things that might be necessary. There was but little to be done, for Miss Charlotte had cared nothing about her dress or appearance these desolate years, and had never left off the deep mourning she wore for her lost daughter. This had been one subject of dispute between her and her husband. A year after my dear mistress's death, he had asked her to put away the heavy black dresses she had worn for so long, and she had refused. Now I wanted her return to be as perfect a signal for reconciliation as was possible, so I wrote to London for some pale grey silk, not light enough to shock her feelings by too sudden a change, yet sufficiently so to show that she was no longer in mourning; and when it came I sat and worked at it with great satisfaction, and as its shining folds lay on my lap I pleased myself with thinking that it was something more than a silk gown I was taking such pleasure in, and that it would be a token of submission—a bond of union between the husband and wife.

Well, the day came when all was ready, and I told her in the evening that if she liked we would start the next day. I knew that she had been expecting and waiting for this summons, and a look of relief passed over her face as I spoke. Still she said very little—only a few vague words about the weather and the time for starting, and then put her arms suddenly round Miss Nelly, and kissed her passionately till the gentle child looked at me half frightened. Poor Miss Charlotte! She had such a deep hunger for affection, and yet she had cast away all that God had given her.

The next morning I brought the delicate, bright dress I had such pride in into Miss Charlotte's room, with some fear and trembling, and as I laid it on a chair where the sun caught its lustre, I saw her cheeks redden for a moment, and her eyes light up with anger and glance at me; but the look and the colour both faded away as suddenly as they had come, and she let me put on the dress without a word.

We set out that day, and it was not till after some hours that I found out how very weak Mrs. Allworthy really was. She was quite exhausted by noon, and we were obliged to stop and sleep at the town where we had only intended dining. A dreadful thought came into my mind—that I was only taking her home to die. But she seemed very much revived by her night's rest, and I went on with a lighter heart. As we drew near the country round Allworthy Court a faint colour came into her face, and she sat upright and looked from the carriage window with something like eagerness. If you had ever known what it was to watch a face for long which had no expression in it, or rather a mask of indifference, which you know perfectly to be a mask all the time, you would understand the relief this change was to me.

"Miss Charlotte," I said, as we drove into a village, "we can stop here. It looks pretty and quiet, and the air feels sweet and soft. I am sure I could make you comfortable."

"No, no," she replied, eagerly and feverishly; "let us go on. I can't stop—you don't mean that I should;" and she looked at me with eyes which had an imploring prayer in them.

I said nothing more, but we went on silently. It was four o'clock in the afternoon as we drove into Allworthy Village. We had still a mile to go before we got to the Court, which lay back from the road, up a lane planted on each side with firs and cedars.

The sun was a little less powerful than it

had been during the day, but still the shade from the noble old trees, as we turned off from the glaring highroad, was very grateful. I remember it now. There was a high wall on one side of this lane, and over the wall the fir-trees stretched their great red arms straight across the road, the sunlight catching them now and then, and making them gleam like gold. Then came cedars, such as I have never seen before or since—grand, stately, and foreign-looking. And so we drove on; the sunshine gleaming between the boughs and falling on the road in bright patches, the birds singing, and Miss Charlotte sitting straight up, looking out of the window, her colour rising higher and higher. At length we stopped at the gate, and drove up to the house.

We stopped at the door. The bell was rung and sounded loud and portentous, I thought, through the house. I was nervous now, and when a large house-dog darted out the full length of his chain, and barked furiously at the sound, I started violently. The man-servant who opened the door was evidently a stranger, and in answer to my question, said that his master was out walking, but would be in shortly. He stared in surprise when we got out, and began to superintend the taking out of the luggage, but civilly asked our names. The question rather puzzled me, but Miss Charlotte answered for me in a clear, decided voice, "Mrs. Allworthy;" and the man's face brightened into comprehension directly, as I could see by the curious glances he cast at her from under his eyes, as he ushered us into a cool, dark room which I took to be the library. When we were left alone I ventured to look at Miss Charlotte. To tell the truth, I began to be afraid that now she might be angry with me for my bold venture; for you must recollect that I had never yet said a word about bringing her home, and she might have taxed me with inveigling her there under false pretences. A year or two before she would have done so; and when I looked at her, I could hardly feel glad at the change, though I knew it was really for the better. Her sunken colour had all gone, and her cheeks looked so like death in their pallor, that I went to her in alarm. She recovered herself a little when she saw my fright, and said faintly—

"Hannah, I don't think I can bear to see him yet. Supposing he should not—he might be as altered in feelings as I am in person."

"Miss Charlotte, don't think so!" I cried, "don't have such a thought! He will be too glad and happy; I would answer for it with my life! And you, now you are once





"MISS CHARLOTTE'S PRIDE"

more here, where you ought to be, you will be as happy as he."

She shook her head and answered—

"I have been very wicked, and I will try and do my duty now; but there is not much happiness left me in this world, Hannah."

I shuddered at the ominous words, and felt them in my heart to be true, though I tried vehemently to disbelieve them. I wanted to remove Miss Charlotte's bonnet and cloak, and make her more comfortable, but she would not let me, and sat in the same position, till voices sounded outside, and the door opened to admit Mr. Allworthy.

He came into the room, and walked straight up to his wife. He was altered, and for the worse. In those days hard drinking was not thought the sin it is now, and Mr. Allworthy, I was sure, had got into the habit of taking more than was good for him. I saw it in his face. He walked up to his wife with a smile, but not a pleasant one, as his smiles used to be. He looked down at her as she sat drooping in the chair I had placed for her, and spoke cruel words.

"So you think you may come and go as you like here, Mrs. Allworthy. You are mistaken."

Miss Charlotte gave a start, and looked up at him.

"You are mistaken," he repeated, in a louder tone; "mistaken! Do you understand?"

Her pride had all deserted her, indeed, for instead of getting up on the instant to go, as I expected, she only said in a sort of murmur:

"Oh, George, George, forgive me! I shan't trouble you long."

Mr. Allworthy looked awkward and uneasy at this appeal, and turned to me.

"Have you aided and abetted my wife in this fine scheme of coming to work on my feelings, now that she has got tired of her solitude and wants a change?"

"Yes, sir," I replied. "I saw that she was pining her life out to come back, and could not bring herself to say the word, and I brought her home. I thought you would surely welcome her; but since you do not, I can but take her away again, and then it will be true that she won't trouble you long."

I spoke bitterly, for though I see now that Mr. Allworthy's anger was only natural, I then thought only of her—of the struggle it had been for her to take the step, of the humility of her present conduct, of her failing health and wounded heart. As I thought this, I looked at her husband and forgot that he had been deeply injured, and that his easy

nature had been tried too long to forgive readily now. A deeper colour came into his ruddy cheeks as I spoke.

"She has troubled me with very little of her company for some time past," he said.

I had drawn a little aside from Miss Charlotte's chair as I spoke, and now I turned round at a slight movement, a long sigh from her, and saw that she was fainting. The deadly struggle of feeling that must have been going on within her—shame, disappointment, yearning regret, and remorse, each of these singly was enough to overcome her weak frame, and together they rent her with an agony which was like death. When Mr. Allworthy saw her unconscious, wasted face, so different from the proud, handsome one he had seen last, he seemed moved, and went to her to raise her. But I prevented him. She had sinned grievously, but he might have been more pitiful.

"I will take her to the carriage, sir," I said. "The sooner she gets back to die, the better."

"Nonsense, nonsense, my good woman!" said Mr. Allworthy uneasily. "Who talks of dying? I'm not going to send her off in this state. I'm not a brute. Ring for the housekeeper to take her up-stairs. Bless my soul! she is altered a good deal, poor thing!"

I did as I was bid, and we carried her away, still insensible, and laid her on a bed, where she woke to consciousness with a violent fit of coughing, which left her too exhausted to speak. I watched the night by her; and this was how the repentant wife returned to her home. There was no question of her leaving again; she was too ill for that; and her husband always treated her kindly; but what are such words, after all, for a husband and wife? I could not stay on account of my children, whom I could no longer leave; but Miss Ann went down, and from her I learnt all that happened, and the end. How Miss Charlotte languished gradually, and how her husband used to visit her sick-room daily, and spend the rest of his time with his companions, some of whom were not such as Miss Ann could associate with.

I should hardly have told you such a tale as this if it had not been for a warning. Never marry a man for anything but true love and honour, and never let rebellious pride take possession of your hearts and harden you. These two things together eat into Miss Charlotte's heart, poisoned her life, saddened that of her only child, harmed her husband, body and soul, and brought her at length to an early grave.

A GHOST STORY.



HE had sat for two hours in the snug, brown coffee-room of the Four Swans, Norham, and had ordered nothing, not even a bedroom or a cup of coffee. All in vain had the honest old waiter bustled in and out stirring the fire, and flicking crumbs from the table. He had only brought himself to the conclusion that this strange guest was "a queer sort," especially for a Christmas Eve.

In fact, they of the Four Swans were not much used to strangers of any sort. They had a quiet, steady-going connection in Norham itself. Three or four trade clubs held their meetings there, and the six or seven bedrooms of the establishment were kept in just the state of order and comfort which suited the individuality of the six or seven "commercial gentlemen" who, when on Norham business, had patronised the Four Swans for the last twenty or thirty years. If ever a stranger appeared, it was generally with some such introduction as this: "Landlord, Mr. Dash, of Blank, told me you would give me good quarters for a day, or for a week," as the case might be. Indeed, the Four Swans, had, as it were, hidden itself from all chance-comers, for it was situated in a quiet corner of a very quiet street, down which nobody would think of turning unless he knew something of it beforehand; and altogether, with its interior of brown panelling, its wealth of quaint and grotesque ornaments, its red-tiled verandah, and its communicative confidential old servants, the Four Swans was an excellent type of those honest, homely hostels which are fast being "improved" from the face of the earth.

The gentleman in the coffee-room did not notice that he had done an odd thing by coming in without a word, and remaining without an order. Perhaps he had other things to

think about. He was a tall, middle-aged man, with a good deal of hair upon his face; and, though he was unmistakably well-dressed, he had that indefinite air which most men carry who at any period of their lives have "knocked about" in ships and colonies, in canvas suits and corduroys.

He had come in about five o'clock, and six o'clock struck, and seven, and it was within two minutes of eight, when an old Norham townsman came in to look over the papers. To the intense satisfaction of the waiter, that effectually roused the stranger. But so slowly—like the awakening from a long, enchanted sleep. And so it had been, an enchanted sleep haunted by a dream of five-and-twenty years ago.

"I want to stay here for the night, waiter," he said abruptly. "Any comfortable sort of bedroom will suit me. And bring me some tea and toast."

The waiter was alert. "There's a little private room off here, sir," he said, throwing open a door. "I'll set your tray there, it's more retired like than this."

The gentleman followed as invited. It was a square closet, with two or three stuffed chairs, a polished round table, and a dull oil painting over the mantel. That was all that would strike any strange eye. But the gentleman walked straight to a panel beside the fireplace, and peered at it. Under the slow discoloration and many washings of a long time, there was still visible a slight dashing pen-and-ink sketch of an old man, with a long nose and goggle spectacles.

"Dear me, sir, you've got quick eyes to find that out directly," said the chatty old waiter. "Clever, isn't it? A young daredevil he was that did it, and that was a portrait of the London detective that had come down to take him off to prison. His last meal in Norham he ate in this here room, sir, and a rare lot of ham and eggs he did get through, sir, and never minded a bit that the policemen was a-watching of him."

The gentleman said not one word.

"He's queerer than ever," confided the waiter to the old cook, as he received the tea and toast from her hands. "I began to tell him about young Rogerson, but he did not listen a bit, did not even ask if he was hanged or anything. It's like taking a meal to a ghost, that it is."

"You might do better than poke up old stories about as bad a young scamp as ever

lived to disgrace a honest family," retorted the old cook, who was sharp in her temper; "and as to ghosts, there's plenty o' ghosts everywhere, for them as has sense to see 'em, Peter, but I don't think *you* need be afear'd."

Meanwhile another Norham tradesman had dropped into the coffee-room, and Peter, in the intervals of his attendance, came out and chatted with them in a cheerful equality, wherein the sole line of social distinction lay in his remaining standing while they were seated.

"Real Christmas weather this," said Mr. Johnston.

"But Norham's very dull," answered Mr. Lee.

"They're a dead-and-alive set of people, now, the Norhamites," said Mr. Johnston, who was one himself, and would allow nobody else to abuse them. "It used to be different in my young days. I remember it quite gay, what with the oxen roasting to be given in charity, and the puddings boiling for the same, and everybody that was anyways connected with the Church—and everybody seemed to be in those days—invited to tea in the Town-hall. And usedn't there to be fine carol-singing through the streets. And rare Christmas sermons he used to preach, the old rector that was, in my young days."

"Ah, that was Mr. Rogerson," put in Peter, directing his thumb toward the open door. "I've just been showing that gent that bit of an old sketch up agen the wall. He broke the good old gentleman's heart, that young scamp did."

"Ah, yes, and did a deal of harm to Norham every way," pursued Mr. Johnston, "we've never had a lively Christmas since; I remember the first after his going off. What could people do when they knew there was nothing but misery in the rectory house? The town just kept as quiet as ever it could, and it couldn't do less every Christmas after, during the old rector's days. And so it got out of the good old ways."

"Poor young Rogerson," said old Mr. Lee. "I used to think there was something good in the young fellow, for all his wildness, and I always hoped he'd right himself, till he went and did that wickedness that set man against him as well as God."

"I don't know about good or not," persisted Mr. Johnston, "but I know that it took years and years before his sister Mary looked up again. Only at last, as time began to thicken over the tender spots o' grief and shame, she took kind of heart. Says she

once to my dear wife that's dead, 'Mrs. Johnston, our poor Dick was the child of many prayers, and I've faith God will keep hold of him.' And then she took fancies that he was dead. And I noticed she was happier-like after that—just as one breathes freer in a house after the dearest corpse is buried. As for poor Tom Rogerson, his brother ruined him for this life, anyway. Maybe, he needn't, but poor Mr. Tom was awful proud and sensitive. Miss Mary, she told my wife that her brother Tom said he'd never ask people to trust him, because he couldn't expect they would, after his brother's ways, and he wouldn't lay himself open to be half-trusted, and watched, and suspected all the time. And so, he that was so clever, stayed a poor under-clerk all the rest of his days, and has left his poor widow just to struggle on and get what places she can for her boys. Such a pretty dainty miss as she used to be, and now she's wearing an old rusty silk that's been turned and turned till she's forgotten which is its real right side. 'I should think what their uncle did won't go against my sons, Mr. Johnston,' she said only the other day. 'Bless you, Mrs. Tom,' says I, 'half the town-people are new since then.' 'I'm always so afraid he'll come back,' says she; 'I'm sure I don't wish him not to repent,' says she, 'I always hoped he would—but I can't help thinking of my own, and for their sakes, I'd rather he never come back.' 'The more penitent he is, the more he'll stay away, ma'am,' says I; 'it isn't as if the whole story was above-ground still, and he'd only got to be forgiven and all would go well, but there's some that's dead that died in wrath and bitterness with others for his sake. Look at poor old Mrs. Rogerson,—how she turned against Mr. Tom, good, dutiful son as he was, because he wouldn't stay by Mr. Dick through thick and thin, and defend him as if he were innocent. Poor dear old lady, she knows better where she's been this many a day; but Mr. Dick had better wait to ask your forgiveness till he can ask hers too. You forgive him, ma'am,' says I, 'and that's enough for you, but I maintain that he'd have no right to come disturbing your mind to ease his own.'"

"There was one that would have been glad to see him, had he returned in ever such shame and misery," said kindly old Mr. Lee.

"Ay, ay," chimed Peter; "I know who you mean. You know she was on the charity school committee, and when the 'lection board met here, she always just stepped in yonder and took a look at that rum picture

on the wall. She never thought I saw her. She never thought nobody was looking at her. My old woman says she always walked regular among them green avenues by the old abbey, where she used to walk with Mr. Dick when he was courting of her. Maybe, she thought he'd be sure to go there if ever he'd comed back."

At that instant the stranger came suddenly out of the brown closet, crossed the coffee-room, left the house, and walked up the street towards the main quarter of the town.

Quaint old Norham! The winter moonlight lay clear and cold on its ancient cathedral, standing in its spacious square of sombre, stately houses. The stranger stood still and gazed upon it.

That stranger knew a little boy who had attended many a service in that cathedral—awed by its sweet music, wondering at its white-robed choristers. That little boy had known every face on the quaint gargoyles of the ancient chapter-house, and with child-like familiarity he had given a name to each one of those contorted countenances. That little boy, muffled in black weepers, had stood beside an open grave right under the great west window, and listened to the funeral service over a little sister. The stranger went to seek that little grave—went straight to it without one mistaken step. But it is not a little grave any more, for under the name of "Amy Rogerson, aged four," is written, "Also the Rev. Richard Rogerson, father of the above, aged seventy. Also his wife Amelia, aged sixty-nine. Also their son Thomas, aged forty-eight."

Oh, little sister, who went so long before, how much did you know of earth while you were growing up in heaven? Was not your father very glad on the day when he entered rest and joined the folded lamb of happier times? Oh, little sister, is there any look on the face of an angel, whose human heart was broken?

The stranger stood still by that household tomb, and looked around. There was another grave which that little boy had known—the family grave of that little boy's playfellows, the Herons. But the stranger knew that he could not find that grave in the twilight, though he could have found the way to their house in the utter darkness!

He crossed the Cathedral Square, and issued out on Norham High Street. The shops were very bright with Christmas goods, and busy with Christmas trade.

There was a little, thin, sharp-looking widow, with a boy on one side and a girl on

the other, gazing intently into the best draper's shop. The stranger stood still when he first saw them, and then he went up softly and stood behind them.

"It's no good wasting our time, Margey," said the mother, "for we can't afford to buy anything."

"But looking doesn't spend, mamma," pleaded Margey, "and I'd like to plan what I'd give you if I could, mamma, and to choose what I should like you to give me. There, you should have that beautiful thick black silk, and it should be made with one deep flounce like the mayor's wife's, and you should have that soft grey shawl to wear with it. And I would have two of those merinos—a dark brown for everyday, and an olive green for Sundays, and one of those neat, plain black-cloth jackets. And there's Tom gone off to look at the watches. Tom is going to save sixpence a week to buy one, mamma; but won't it take a long time?"

"Ah, I wish I could give you children pleasant surprises," said mamma wistfully. "I was so fond of that kind of tricks once upon a time."

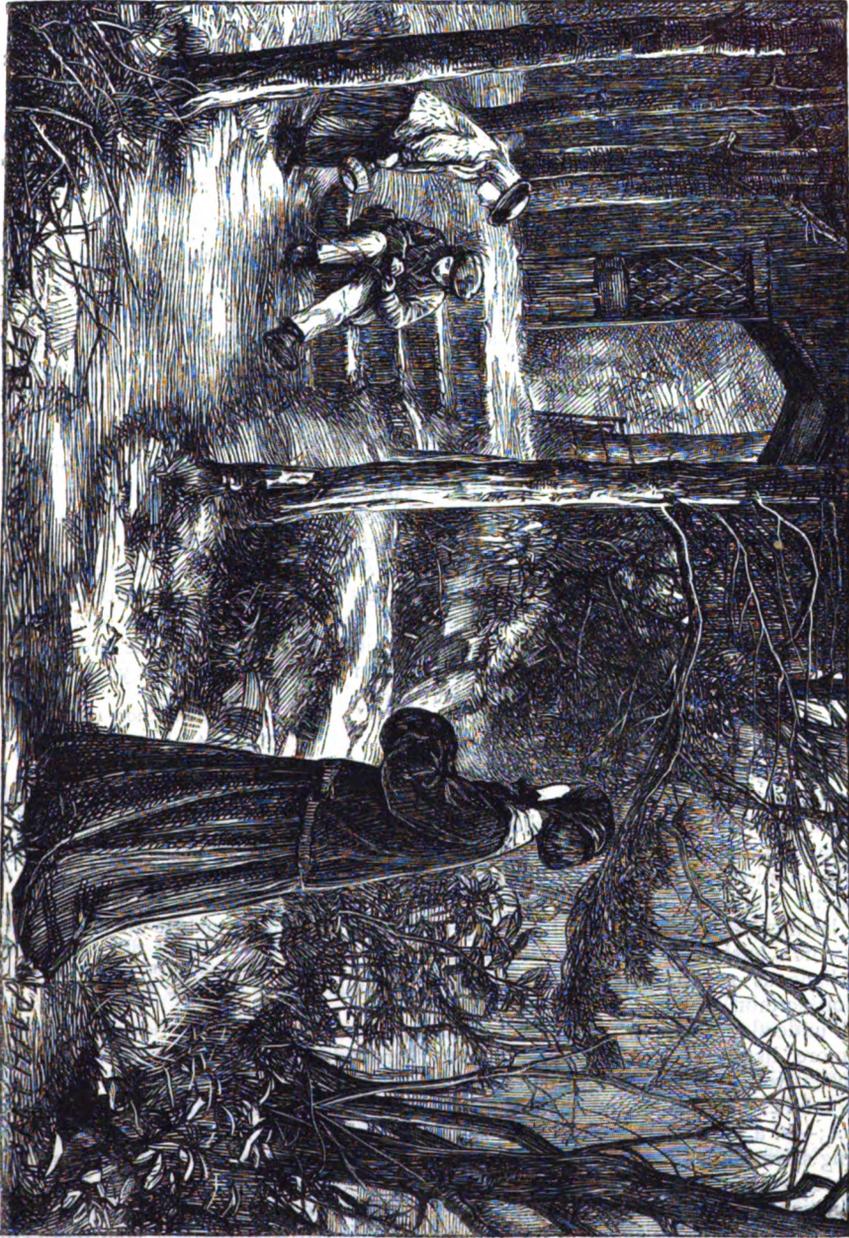
"And so you are still, mammy dear," Margey replied, pressing fondly to her. "Isn't it always a pleasant surprise when you make us a fig-pudding? I'm sure we are very happy, and I won't talk any more of my nonsense if it worries you."

Then the little group passed on; and the tall stranger followed them out of the glare of the gaslight into a small by-way, where they entered a house with "Mrs. T. Rogerson's day-school for young ladies," written on the door. Then he went back to the High Street, and that same night a large parcel from the drapers came "for Mrs. Rogerson and Miss Margery," and a little packet from the jeweller's, for "Master Tom Rogerson."

"Everything we wanted," sighed Margery happily. "I only hope they are real. How *could* they have come? The shop-people say they were ordered by a tall dark gentleman, very pale. I wish mamma would let us believe in ghosts, and then we could understand it easily, for that description is like dear papa. But I never did hear of any ghost that had money. I wonder what Aunt Mary will say when she comes to-morrow!"

The stranger went back to the Four Swans. Next morning he went to the cathedral, and stole into a shady corner to take part in the service. The sharp little widow came in, looking sweeter and happier than would have seemed possible the night before. Beside

"She always walked regular among them avenues by the old abbey." ..



Margery and Tom, she had a lady with her—an elderly, fragile-looking lady, with one of those pale, fair faces, that look as if perfect repose was their only remaining atmosphere of life, and any jarring element, even of joy, would shake and rend the tender spirit from its feeble dwelling. A face bright with spiritual joy, and pleasant fancies and sentiments. God often sends pleasant fancies to those pure but weakly souls that could never rise to create and grasp pleasant facts. What are such fancies but the dainty aroma of the royal feast awaiting them in their Father's mansion?

Lowly kneeled the stranger through the old familiar prayers. He sat leaning forwards with his face in his hands, while the white-stoled choir chanted the glorious anthem—"Glory be to God in the Highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men."

Then he came out, silently, among the crowd of worshippers. People were exchanging good wishes with each other—actually Peter, the old waiter, saluted even him with "a merry Christmas."

A merry Christmas!

The stranger stayed and wandered among the graves. There was a world of silent memory seething in his heart. Beside that vision of the little boy, listening awe-struck to the choir, there were others of a young man, vain, extravagant, selfish, counting as of nought, or of little value, all the love and pride and household joy which looked so very fair from this point of view, this lonely wandering among the dead! More pictures still. Of a young man, reckless and cruel in his sins, full of that bravado which dares God and good men out of fear of the devil and his minions;—of the ghastly horrors of a convict ship;—of a shunned man on a wild, lawless shore—the prodigal feeding on the swine's husks. Then of a little rough, miscellaneous group, listening to a simple mission sermon, which even "black fellows" could understand, and which, perhaps, was the more likely to touch the white men, because it was so like what they had heard at their mother's knee, or in their Sabbath-school;—of a hard heart broken, of a sinner seeking salvation, as men dying of thirst seek for water-springs. And then the sweet household instincts, dried and dead under the forgetfulness of God, stirring again in the remembrance of Him, and the return to his ways. O God! such longings for a comforting word in the old familiar voices—such dreams of atonement and reconciliation!

All these memories between that little boy

and this strange, silent man, whom nobody knew.

Was there any long-tried servant of God in Norham that afternoon, poor, humble, stricken, and tempted to think that God in his mercy forgets his justice, and tears the moral from the page which He purifies with his pardoning blood? Or was there any heedless young sinner, flattering himself that he will repent in time, and that then all will be as if he had never sinned? Could either have read the secrets of that silent wanderer, each would have got a lesson never to be forgotten.

"How can I bear it?" he said within himself. "I wanted to hear the divine love and forgiveness in a dear human voice; but I must not tear open old wounds, that are healed as much as such wounds can ever heal. It is just. They cannot forget. My life lies among theirs like a waste field, whence noxious weeds creep into other people's gardens. Will God himself forget? How can I bear even his pardon, if his eye is fixed ever on the sins that hang about my neck? And yet, O God, though thou slayest me, yet will I trust in thee."

And so he made his way among the long grass to a square, old-fashioned grave—with all the names on it very old, except one, which, with its remarkable epitaph, had only been written the very last year.

To the memory of
BARBARA HERON,

Aged 47,

who expressly desired that these words of God should be written on her grave for the comfort of whoever should come here, repentant and sorrow-stricken.

"Who is a God like unto Thee? . . . Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.

"For the Lord shall comfort Zion: He will comfort all her waste places, and He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord: joy and gladness shall be found therein: thanksgiving and the voice of melody."

And the stranger bowed himself to the ground, as if he had heard an angel's voice. Perhaps he did. Here was the love—type of that heavenly love that he was wildly clutching in a faith that was half despair!—the love that survived sin, and suffering, and death, and stretched a hand to save and soothe from the very grave itself.

Oh, Barbara, Barbara, your tenderness had taught you to lay sweet snares for every possible opportunity! Oh, Barbara, Barbara! surely God must have comforted you in your lonely walkings in those green avenues by the ruined abbey. He did not empty your

pure heart of its earthly love, but He dropped into it a balm which changed its bitterness to celestial nectar. Up in heaven, where you are, Barbara, there is only joy over the returning sinner!

And still the stranger sat on the damp winter sod, with his face between his hands. He was not wishing her back, the dear love of his youth. Better where she was, where no mortal soil could ever touch that great love, which was long enough, and strong enough, to stretch from heaven to earth. Only there he sat, shutting out from his eyes the sweet, peaceful scenes around him, even as they must be shut from his life, and seeing far beyond the "waste places" and "wilderness" that his own sins had made, into that joyful country where "the ransomed of the Lord shall return," where "they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

That night the stranger walked again in front of that lowly house in the quiet by-way. Christmas savours came through the kitchen window, bright light gleamed between the curtains, even sounds of glad young laughter and merry song reached the lonely

watcher without. And he could thank God for them now. He could even smile in sympathy with the joy he might not share. He had his own.

In that lowly house, after supper, when the young ones were quiet round the fire, cracking nuts and asking riddles, Aunt Mary fell into a soft sleep on the sofa. They saw her smile in her slumber, and when she woke she told them in her subdued, pathetic little voice, that she had been dreaming of poor Uncle Dick: she saw him with dear Barbara Heron, and Barbara looked so happy! "And even in my sleep, dears," she said, "I wondered within myself, were we all on earth still, or all safe together in heaven?"

It must have been about that time that the stranger left Norham by the midnight mail-train. He stood up in the carriage, and stretched out his head till the last spire of Norham Cathedral was lost in the darkness. But even he had gotten his Christmas blessing ere he departed—the prodigal son had found his royal feast—heavenly peace and human love.

"He came and he went like a ghost," said old Peter, at the Four Swans.

PAYING BILL HARDING.

I.

"A MERRY Christmas, tather!"

The speaker of the greeting was a little girl of about six years of age. Her face was wan and hunger-pinched, and had something of a careworn expression upon it. This, and the circumstance of her clothes being poor, ill-fitting, and evidently the "cast-offs" of some bigger and older child, gave her an old-fashioned air—an air such as is often seen in the children of the poor, and is in many instances really accompanied by the premature knowledge of the world which it is generally supposed to indicate. Yet Maggie Johnson, as she wished her father a merry Christmas, was both a pretty and a *childish* child. The prettiness was visible enough in her beautiful blue eyes, soft silky brown hair, small rosy mouth, and delicately rounded chin, in which the dimples had not yet been *quite* starved out; while in the prattling tone of her voice, and the smile with which she looked up in her father's face as she spoke, could easily be read the childish *naïveté* proper to her years.

"A merry Christmas, father," she repeated when, after a minute's silence, he had made no answer. "You know this is Christmas morning; hear the bells. Didn't you hear Lizzie Smith and me singing about it yesterday morning, you know?"

'Some did whistle and some did sing,
And all the bells on earth did ring,
On Christmas-day in the morning.'

"Oh, I know it is Christmas-day, Maggie," he said, when she had finished her snatch of song.

"Then why don't you say, 'The same to you?' that is what people say when others wish them a merry Christmas."

"And who told you that, Maggie?" said the father, faintly smiling.

"Oh, I know," she answered briskly; "we were playing at Christmas-parties in the court yesterday. Johnny Rogers was father, and Jane Jones mother, and Lizzie Smith and me were two of the ladies that came to see them, and that was what Johnny told us to say, and he knows. He's eleven, and he's in the second class at school, and he's going to

work soon, and then he's to have threepence out of his wages to hissself every Saturday."

She seemed to warm with her subject, and prattled on with breathless volubility up to this point, when, as if suddenly remembering herself, she paused, and, in an altered tone, exclaimed—

"Oh, but you haven't said it yet! Now I'll say mine again, and then you say it—'A merry Christmas, father.'"

"The same to you," he answered; and then, in an undertone and stroking her hair as he spoke, he added, "and if wishing could give it, you *should* have a merry Christmas. It is hard that you should suffer like this, for you are a good, patient little soul."

Without exactly understanding the purport of what he said, she divined that it was something of love to her—something of implied reproach to himself; and as he spoke she came nestling to his side, and pressed her tiny hand upon his as if to assure him of her affection. He put his arm round her, and with a forced playfulness of tone, asked—

"Do you like Christmas to come, Maggie?"

"All but its being cold I do," she answered; "because I can go and see the shops dressed up and all the nice things in the windows."

"And that is about your share of them, my poor little Maggie," he said, stooping and kissing her. "You deserve better," he went on, in a low musing tone, "both you and your mother, and perhaps better times will come. We have had a hard lot of it of late, but I won't believe that Providence has deserted us for all that. Things can't well be worse with us, and they say that when they get to that stage they mend; perhaps the turn in our long lane of sorrow is not far off, though we can't see it."

As he finished speaking the sound of children's voices was heard outside, and, taking his arm from round her, he said—

"There are your little playmates, Maggie; you had better go and join them for awhile."

"Yes, I'll go till mother comes home," she said; and then she ran out, leaving her father alone in their miserable room.

A miserable room indeed it was! A small second-floor room in an over-crowded court in a densely-populated metropolitan suburb. A room, which was scarcely large enough for a bedroom for a single person, but which had, nevertheless, to serve George Johnson and his wife and child as living and sleeping apartment. The furniture consisted of an old wooden bedstead, but scantily supplied with bedding, two battered chairs,

and a box, that served as a table. There was no fire, and only part of a half-quartern loaf in the cupboard in the shape of food. The tenant was in keeping with the apartment. Thin, sickly-looking, haggard, poorly clad, and shrivelled with cold, he appeared a truly wretched being. You could see that he had been severely ill, that he was still suffering from the weakness consequent on a long sickness; and you could see, too, that he had endured, and was still enduring mental as well as bodily sickness—the sickness of heart which comes of hope deferred, till hopefulness is crushed, and despair and bitterness take possession of the mind. He was only thirty years old, and six months before he had scarcely looked his age; but now he appeared more than middle-aged, as well as thoroughly unhappy. He had been in the employ of a large building firm, as an assistant timekeeper, at a payment that had been barely sufficient for the decent maintenance of himself and family; so that when the evil day came upon him it found him but ill-prepared. He had been taking the time of men engaged upon outdoor work, had got wet, gone about in his damp clothes, and as a result had an attack of rheumatic fever. For four months he had been confined to his bed, and, even during the two following months, he had been much fitter to be still in it, than wandering about London—as he had been doing—looking for work. He had looked in vain, and had suffered all the heart-break and depression incidental to such a disappointment. Where he had last worked he found that his place knew him no more. His physical weakness was evident, foremen could look at none but business considerations; and the domestic needs of an assistant timekeeper, or the fact of his having incurred his illness in their employ, were not regarded as matter to be brought under the notice of the principals. His debilitated appearance of course told still more heavily against him at other places, and his weakness seemed likely to be increased rather than diminished as time went on; since the nourishment, which, on the subsiding of the disease, the doctor had said was all that was wanted to put him right again, was beyond his reach. In the early stages of his illness, when constant nursing was necessary, household goods had been sold to pay household expenses, and the little that the wife had latterly been able to earn as a charwoman, had barely sufficed to keep body

and soul together in the family. On this Christmas-day she was out assisting in a gentleman's kitchen, and Johnson, left to brood alone, felt all the more unhappy, by reason of its being the "festive season."

II.

But if he was "sad and alone," so were not his next-door neighbours. To them Christmas had brought the good cheer with which it is proverbially associated. In the kitchen the wife was attending to the cooking of a substantial dinner; while round the bright fire in the little parlour sat those who formed the Christmas party of the family. This circle consisted of the husband, a son about sixteen, a brother of the wife's, with his wife, and an old friend of the family named Harding, who had unexpectedly come among them. He was mate of an Australian trading-vessel, and had only arrived in port that morning. His own family were in Liverpool; and, being compelled to stay in London for a day or two, he had looked up these friends, and accepted their invitation to join their party. His sea-going adventures were the chief topic of discourse, and yet he took a modest share in the conversation; for, though he freely and cheerily answered the questions showered upon him from all sides, he never thrust himself forward; and while he laughed at the ignorance about nautical matters that some of the queries made manifest, it was so good-humouredly, and with such a pleasant look upon his comely, weather-bronzed face, that the blunderers laughed as heartily as he.

"Why, let me see, Bill," said the host, "it's over nine years since I saw you last. You were just married then, I remember; I suppose you have a family now?"

"Two—a boy and a girl," was the answer.

"And you have been doing pretty well in the meantime," said the other, not questioning, but as making a general remark upon what his friend had been telling him.

"Yes, I'm thankful to say I have," the sailor answered; "I've been very fortunate in never wanting a ship, and if a fellow may be allowed to say a word for himself, I may add that I have been very careful of what I've earned."

"I thought sailors always spent their money when they got on shore," said one of the others.

"Many of them do, more's the pity!" exclaimed Harding; "but there are more that don't, especially the married ones—that is, when they are happily married. Like

other men, they sometimes get hard bargains in the way of wives, and when they do, I'm afraid that helps on any inclination to recklessness there may be. But when you have got a good wife, and children that you love,—as I do mine, bless them,—why then, however far away you may be, you never feel really separated from them. As an old ship-mate of mine used to say whenever he was asked to drink, or anything of that sort, 'No, no, mates! That will never get the child a frock.' Wild Jack-a-shore-ism may be made to seem fine in a nautical novel, but it is a very bad thing for Jack in real life, and a still worse thing for his wife and family. There though!" he exclaimed, pulling himself up, "I'm spinning a yarn; but speaking of the wife and youngsters always does set my tongue on the run."

"It couldn't run on a better subject," said his hostess, who at that moment came into the room to lay the cloth.

In this remark the company generally agreed, and then the bustle attending the setting out of the dinner put an end to conversation until they were seated round the table. The host carved a piece of prime roast beef, which was the chief feature of the meal. When he had served plates to the number of the guests, he was about to put down his knife and fork, when his wife quietly said—

"One more, you know."

"No, there are——"

"For Johnson," she interrupted.

"Oh!" he exclaimed, "I was forgetting him, and his wife away from home to-day too. A next-door neighbour of ours," he went on, addressing himself to Harding, who had looked up with an expression of curiosity. "He has had a hard time of it lately. He was laid up for four months with rheumatic fever, and it has left him neither fit to work, nor able to get the kind of living that would make him fit. It's a thousand pities; he's a decent, steady fellow."

He had cut a good plate of the beef while talking, and now handed it to his wife, who, having added vegetables, went to the door and called to Maggie Johnson, who was playing outside. The child came forward readily enough, but on seeing so many strangers hung back shyly. Noticing this, Harding, who was seated near the door, drew her to his side, and, stroking her hair, said—

"You mustn't be frightened, dear. None of us would hurt a pretty little girl like you—do you think I would, now?"

She looked up in his face, timidly for a

moment, but, after the first glance, confidently, and breaking into a smile answered—

"No, sir."

"No, that I wouldn't," he said; "I have a little girl like you, and I like all little girls for her sake. And so your name is Maggie?"

"Yes; Maggie Johnson."

"Well, and if you had a penny, Maggie, what would you do with it?"

"Give it to my mother."

"Ay, that's a good girl; but I don't mean a penny to save up, but to spend, you know, —what would you do with that?"

"Buy a cake."

"That's right," he said, taking a penny out of his pocket and giving it to her. "And now will you give me a kiss?"

Without speaking she held up her face to his.

"That's a little lady," he said, kissing her; "and now I think my friend here has something to say to you."

"Do you think you can take this to your father," said the wife, who had been putting a dish-cover over the plate, and wrapping the whole in a cloth. "That's a clever girl," she went on, as Maggie took it from her; "give it to him, and say we just wanted him to taste a bit of our Christmas dinner. And Maggie," she concluded, as the child was passing out, "when I knock on the wall, just come in again, I shall want you."

When the plum-pudding came upon the table, the knock on the wall was given, and, Maggie promptly answering, a share was sent in for her father and her.

After dinner, the party again drew round the fire and engaged in friendly chat. The parlour was small, the weather, for the time of year, close and muggy, and presently Harding, suiting the action to the word, said that he would take a turn on the door-step, as he felt hot. The reason he assigned was not, however, the only one that prompted him to go out. He had heard the sound of Maggie Johnson in talk with a man, and, guessing that it would be her father, had gone out to get a look at him. Johnson was standing on the step, while his little daughter was on the pavement prattling to him. As soon as Harding came out, Maggie recognised him, and greeted him with a smile.

"Good day," he said, nodding to Johnson; "you see Maggie and I have been making friends; she is a pretty child."

"And she's a good one too," said the father, patting her head.

"Well, I hope so," said Harding, smiling, "for she puts me very much in mind of my

own little girl. My friends here," he went on, stepping up to Johnson, "tell me you have had a long illness. I see it has given you a shake—rheumatics, wasn't it?"

"Yes."

"And a terrible bad thing too."

"It has been a terrible bad thing for me," said Johnson, his lip quivering as he spoke. "I'm not churlish, sir; Maggie told me how kindly you took notice of her. I wouldn't keep you standing at the door, but I haven't a place fit to ask you into."

"I know the havoc a long sickness makes in a poor man's home," said Harding in a graver tone than he had previously spoken in; "and I'm sorry yours has suffered in that way; but as to myself, I hope you don't think I look like a fellow to stand upon ceremony on my own account. Not, understand me," he added smiling, "that I am trying to invite myself into your home."

"No; mine is not the sort of home that people seek to invite themselves to," said Johnson; "only if it had been a little less miserable, I would liked to have asked you in for a few minutes; you—you—"

He stopped abruptly, overcome by rising feelings that were too much for him in his weakened condition.

Harding perceived how it was with him, and at once exclaimed—

"Try and keep your heart up, better days will come! I know these severe illnesses leave a man out of nerve. If you think I'll be company to you for a while, I'll come in and yarn a bit with all the pleasure in the world. Just let the little lady here pass the word to my friends, to keep them from wondering where I have got to."

Maggie went with the message, and then the two ascended into Johnson's apartment.

"I had the whole of this floor before my illness," said Johnson, as Harding seated himself on a corner of the box; "but this place is all I have now. However, you'll find room enough; the furniture don't take up much of it."

"Ah, well," said Harding, "I suppose, in the storms of life as in others, we must sometimes lighten the ship to keep her afloat at all; but don't be dispirited, the storm will pass, and you'll be able to refit."

The sailor's cheery and sympathetic tone soon overcame Johnson's bitterness, and he told him all the story of his troubles—told it him more fully as regarded his mental sufferings than he had ever told it to another.

"Well, I do believe that heart-sickness is the worst of all sickness," said Harding when the other had finished; "but at the same

time I believe that hope is the best of all doctors for it—so you must try to hope, even though it may seem like hoping against hope.”

“I will,” said Johnson, who seemed to have caught a touch of the other's cheerfulness. “I feel more hopeful even now; it seems something to have met one to listen to me as you have done; I'll take it as a good sign.”

“Well, as to listening to you,” said Harding, his manner suddenly becoming embarrassed, “I don't think much of that; but I should like . . . you know, ‘Do a good turn if you can’ ought to be our motto. I'm such a stranger to you I hardly know how to put it, but let me lend you this;” and as he spoke he thrust a sovereign into the other's hand.

“I—I can't; I didn't speak to you with any thought of this,” Johnson stammered.

“Of course not,” said Harding, “but there you are going off your tack already. It's not the part of a hopeful man to be a self-tormentor. As I look at it, I simply give the money as I would throw a plank to a man struggling to keep his head above water, or expect him to throw one to me.”

“You are very kind; there are not many like you—”

“Oh, I don't know,” interrupted Harding, with a slight laugh; “I hope it is nothing extra to have a heart that can feel for another. However, I must be off now,” he went on, as at that moment there came a rapping at the wall, “they are signalling me in to tea, I suppose. Good-bye.”

“One moment,” said Johnson; “I shall always feel your debtor; but some day I may be able to repay you—if I am, where shall I find you?”

“Well, it would be hard to name any place where you might be able to find me for any length of time together,” answered Harding; “nor so far as I am concerned do I want the money back. Still, if you wish it, I will tell you how you can pay me—perhaps many times over.”

“How?”

“Why, if ever you are in a position to give another some such lift as I have given you, give it, and say to yourself as you do so, ‘Now I am paying Bill Harding.’”

“I will!” exclaimed Johnson earnestly, “if ever I *am* in a position.”

“You mustn't despair, remember,” said Harding; “keep to hope as your sheet-anchor, and trust to the great Pilot—and now good-bye, and good luck.”

“Good-bye,” responded Johnson, grasping his proffered hand; “good-bye, and God bless you!”

III.

“A merry Christmas, father!”

Again the speaker is Maggie Johnson, but the scene had greatly changed since we last heard her utter that greeting. Ten years have passed, and you can see at a glance that things must have gone prosperously with the family—that they have risen out of the depths of poverty into a comfortable position. They are living in the same suburb, but in a different part of it, and now occupy a neat cottage furnished in a very different style from that of their old room. The parlour in which Maggie meets her father is carpeted, has couch, easy chair, and small chairs *en suite*, a polished centre table, a neat book-case, and pictures upon the walls, and altogether presents just such an appearance as to any one versed in such matters would indicate that it is the “best” room of the household of a well-to-do artisan or clerk, blest with that treasure, a managing wife.

Johnson himself looks robust and hearty, and though we did not see his wife on that Christmas-day ten years back, it is only reasonable to suppose that she was not, in that time of trouble, the smiling, buxom, matronly-looking woman we now see her, as she comes quickly into the room on hearing her daughter's voice. In Maggie, too, there is a great change—and it is for the better. Her childish promise of good looks has been fulfilled. She has grown into a nice, healthy-looking girl, and neatly and tastefully dressed, presents an appearance that may fairly be described as charming.

The family *has* been prosperous. Bill Harding's gift had seemed to bring good fortune with it. The sovereign had scarcely been broken into before Johnson found employment. An assistant storekeeper in a neighbouring work did not return to his duties on the expiration of the Christmas holidays. He had gone into the country on a visit to some relations, and it being supposed that he was merely prolonging his holiday for a day or two, it was not considered a matter of much moment who should be temporarily put in his place, and on one of the workmen representing Johnson's case to the manager he was taken. But day after day passed without any word of the other man, until at the end of three weeks there came a letter saying that he had taken another situation. In the meantime Johnson had been doing the work in a satisfactory manner, and having been enabled to procure the nourishment of which he stood in need,

was beginning to look himself again, and these circumstances weighing in his favour he was retained in the place.

From this time all had gone well with him, and he had gradually worked his way up, until now when we see him again he is chief storekeeper, at a salary of three pounds a week. His home is a happy one, and he has placed his daughter in a position to be

qualified to earn a respectable livelihood for herself. She is a pupil teacher at a school in the neighbourhood. She has been staying the first week of her Christmas holidays with some friends, and it is on returning home from this week's absence that she salutes first her father and then her mother with, "A merry Christmas."

During these happier years Johnson had



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well remembered his promise to Bill Harding. So far as the mere amount of money was concerned, he had paid his debt to him over and over again—in the figurative sense in which the other had expressed himself willing to be paid. He was naturally of a kind-hearted disposition, and the incident of his meeting with the generous sailor had made him thoughtful and systematic in his

kindness. He had not merely done kind actions when occasion had come in his way, but had sought out opportunities to do them. In this way he had become known among his shopmates, neighbours, and most of those in the district connected with works of charity, as a practical philanthropist. He contributed to all, and originated many of the workshop subscriptions for men in distress.

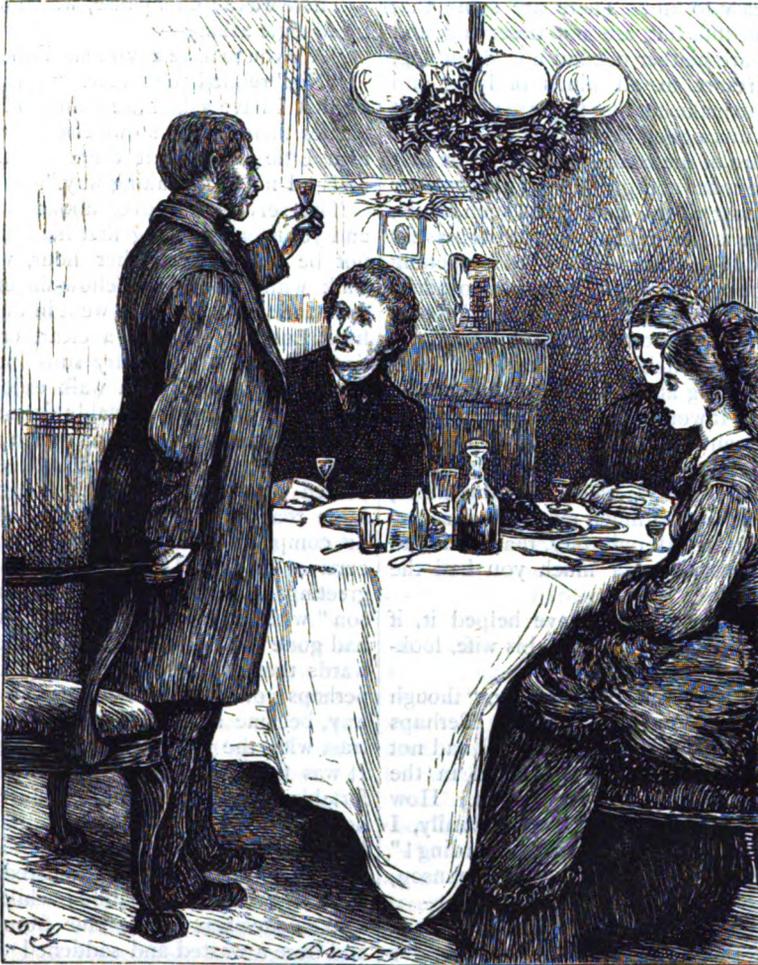
and relieved tramps who came to the workshop-gates in search of employment, but failed to obtain it. Oftener than not a dinner was sent from his table to some poor person; many an hour of his spare time was spent by sick-beds; and in instances in which the necessities of the case called for it, he had been successful in obtaining for distressed individuals the larger assistance it was beyond his personal power to give. And never did

he engage in any work of this kind without a thought of the bluff seaman who, with a delicacy worthy of the deed, had been as a good Samaritan to him in his own time of distress.

"Well, and how have you enjoyed yourself, Maggie?" asked her father, when she had put off her bonnet and cloak.

"Very much," she answered. "How have things been going at home?"

"Oh, all right," he said, smiling; "about



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the same as usual you may know, or you would have heard."

"I don't know so much about that, unless something *very* particular had happened," said the wife, also smiling, "what with practice, and one thing and another, he has been pretty full of business this week, Maggie, I can tell you."

The "practice" of which his wife spoke had reference to his being a member of the choir of the parish church.

"I've had enough to keep me going, certainly," he said, "but this is rather an extra time. We are going to have new anthems to-day; and then I had charge of the Christmas coal distribution."

"That wouldn't be much trouble, as there would be plenty to give it to," said Maggie.

"No trouble, Maggie," the father answered, with just a shade of reproof in his tone, "but still a thing to make a call upon time and mind."

"I thought you had only to give the tickets to the most needful of the applicants."

"Yes, that's all, Maggie," put in the mother,—"when you have found out who *are* the most needful and *deserving*. But that is not very easy to do. There are some that may be needful, but are not deserving, and many that are neither needful nor deserving, who will resort to all kinds of lying and scheming, to make out that they are both. Last year there was a good deal of complaint about a large share of the coals—and as far as that goes of the meat and groceries, and whatever else was being given—falling into such hands, and as your father wanted to put a stop as far as he could to anything of the kind happening this year, he did a lot of from house to house visitation. He was at it every night till eleven o'clock, and came home quite tired out."

"Oh, that was neither here nor there," said Johnson, smiling at his wife's impetuosity.

"Oh, but it would be hard work that way," said the daughter.

"It was hard work, heart-breakingly hard work in one sense, Maggie," said the father, "in showing you so much misery and suffering that you could only pity, that you had not the means, however much you had the will, to help."

"I am sure you would have helped it, if you had had the means," said his wife, looking at him with fond pride.

"I would," he said emphatically, "though I take no pride to myself for that. Perhaps I should not have felt it as I did, if I had not known what it was to have suffered in the same way and to have been helped. How often when I was with some poor family, I wished they could meet with a Bill Harding!"

There was a brief pause, and then Johnson, speaking to his wife, resumed musingly—

"I wish you had seen Harding; it is a pleasure to have even the memory of his brave, kind face. On this day, of all others in the year, I can see him as plainly in my mind's eye as I did with my bodily vision, when he came into our wretched room, making light in its gloom, and leaving means, and better still, hope, behind him. Do you recollect him, Maggie?"

"Yes, I can remember him giving me the penny, and everything, quite well."

"I would dearly have liked to have met

him again," the father went on, "if it had only been to let him know that his kindness had brought a blessing with it."

"You tried to find him out, didn't you?" asked Maggie.

"Yes, but I could only learn that his family had left Liverpool altogether. Somehow I think he must have gone trading between foreign ports, or something of that kind, and have settled abroad; for our old neighbours never heard anything of him again either."

There was another pause, which was broken by Maggie asking—

"Are you to have any one to dinner to-day?"

"No," replied the father. "As it happens, all that I have asked are going to have home parties themselves; so we shall have to be our own little party—but there are the church bells; I must be making way."

The service was over about one o'clock, and Johnson, knowing that his dinner would not be ready for another hour, went for a walk with two of his fellow-singers. They took the main road, and went in the direction from London. It was a clear, crisp, frosty day, brightened by wintry sunshine, just the sort of day to make a walk enjoyable and invigorating to a comfortably dressed person. And it had drawn out many such; for numbers of more or less well and seasonably attired people were strolling along this self-same road in either direction. Johnson and his companions sauntered on, engaged in discursive chat, and occasionally exchanging greetings and "the compliments of the season" with acquaintances. In this way they had gone about half a mile, when, coming towards them, they saw a figure which, though perhaps not strikingly noticeable in a general way, became so at this moment by its contrast with the holiday spirit that was about. It was the figure of one who was *not* comfortably dressed, and whose countenance did not wear a smile. On the contrary, he was lightly clad in garments which, though showing evidence of being well cared for, were woefully worn and shabby; while his thin, sunken face was lividly blue from the cold, and bore a wasted and saddened expression. His dusty boots and general appearance indicated that he was tramping; and yet it was palpable that he did not belong to either of the two classes from among whom tramps almost invariably come. Had he been an artisan or labourer tramping in search of employment he would have had on some sort of working-suit, while his clothes, though threadbare, were of broadcloth, and his hands were small and white. And if his

dress showed that he did not belong to the working-class division of tramps, his manner, to any one taking note of it, would have yet more decidedly shown that he was not of the "cadger" order of tramps. He had not the dirt-engrained complexion, slouching movement, and "countenance of demand," which are "the badge of all their tribe." He was quite a young fellow, and seemed to experience a sense of shame at his condition, and was evidently made uncomfortable by the half-curious, half-compassionate glances cast upon him by the passers-by. Now and again he looked up in their faces, and it chanced that he did so as Johnson and his companions approached. He gave one quick glance at the three, and then his eyes rested upon Johnson, while his face rapidly flushed and paled. As he came up to them he paused and appeared about to speak, but, if such was his purpose, he either failed in it, or changed it, for, without having come to a dead stop, he passed on in silence.

When he had got beyond earshot, one of Johnson's companions, laughing, exclaimed—

"Holloa, Johnson, you had a narrow escape there, I fancy! He didn't look the least like a cadger, certainly; but, if I'm not mistaken, he had half made up his mind to try on a bit of cadging with you—'Excuse me being so bold, sir, but would you help a respectable young fellow on tramp?' and so forth."

"I'm more than half sorry that I didn't ask him if I could help him," said Johnson.

"Now, look here, Johnson," said the other, "we all know how kind you are, and what you do down here about, where you know or have a chance of finding out who they are you are helping, is all to your credit; but to give to any stray fellow who may meet you in the street is a very different affair. I don't say that it would be so in your case, but, as a rule, such promiscuous giving shows more thoughtless weakness than true charity."

"That is quite correct in a general way," replied Johnson, "but at the same time you must allow something for discrimination. I feel sure that that young fellow, though under misfortune, is as respectable as any of us. I've a great mind to turn back."

Neither of the others made any answer, and they had walked on quietly some fifty yards, when Johnson suddenly exclaimed—

"There—I *will* turn back. I'll speak to him, if I can do no more."

The others turned back with him, but when in a few minutes they overtook the young wayfarer they went on by themselves, leaving Johnson alone to speak to him.

"Good day," said Johnson, in a friendly tone. "You see I have soon overtaken you, but I dare say you are too tired to care about going fast."

"I *am* tired," he answered in a low, vehement tone, "and hungry, and penniless, and friendless,—and I wish I was dead!"

"No, no; don't speak rashly," said Johnson, in a tone of kindly remonstrance, "you are only a boy; you have known better days, I can tell; think that you'll know them again. Have you been on the road long?"

"I have tramped all the way from Sunderland, and I am going to seek for work in London. I'm a clerk, but I wonder what would be thought of me if I applied at an office in this guise; and if I asked for labour it would be thought a good joke."

"It would be folly to argue that there wasn't a good deal in what you say," replied Johnson; "but still, you know, many a young fellow has come to London as poor as you, and lived to be rich and respected in it."

"Ah, yes, but the turn-again-Whittington days are over," said the other, with bitterness.

"Well, there is not room for every man to become lord mayor," said Johnson, smiling; "but every man's cloud has a silver lining."

"It's very easy for you to talk," said the young fellow, in the same bitter tone.

"Well, I have perhaps a better right to talk that way than you think," returned Johnson good-humouredly. "I have been under pretty much the same cloud myself, and had what you can hardly have—a wife and child under it with me. I have been out of work, and penniless, and, as I thought, friendless, and on a Christmas day too, when all around me seemed rejoicing. I couldn't see the silver lining even in the distance; but it was there, and came in sight in good time, and the cloud passed away."

"I had no idea of that," said the other; "but I did see that you pitied me, and that is why I looked at you, and—and thought to beg of you. But I would never have forgiven myself afterwards if I had come down to that."

"Ah, that is a false pride when carried to an extreme," said Johnson, "though, as far as that goes, there would have been no question of begging in your speaking to me. However, it is perhaps best that I should ask you to let me help you as—"

"Excuse me, sir," the other interrupted, "I don't want to be unthankful, and I didn't mean to be disrespectful—but I don't want help. As you say, as poor fellows as me have done well in London, and I daresay I shall pull through somehow."

"I have no doubt you will," answered Johnson, "still you will pull through none the worse for having a rest and a bit of dinner before going any farther. You could do nothing towards getting work to-day, as every place is closed. You needn't be afraid that you will be laying yourself under any obligation to me," he went on, interrupting the other as he was about to speak. "I'm sorry to think that I have little more than the will to assist you, but I'm just going home to dinner, and you had better come with me. I may perhaps be able to point out where you might have the best chances of finding work."

"I'm such a figure," said the other.

"Oh, never mind that," said Johnson, "we are not dressy people—come on."

When they reached the house Johnson briefly explained matters to his wife.

"Well, George, I don't begrudge the cost of anything you may do for him," she said, with just a shade of vexation in her voice, when the unexpected guest had gone up-stairs to wash; "but it is awkward bringing a stranger here on a day like this."

"Well, I daresay it is a little," he answered, "but there was something in his face that made me feel that I must speak to him, and our inconvenience can be but small compared with the hardship it would seem for a youth to be left without a soul to speak to on this day."

"Yes, that would have been hard," said the wife; "and after all, we have nothing to say that any stranger may not hear. He appears very well-behaved; he'll be some decent body's child. He looks a mere boy. I shouldn't think he was more than eighteen."

"That is his age; he mentioned it as we came along."

"Well, you had better go and see how he is getting on, and look him out slippers, and anything of that kind that he may want. I'll go and tell Maggie that we are going to have some one to dinner, after all."

IV.

"Ah yes, that's an improvement; you look quite another fellow!" exclaimed Johnson, when, some ten minutes later, the other stood before him with his face well washed, his clothes well brushed, and his dusty boots exchanged for a pair of slippers. And thus brightened and freshened, he certainly was a great improvement upon the travel-stained being he had looked when Johnson first met him. He showed a well-built, handsome, pleasant-faced youth; and it was perhaps in as great a degree owing to her finding him

so presentable as to girlish bashfulness, that Maggie blushed deeply, as she rose to say a word of greeting to him when her father brought him into the parlour.

Dinner being laid, they at once sat down. At first the young stranger was shy and nervous; but after a while he began to be more at ease, took his share in the talk, and under Johnson's delicately managed attention he made a hearty meal. When they were done, Johnson spoke a short thanksgiving, upon the conclusion of which his guest observed—

"I think I ought to add a little grace that my father always used, and used sincerely too, 'I wish that every poor man in the kingdom had had as good a dinner as I have.'"

"And a noble wish too," said Johnson; "and now I have a wish, in the shape of a toast, to give. You will not know the meaning of it till I have explained it afterwards; but you may drink it with the full assurance that you will never drink a worthier. It has been a Christmas custom with us for the last nine years, and involves one of the few extravagances of which we are guilty—a bottle of wine yearly. Bring it out, dear."

The wife brought out the bottle, and Johnson, having filled four glasses, stood up, and in a solemn tone, and with an earnest, prayerful look upon his face, exclaimed—

"Here is health, happiness, and prosperity to Bill Harding; Heaven's blessing be with him, wherever he may be, on land or sea!"

As he finished speaking he noticed that his guest was greatly agitated; but, before he could ask a question, the other exclaimed—

"Why—why, I didn't—; how did you know my name?"

"Your name!" exclaimed Johnson, in surprise.

"Yes, my name—Bill Harding," said the other; "though I am sure I never mentioned it to you."

Johnson stood for a few moments speechless, and then, bringing his hand down on the table, excitedly exclaimed—

"Of course you didn't; but I believe I see it all. I understand now why your face should have drawn me so irresistibly. Was your father's name Bill Harding too? Was he a seaman? Was he ever mate of an Australian ship, the *Herbert Henry*?"

"Yes, yes; he sailed in her ten years ago!" exclaimed the other.

"The very time," said Johnson.

"Did you know my father, then?"

"I can scarcely say that I did. I only saw him once, but I respect him more than

any man I ever did know, and I thank Providence that it has come in my way to be of service to a child of his."

Then, in a few rapid sentences, he told the son how the father had assisted him.

"And where is your father now?" he asked, when he had concluded his story.

"In heaven, I hope," was the answer. "He perished at sea three years ago, and all that we had perished with him. It was his first run as captain and half-owner, and every halfpenny of his savings was invested in the ship and cargo. That was indirectly the cause of his death. The crew left her in boats and were saved; but, with a view to keeping her from being picked up as abandoned, he insisted upon sticking to her, and was lost with her.

"The blow killed my mother, my little sister had died five years before, and so I was left alone in the world. A distant relation gave me shelter for a short time, but he made the bread of dependence bitter to me; so, without either telling him where I was going, or that I was going at all, I took myself from under his roof, and did the best I could for myself. Most of the time it was a very poor best, but I was just beginning to get on well in Sunderland, when I was taken ill, and laid up for nearly three months. When I got better, I found myself out of a situation and out of money, and as I didn't care to walk about like a beggar where I was known, I sold what few clothes I had beside these I stand up in, and with the trifle I got in this way, to keep me on the road, I set out to tramp to London. What will be my fate goodness knows; but if I meet with anything like good fortune, I'll let you know."

"There will be no need for your acquainting me with it," said Johnson, smiling; "you must make this your home till you get a situation. Afterwards you can please yourself as to whether you will live with us, though in any case we shall always expect you to drop in as to a home."

"You are very kind," the other said, speaking brokenly from emotion, "but that is only the more reason why I should not impose——"

"Impose, nonsense!" interrupted Johnson; "I shall really have to lecture you if you talk that way any more. Besides, if there is anything in what I am doing, you should remember that it is to your dead father that you are indebted for it."

"Oh, but——" the other was beginning, when Mrs. Johnson, with good-humoured imperiousness, broke in—

"Now, it is no use talking, Mr. Harding; if it had not been for your father's kindness, we might not have had a home to offer you a share of. You *shall* stay with us, and there's an end of it."

The other, however, did not seem to think that this settled the matter, and he was about to say something more in the way of demur, when Maggie, blushing a little as she spoke, said—

"Oh yes, do stay; we shall all be so sorry if you go away among strangers—say you will stay."

As she spoke, the look of doubt at last cleared away from his countenance, and, after a momentary pause, he answered—

"You are all very good to me. I will stay, and I hope that some day it may be in my power to prove my gratitude in more than words."

v.

"A merry Christmas, father; a merry Christmas, mother!"

Once more it is Maggie who thus greets her parents. Young Harding, who comes in at her side, repeats, "A merry Christmas, father; a merry Christmas, mother!" And he has the right to so salute them, for Maggie is now his wife, and they have just returned from a week's wedding trip. Six years have gone round since the day when Johnson and young Harding had met upon the road, and fortune had smiled upon the latter as kindly during this interval as it had done upon the Johnsons in the longer one previously spoken of. At the end of a month he had obtained employment in the office of a City merchant. To be near his business he had had to remove from Johnson's house, but he had continued to regard it as a home, going down regularly on Saturday evenings and staying over the Sunday. Maggie and he being thrown together in this way, a favourable first impression had ripened into a strong attachment; and as he had risen to such a position as justified their doing so with every prospect of being able to live comfortably, they had sealed their love by marriage.

After learning that the elder Harding was dead, Johnson had on Christmas-days solemnly proposed his memory, and he was just rising to do so upon this occasion, when they were all startled by a rattling peal at the knocker.

Maggie, who was nearest to the door, sprang to answer it, and in an instant was clasped in the embrace of a stalwart, sun-

browned, black-bearded man, who imprinted a hearty kiss upon her cheek.

"Why, you——. It can't be——"

Her utterance failed, and voice seemed also to have deserted her father and her husband; for, though both had hastily started to their feet, they now stood as if petrified by surprise, with their eyes intently fixed upon the figure of the man in the doorway. He, too, seemed labouring under strong emotion, but he was the first to be able to speak connectedly.

"I know just how you are all taken aback," he said. "You are almost inclined to think that the sea must have given up its dead, but I'll explain everything."

"Father! father! it is really you?" exclaimed young Harding, stepping forward and seizing his hand.

"Yes, it is me, Bill," he said, while he gently put him back with his disengaged hand so as to be able to look in his face. "Something told me I should find you again, and I have, Bill—I have!" He paused, and then stepping up to Johnson and taking his hand, went on—

"And I am only less glad to see you again than to find my son. I have heard all about how kind you have been to him."

"But, father," said the son, "I thought——"

"That I had gone down in the *King Canute*; and you had every reason to think so, for though I was saved, it was under such circumstances as gave me no chance of letting it be known until after your mother was dead, and you gone away leaving no trace behind you. There, there, I'm not going to beat about," he exclaimed, checking his son as he was going to ask some impatient question. "I'll tell you the whole story at once, and in as few words as well as I can:—

"My craft kept afloat for two days after the crew had left, but nothing came in sight to afford assistance, and at length she began to settle down. Then I tried to launch a boat, but it got stove in, and, as a last resource, I lashed myself to a spar, and fastened an extemporized signal of distress upon it in such a way that it would float upwards. A few minutes after I had done it she sunk, and I remembered no more till I found myself in an hospital in Bombay. Then I found, or rather I came by degrees to understand, that a few hours after the *King Canute* went down I had been picked up by a sailing vessel bound for Bombay. I was more than half dead, and altogether insensible from the

effects of a wound on the head, which must have resulted from my being hit by some piece of wreckage. I was insensible all the while I was on board this ship, which was some weeks. I had remained so in the hospital, and my being brought round at all was considered as something wonderful in the way of cure. I got the doctor to write to your mother for me, but the letter came back with 'Dead' written across it, and though I was able to go about by that time, the shock brought on a relapse that laid me by for another two months. At last, however, I got all right in health again, and shipped to England, and on arriving tried all I could to find you, till my pay was gone. Then of course I had to be off to sea once more, and an old employer of mine gave me command of one of his ships. I have been with him ever since, and as I am liberally paid, and allowed to do a little trading on my own account, I am doing well, and pretty Maggie here shall not go without a present from her father-in-law."

He was stopping with the air of a man who had finished what he had to say, when his son exclaimed—

"But you haven't told us how you found us out."

"There, I was forgetting that!" he exclaimed. "Well, it was this way. I got into dock late last night, and the thought struck me that this would be the first Christmas-day I had had in port in England since the one I spent with Johnson's old neighbours. This in its turn set me wondering whether they were still in the same place, and I made up my mind to find out to-day. They were almost as much astonished to see me as you all were, but when they had got over their surprise they told me about you, Johnson, and about Bill here. Of course I was off before they had fairly finished telling me where you lived; and here I am, happier than I can say."

"I think we are all equally happy to see you," said Johnson.

"I believe you are, Johnson; and let me add, that I am not more happy in myself than grateful to you for your kindness to my boy."

"I was only paying Bill Harding, you know," answered Johnson, smiling.

"Well, you *have* paid him with overwhelming interest," said the seaman emphatically; "for if, when I first met you, I had cast bread upon the waters, it has certainly returned to me again after many days—and many fold."

ROSE SALTERRE.

L



THE village of Cobden lay at some little distance from Brierley Hall. You did not go down the steep bit of road lined with beeches, but turned up behind the house, past the church, on to the Down, and followed a chalk track for nearly three quarters of a mile,

and then you came upon it like a surprise, if you were a stranger. It lay nestled in a hollow of the Down, and seemed to have nothing to do with any other place but itself. When you got out upon the Down beyond it, if it was a clear day, you could see the sea-line away in the distance.

The track was good enough in summer, but in winter, and after heavy rains, it was very bad; indeed often impassable, except to the shepherd boys in their heavy boots, or to the horse of the good village doctor, who often had to ride across in dark winter nights and summer storms, to visit patients whose houses lay scattered on the other side of the Hall. One February night one of the servant-maids at the Hall was taken ill. Miss Mary, who had kept the Squire's house, ever since the sudden death of his wife, was a bit of a doctor herself, for in her young days every lady was taught something of the virtue of herbs, and to cure hurts and burns, and to make salves and ointments. But this illness was getting beyond Miss Mary's skill, and she sent up to the Hill for Dr. Staynes, and sat herself by the bed of the poor suffering girl till he arrived. It took two hours to fetch him. Perhaps it would have taken more with another, but Dr. Staynes never thought of his own ease when illness was concerned. The messenger found him in his little parlour, his feet on the fender, and a glass of elderberry wine

simmering on the hob, while his supper was preparing. He put on his boots again, drank the wine, congratulating himself that it at least was ready and hot, and rode off down the hill, with lights and fire behind him, and the cold wet air of a February night in front. He found the poor girl in a state of inflammation which required quick and sharp remedies, and it was not until dawn that the attack was subdued. Then Miss Mary saw that he was exhausted, and ordered him a good breakfast, in which she joined him. While they sat over it, she pressed him to take some rest before returning, but he declined; so she asked if he had many patients just then, and he replied by naming all, except one whom he called "the poor French thing."

"What poor French thing?" said Miss Mary, with a sudden yearning of heart, for her brother had married a French woman against his father's will, and she had come to England on the outbreak of the war, only to die broken-hearted near them.

"Oh, the young French woman," was the reply, "who has been in the village all the winter;" and Miss Mary detected an annoyance in his tone which surprised her. "You must have seen her, madam."

"But I have not. All the winter! What is her name, and what does she do?"

"Her name is Mademoiselle Rose, and she makes dresses and bonnets."

"A French milliner is, you will allow, something so unheard-of," said Miss Mary with a smile, "that I wonder her fame has not descended to the Hall. Poor thing! I suppose she has come over like the rest of them, to earn a livelihood; but why should she pick out Cobden of all places on earth?"

"I fancy her fingers are too fine and dainty for a good deal that she has undertaken," remarked the Doctor drily.

"You interest me very much," said Miss Mary. "And what is the matter with her that she wants you?"

"Oh, it is more a matter of climate than anything else. She has a cough. She is not accustomed to live on a hill."

"Poor thing!" said Miss Mary again. "Has she money? I mean, does she earn enough to support herself, and—pay you?"

"For the latter I can't tell yet," said the Doctor, with a shade of impatience very unlike his usual respectful courtesy; "but she lodges in a spare room in one of our

farmer's houses, and I never heard any complaints."

Here the Doctor, who was unusually reluctant in his answers, rose and, with thanks, prepared for his ride home.

"When the weather gets better, I shall come and see Mademoiselle Rose," said Miss Mary, who saw the reluctance without understanding it, and was too kind-hearted and high bred to force a subject upon any one; and, after a few parting words of advice about the servant-girl, the Doctor made his bow and rode off.

Miss Mary was puzzled. Not but what there were a great many French in England then. The war was at an end, and many of them came over, in hopes of retrieving their ruined fortunes, or at least of getting more bread to eat than they could at home. Some of them were sadly disappointed, poor things; especially the women. The men, some of them gentlemen as highly born as the Squire, taught French and dancing, and so gained money; but the poor women, those who had no husbands or brothers to mend and cook for, and none to care for them, had nothing but their needlework, millinery, or artificial flowers, to look to for a livelihood. Some few of the better educated took to teaching, but those were few, and their want of knowledge of English stood in their way. And Cobden was such a poor, out-of-the-way place for a Frenchwoman to settle in. London or Bath would have seemed so much more likely. And then the Doctor was apparently afraid of saying much about the newcomer, or at any rate did not choose to do so; and his manner was most unaccountable, as was the expression of vexation Miss Mary was sure she saw on his face at being questioned. However, it was February, and quite impossible for a lady to get up to the village then; so the French stranger was, not forgotten, but put on one side in Miss Mary's mind till the spring. March was snowy, April more fickle than usual, May cold and windy, and so it happened that June had made everything green and sweet and leafy before she was able to make her long-meditated visit to Cobden. It was not to satisfy an idle curiosity that she went, but to see if she could be of any use to the poor stranger, who must feel so forlorn, alone, among the rough villagers. There was no parson or parson's wife to go to, if she wanted a friend; for in those days one clergyman did duty for two or three parishes, as often as not, and Mr. Rogers, an old and somewhat infirm, but very wealthy man, was

the clergyman of two parishes besides Cobden. He was driven over every Sunday, to read prayers and preach to the people in the morning, and hear the children their Catechism in the afternoon, at the old parish church, which was just behind the Hall, and sadly out of reach of the old and ailing among the village folk in the winter; and then he went away, and was never seen till the next week. But he was charitable and kind, and never refused a shilling to any one of the line of people who would be waiting for him after church with pitiful stories of all kinds. Also, he used to give the Squire five pounds every Christmas, to spend in coals and blankets; so that the people of Cobden had less to complain of than many. Now-a-days things are improved, and parishes better looked after, but then it was different. Well, it was a fine June morning when Miss Mary started on her walk. Her maid behind her carried a basket with tea and sugar, and other like comforts for the old women, and some pretty soft stuff for Mademoiselle Rose to make up into a gown for her. When she got to the farm-house where the Doctor had told her Mademoiselle Rose lodged, she tapped at the door, and was disappointed to find that Mademoiselle was out.

"But she will be in very soon, madam," said the farmer's wife. "Do you come in and rest; it is a treat to see your face again, though you *do* look tired and spent." So saying, the good woman settled her visitor in the great patchwork-cushioned arm-chair, and went off for curds-and-whey. While Miss Mary waited, and drank the whey—her favourite summer drink from a child—she learnt a little about the young woman she had come to see; found that she could talk but very broken English, as was to be expected, that she was very industrious at any kind of work she could get to do, and that she had a cough and a weak chest, for which Dr. Staynes came very often to see her. "She is none too well off, poor soul, I expect," added the farmer's wife; "and then she can't stomach our food, but must needs make her own soup, and messes of one kind and another, which I don't believe are so wholesome as good bacon or meat, such as we have every day. I'm downright sorry for her, she must be so lonesome; but she looks cheerful, so perhaps I'm wasting pity. There she is!" as a little figure passed the window, and light steps were heard ascending the stairs. "I will go and tell her you are here, or she will be flustered;" and the kind-hearted dame went off after her lodger.

Miss Mary said that she was quite disappointed when she went up and first saw the young woman, but that afterwards that feeling left her, and she conceived the greatest interest in her. I can understand this, having seen her so often myself. Miss Mary went up, leaving her maid in the kitchen, and found Mademoiselle Rose standing to receive her. She was a very little

person; so small, and so neatly made, that you were reminded of a doll when you looked at her. She had keen black eyes, a sallow complexion, very black hair, which she wore combed straight off her forehead—French fashion, and the smallest, prettiest hands and feet I ever saw. Everything she wore was as dainty as herself, though as cheap and common as possible. A black stuff gown, a



white linen apron with pockets, a little white cap with a pink border—that was all; but it was put on so neatly; the gown fitted her trim little figure so well, and the apron and cap were so white and fresh, that she could not have looked better, nor so well in my opinion, if she had been dressed in silk and velvet. On one of her fingers she wore a hair ring, with an opal set in it, and that

was the only thing at all out of the way about her. Her bed was in one corner of the room, and she had sewn a white cambric covering for it, with a deep frill, which made it look quite pretty; the table was pushed into the window, and littered with work; and on the window-ledge was a flower-pot with a rose in it. She made a deep curtsy when Miss Mary came in, and then stood as if wait-

ing for a work order. Now the reason for Miss Mary's disappointment was partly because she had made up her mind for a mystery, and mystery there seemed to be none. The little woman was as plain and business-like a person as possible, and spoke straight to the point.

"Good day, mademoiselle," said she in her broken English. And she had this curious thing about her, that she never seemed to be afraid of making a blunder, though, of course, she made plenty, but went on as quickly as if she were talking her own language; and a strange jumble she made of it.

"Good day, mademoiselle," said Miss Mary in French—at which the little woman started, and coloured.

"Ah, mademoiselle, what pleasure!" she exclaimed. "I have heard nothing so sweet for no long!" and tears came into the bright eyes, and then she suddenly became the workwoman again, and added, "I await your commands."

Miss Mary accordingly called to her maid, and produced the stuff, giving her orders for the dress, in such a way as to bring out the taste and skill of the workwoman, who proved to have plenty of both, and to enjoy having anything to do in which she could exercise them. Her eyes sparkled when Miss Mary said she would leave the trimming for her decision, and she asked eagerly when the dress would be wanted.

"Can you bring it to me in a week's time?" said Miss Mary; "then I could try it, and you could make any alterations that might be needful."

Miss Mary said this in the hope of getting an opportunity of more general talk with her than seemed likely now, though Mademoiselle Rose evidently thought so much about her work, that all the romantic story she had been making up in her own mind about the little dressmaker being a countess in her own country, and so on, appeared likely to fade into nothing.

Mademoiselle Rose hesitated.

"Is it too short a time?" said Miss Mary. "I am in no great hurry."

"No, indeed, mademoiselle—but—pardon me, I never go out much—I have not the time—I might be wanted; and for alterations," she added with a little proud smile, "mademoiselle may assure herself none will be required."

This was provoking; but, as Miss Mary wondered what she could say, the little woman suddenly remembered that she had not taken the length of the skirt, and ran across

the room for her measure. The quick movement brought on her cough, and she had to stop, and put her hand to her chest. Miss Mary's kind heart was roused in a moment—

"Your cough is very bad, I fear," she said, making her sit down in a chair, and waiting till the fit should pass.

"It has been bad, mademoiselle," panted Mademoiselle Rose, recovering herself; "but that will pass—now the roses are blowing." She pointed to a white rose-bush which was beginning to flower luxuriantly all up one side of the house. "I shall make a tissue of roses, and it will soon cure my chest." And she got up from the chair.

"But what does Dr. Staynes say? He tells me he is attending you for it," said Miss Mary.

Mademoiselle Rose's hands began to fidget a little nervously at the black ribbon which held her scissors to her side, and she glanced quickly at her visitor, with a sort of questioning look in her eyes, and then dropped them as quickly.

"He says it is climate—your fogs;" and breaking off as if with a sudden recollection, she said, "You do me too much honour, mademoiselle. It is nothing, absolutely nothing." And she began folding up the stuff with neat hands, and a quick movement, which plainly said, "Our business is done, and I have no time to talk on other matters."

Miss Mary was fairly baffled, but she ventured to say as she left the room—

"Well, I think a walk to the Hall would do you good, so bring my dress if you can." And then she walked home, thinking that Mademoiselle Rose was a commonplace little body enough, evidently devoted to work, cheerful to all appearance, and not over sensitive—in fact, not at all a person who could be made into the heroine of a romance; and yet, in spite of this, Miss Mary did feel a great interest, not to say curiosity, about her. She did feel sure that there was some concealment somewhere.

"No concern of mine," she said to herself. Yet the wish grew strong within her to find out more about Mademoiselle Rose.

II.

Contrary to Miss Mary's expectations, Mademoiselle Rose brought home the dress herself at the end of four days. Miss Mary was in the garden, and Mademoiselle Rose was shown into the parlour, to wait while the servant went to fetch her mistress. Miss Nelly was at the table in the window with her spelling-books, and told all about it after-

wards—how Mademoiselle Rose curtsied to her, and then sat down in the chair placed for her. The chair was one of a row at the side of the room, so that she could see everything in it as she sat.

"I am sure she thought the parlour very pretty, Auntie," said the child afterwards, "she looked at the things so much, and I think she can see more with her eyes than other people, they *look* so," said my darling, not knowing how to express what she meant. "First of all she looked at the pictures, and then at the rug. Then she turned and looked at the coral and the amethyst, and the china, you know, and as she looked I heard her make a sound something like a sigh, only shorter, and she started up on her feet. I was frightened, Auntie, and I wished you would come; for she went up to the things, and put out her hand and touched the necklace." Miss Nelly called the rosary a necklace, for she was too young to understand what it really was. "Well then," Miss Nelly went on, "of course, I went to her, and said she must not touch it, for Auntie never would let me have it in my hand even, and it belonged to a lady who was dead, and Aunt Anne had loved her very much, and kept the necklace, and let no one so much as dust it but herself. And then, only think, Auntie, she began to cry, and looked at me, and said some French words which I could not understand, and clasped her two hands together, and then you came in."

This was Miss Nelly's explanation of what Miss Mary saw when she entered the room. Mademoiselle Rose stood by the carved console, with tears running down her cheeks.

"Auntie, she is crying," whispered the child. "Shall I go?"

"Yes, my love."

And Miss Nelly ran away, relieved, for the scene had frightened her a little.

Miss Mary took Mademoiselle Rose's hand.

"Can I do anything for you?" she said.

"No, mademoiselle, I thank you much—I am a little unwell—it is nothing." And she turned, and went to the table, and began unfolding her work, seeming so embarrassed, that Miss Mary, for very pity, could ask no more questions then.

The dress fitted to a nicety, and the work and trimming were so beautifully done, that Miss Mary said, involuntarily—

"Why, you are not going to stay at Cobden, surely, if you can do work like this! What made you come here?" and then added, as the sallow face flushed again, "Excuse me, that is an impertinent question."

"Oh, no, no! You are very good. London is sad, and they said I should suffer in my health if I lived there, and I obtain much work here, and fresh air and light. It is better than to live in the town."

"You are right so far, mademoiselle; but the work here is not suited to your abilities."

Mademoiselle Rose smiled, and touched the dress lovingly.

"This is the first robe of taste I have made since I came here. It has been a true pleasure," and she sighed.

"And you are going back to work you dislike," said Miss Mary, "for no other reason than the one you have just told me?"

Mademoiselle Rose dropped her eyes and said nothing. At that moment a horseman rode up to the door, and Miss Mary recognised Dr. Staynes. He had called to see her about a patient in whom she was interested.

Mademoiselle Rose grew nervous again, and hurried on her gloves as if ready to go.

"Stop," said Miss Mary; "we have said nothing about payment. What is your charge?"

Mademoiselle Rose hesitated exceedingly. At last she said, "I know nothing of English charges."

"Well, and I know nothing of French ones," said Miss Mary, smiling. "Will you tell me what you were in the habit of charging for such a dress as this in France?"

More hesitation, and a deeper colour than ever through the sallow skin, and then the words low spoken—

"I was not a dressmaker in France. My sister and I, we worked for amusement only. She dressed her dolls, and she was my doll. I sometime made her dresses."

It was Miss Mary's turn to be confused.

"Forgive me," she said; "I must have pained you. How grieved I am."

But Mademoiselle Rose had recovered herself.

"It has been a pleasure to make the dress," said she, "and if you will add to your kindness by naming your own price, I shall be most grateful."

"And I will do so," said Miss Mary, "with this understanding, that you stay and drink tea with me before you return to Cobden. You know Dr. Staynes, I think; I will ask him to stay too."

But Mademoiselle Rose decidedly refused. In fact she seemed thoroughly distressed when urged, and Miss Mary saw at once she must say no more about it, so with a few parting words and a promise that she would come and pay her debt as soon as she could

ascertain what it ought to be, Mademoiselle Rose hurried out of the house as Dr. Staynes came in.

Miss Mary looking at him observed a flush mount over his face as he caught sight of Mademoiselle Rose, though it was so momentary as to leave her in doubt if she had seen rightly.

After some discourse respecting the Doctor's patient, Miss Mary said, "You have got a genius at Cobden, Doctor, without knowing it. Mademoiselle Rose is a very skilled workwoman, and has turned me out a dress which would do honour to a modiste of the first water."

"I think I told you," was the Doctor's answer, "that her skill was rather above what was needed here; at least, I heard so. Good morning; I must get back as fast as possible," and he was out of the house in a great hurry. Nothing more to be got out of him; that was plain enough, and Miss Mary was a little piqued, as was natural.

She went, however, to Cobden with the money for her dress, and paid Mademoiselle Rose, and several times afterwards she gave her needlework to do out of pure kindness, and she would have me now and then go to see her and take her a nosegay or a French book. But she never renewed her invitation to tea, nor in any way tried to win Mademoiselle Rose's confidence again. Mademoiselle Rose always showed herself very grateful for these little kindnesses, and would sometimes look at me during my visits in a wistful way, as if she wanted to say something, and yet could not bring herself to speak the word. Once she asked me about my master, the Squire, and where he was, and if he would ever come back and live at the Hall. But I thought this question forward in a stranger, and was so backward in my answers that she never said anything more of that kind to me. It has often seemed odd to me since, when I came to know the truth, that neither Miss Mary nor I should ever have guessed it, especially after the affair of the rosary. But there is no accounting for these things; we never did.

III.

July passed, and I think it was the beginning of August, when one evening, just as I had come for Miss Nelly, Miss Mary, as she sometimes did, seeing the Doctor ride wearily past her gate, sent me out to ask him in to drink tea with her. He must have been very tired, I thought, for he answered quite eagerly that he would do himself the honour

of stopping (that was always his phrase), so Miss Mary sent me and my child home, and she and the Doctor sat down to tea alone.

What passed I will tell you as well as I can from my recollection of Miss Mary's own words, as she related it to me afterwards.

"I filled the tea-pot as usual, and served him with bread-and-butter and tea-cake before I entered into any conversation. He looked tired and harassed, and I knew the best thing was to make him eat and drink. But he seemed too much pre-occupied to benefit by my remedies, and I was sure that he ate and drank mechanically, his mind all the while full of something else. I talked of the beauty of the evening, of some trifling ailment of Nelly's, and of her progress in her lessons. And then I laid my hand upon a book which lay on the window seat within reach. 'By-the-bye,' I said, 'may I trouble you to take this book to Mademoiselle Rose? It is the second volume of one that she is reading.' He looked up with a start, and replied that he would do so gladly.

"'Gladly,' he repeated, and looked full at me in a strange, defiant kind of way. I did not in the least understand what the look meant, but something compelled me to go on and say—

"'How curious it is, that she is no dress-maker after all!' The Doctor made a sudden movement, and nearly upset his tea-cup.

"'She told you that?' he said.

"'Yes; why should she not tell me?' said I, a little mischievously, I own, 'as it seems she has told *you*!'

"'I am a friend,' stammered the Doctor, who is not usually at a loss for words, but now seemed at fault, 'that is—she has known me—I have attended her all the winter—she—'

"'She has given you all her confidence, and seems oddly unwilling to bestow a grain upon me,' said I, a little piqued. 'Not that I wish to know anything she is desirous of concealing from me, but I had taken an interest—a fancy—the French tongue always goes to my heart;' and here I know I faltered. Then recovering my composure with an effort, I added, 'I shall not frighten her with any more questions, Dr. Staynes. Pray tell her so. Poor thing!' and here I regained the temper I had for a moment lost," (which I don't believe, mind, for Miss Mary *never* lost her temper).

"'Poor thing!—if she ever wants a woman's counsel, or sympathy, she will always find it if she comes here—tell her that too.'

“Will you have another dish of tea, or some strawberries and cream?”

“Looking up with moist eyes, for a great many feelings and memories were in my heart, I was astonished to see that the Doctor's were full of a strange trouble of some sort, and they were misty without doubt, and yearning, and altogether unlike Dr. Staynes's usual eyes, so unlike indeed, that I sat and stared at him in bewilderment. I was still further astonished when, taking no heed of my question about the strawberries, he got up, and said in an agitated way, ‘God bless you, madam! I will tell her, but a wife is not so much in need of a woman's help as a spinster, and Mademoiselle Rose will be my wife before a fortnight is over her head.’

“Then he sat down, blew his nose, and looked himself again.

“Amazement took away my speech for a full minute. You know the Doctor's age, nearly forty I should say, the grave, professional way he has with him, and his somewhat dry talk and manner; it all takes away any idea of love or marriage in connection with him, and yet here he was talking quite rationally of his marriage with Mademoiselle Rose in a week as a matter of course. It really took away my breath. Mademoiselle Rose, the French milliner—no, not the milliner, but the French woman, and Dr. Staynes, the sensible, downright, sober English parish doctor! Well, after my thoughts had run wild for a full minute, I should say, I recovered myself sufficiently to utter a few civil words. I don't know what they were. Commonplace and cold enough, no doubt, but I felt as if I were in a dream, and as I caught his eye, I broke off ashamed of myself, got up, and held out my hand.

“Forgive me, Doctor, I was too much surprised when you first spoke to express my feelings. I esteem you so much that I feel it incumbent upon me to go to Mademoiselle Rose to-morrow, and wish her joy.”

“But the Doctor looked troubled again as I spoke, and he did not smile, as I intended he should. On the contrary, his lips trembled a little, as he said, his eyes still fixed on me with a curious mixture of expressions in them of dread and defiance.

“I may as well tell you that she has another name. The name by which I shall marry her is Rose Josephine Salterre.”

“I don't know,” said Miss Mary, as she got thus far in her narrative. “I don't know what prompted me, at that distance of time, to burst out weeping at the sudden sound of that name, but so it was. My poor dear

lamb! My beautiful, patient sister!” said she, weeping again, “how could I help it?”

“The Doctor, poor man, did not know what to say or do, so he very wisely said and did nothing. He let me cry. But I did not cry longer than I could help; and when I was quite calm, he got up and bowed as if he were going away.

“I felt too shaken to say much, but there was one question among the many I wished to ask, which I felt must be answered before he left me.

“‘What relation—,’ I began, and he did not oblige me to finish it.

“‘A cousin,’ he replied. ‘Old Monsieur Salterre had a brother. Rose is his daughter.’

“‘Ah,’ I said, ‘she spoke now and then of her cousins.’

“‘One word, madam,’ said the Doctor, ‘may I or may she come to you to-morrow, and tell you anything you wish to know?’

“‘Yes,’ I replied, ‘that will be best. I own I do not feel equal to much conversation now. I am so surprised—so startled—’

“I held out my hand. The Doctor, as he took it, looked wistfully at me, with a look I could not understand at the time, and then he said ‘good-bye,’ and went.

“It occurred to me afterwards, that he must have waited for my felicitations, and that I had failed in common courtesy and kindness in not giving them, and I resolved to make due amends on the morrow.

“The next morning I sent Nelly to play instead of keeping her to her lessons as usual, for I felt unsettled, and I could not know for certain when Mademoiselle Rose, or Dr. Staynes, or both might arrive.

“I began to employ myself in a hundred ways, and left them all, and was preparing myself for the twentieth time at least to read, when Mademoiselle Rose passed the window—alone.

“I was very glad that she was alone, and when she entered the room, with a timid, slow step, instead of her usual brisk one, and I saw that her eyes began to fill, my heart warmed to her for her own sake, as well as for the sake of her name; though she was as unlike my Aimée as it was possible to be. I held out both my hands.

“‘Mademoiselle Rose Salterre,’ I said, and the little woman impulsively caught one of my hands and kissed it.

“‘Ah!’ she cried, ‘and mademoiselle is not angry? Dr. Staynes said you would be this morning, when you had had time to think. But I said you looked too good.’

“‘Angry! why, and with whom?’ I asked.

“‘With him and me,’ said Mademoiselle Rose with a little smile; ‘but there—he *will* talk of *mésalliances*, and I, who am I? A poor little French dressmaker!’

“I began to see what she meant now. The Doctor had thought that if her real name was known to me, I or my family should object to her marrying a man who was so lowly born, as we knew him to be, and should perhaps persuade her against it, with her ignorance of English ways and manners. He fancied, foolish man, that my brother would dislike such a connexion; and he had wrought his fears into her. I call him foolish, but I do not know on reflection but what he had sufficient grounds to go upon, after what he must have heard from her about bygone times.” And Miss Mary gave one of her heavy sighs of long ago.

“I thought of all this,” Miss Mary said, “or it would be truer to say that it flashed through my mind; and then I looked at the little figure before me, with the eager French face, and the quaintly simple dress, and I said—

“‘My dear, Dr. Staynes is greatly mistaken. You are no doubt above him in birth, but he is a generous, high-minded man, and should have known us better.’

“‘Thanks, thanks, mademoiselle!’ cried the little woman tearfully. ‘I love to hear you say so; you have taken such a load from my heart;’ and she made a pretty gesture with her hands of flinging something away. And then I made her sit down, and got her to tell me all I wanted to know. The substance of it was that Monsieur Ignace Salterre, brother to my poor sister’s father, had lived in the provinces, after his wife’s death, with his two daughters, Rose and Antoinette, who was eleven years younger. The family lived in comfort, but not in luxury, like the Parisian hawker, and there had never been much intercourse between the two, though there seems to have been a strong sentiment of admiration and affection on the part of Rose for her beautiful cousin. Her marriage to Herbert, my father’s anger, and her subsequent death, made a very painful impression upon them, and naturally enough deepened Monsieur Salterre’s feelings of dislike to intercourse with English people. When his brother’s failure took place he was involved in the common ruin. He was proud with the pride of a weak mind, that could not stand up against misfortune. A sudden illness prostrated him, and he died in a week from the day when the news from Paris arrived. Rose, like many women who

until they are tried display no particularly heroic qualities, proved a heroine now in the real sense of the word, with courage and wit, and readiness to act, which came out unwittingly in her way of telling her story.

“Antoinette was only fourteen, and had been the pet of her father and the light of her sister’s eyes. She was quite a child, and Rose felt that she must part from her for a time in order to carry her own plan into execution. This was to go to England as she knew many others had done, to make money there by the only talent she possessed, that of needlework, to form a home for her sister, and then when that home, however humble, was secured, to return to France and fetch her. The terrible part of the scheme to her was, not the voyage to England, nor the uncertainty as to what she might be exposed to when she got there—but the parting from Antoinette. It had to be done, however, and it softened the blow to the poor girl that she was able to leave her with an old friend of her father, who, though strict and rigid in her notions, and not likely to be indulgent, was kind and pious, and interested in both the girls.

“Antoinette provided for, and the lamentable parting over, Mademoiselle Salterre wrote to her uncle to tell him of her intention. She conceived that this step was all that was necessary, and, aware that he would object greatly to what she was doing, she awaited no reply, but started for England immediately. She told me very little about her first experiences, which must, I suspect, have been bitter enough. She went to London, and contracted a great dislike to it. Her health failed, and the doctor she consulted told her that she ought to live in country air if possible. She knew, of course, our name, and had heard also in what part of England we lived, and she made up her mind at once to go there. She had three reasons for this rather rash resolve. The first was that she wanted to see the only place in England which possessed a living interest for her; secondly, her ignorance. The country, to a French girl, means a good-sized town, with a promenade, and plenty of well-dressed people. She fancied that, in such a place, she should get full employment, and pass unnoticed. Thirdly, she had heard of me. She knew that I was the only one of my family who had been in the secret of Herbert’s marriage, and she said that she had a dim hope of some day seeing me, and thanking me. Her dismay was great when she saw the place she had come to, but

there was no help for it. She could not afford a second move, and so she settled herself down in the dull country village, just as autumn was fading into winter. She refused no work, however rough and coarse; never complained, and hid in her own breast all the disappointment she must have suffered. Poor thing! I could see that that first month had been very, very hard to bear. From the moment, however, that she made the acquaintance of Dr. Staynes, her lot brightened. She consulted him first about her cough, with a great dread of the expense such a step might bring with it; and when he repeated his visits, and continued to prescribe for her, she fairly told him that she could not afford a bill, and therefore must decline seeing him any more. She said that he stared with astonishment (I had not believed the Doctor could be such a Jesuit!), and asked her if it were possible she did not know that his first visit only was a professional one, and that the rest were perfectly voluntary on his part, and, as such, had nothing to do with money. What with her ignorance of English habits and of the English language, Mademoiselle Rose was easily deceived; and so the acquaintance grew, and deepened into something more than acquaintance on both sides.

"I asked her, when she got so far, why the Doctor, who knew me well, had not told me about her, and why he had seemed so reluctant to mention her name when I asked him about her. She coloured deeply at my question.

"*'I did not wish it at first,'* she said; *'how could I know you would be so good? I concealed my name, for I could not bear to think that you should fancy I came here to be helped by any of your family. You would have done the same in my place, mademoiselle.'*

"I owned that I should.

"*'But,'* she went on, *'after I had seen you two or three times, and heard about you from Mrs. Williams, and when he asked me to marry him, then I wished you to know. The idea of keeping up a secret was painful to me, for I felt I wanted no help then, and my motives could not be called in question. But he objected.'* And she stopped, colouring again still more deeply.

"*'He thought I—my brother would object,'* said I. *'I understood that; but we had no right.'*

"*'That was not all, mademoiselle,'* said Rose. *'I will tell you now, though you will smile.'*

"And her simple narration of the jealousy

of the Doctor, and of his wish to keep his newly-found possession to himself, and his dislike of her getting known and talked of, nearly did make me smile, though I kept grave, for fear of hurting the feelings of this good Rose."

I felt as Miss Mary did, and I was glad to think that Dr. Staynes was going to be so happy, and Mademoiselle Rose too, and I said so.

"And now," said she to me with tearful eyes, "I must try and do what I can to atone. One member of that family, at least, must——" She broke off. "We must contrive to make the wedding as bright and festive a one as we can. They had thought of stealing off, as it were, to Freysham (the village on the coast where the poor French lady died) to be married. But it must be here. We must show that we heartily approve the match. I wish I could transport that poor little sister over from France; but that is out of the question, so Nelly must be bridesmaid. She shall help you and me to dress the church with flowers, and she shall give the bride a posy. I will write to my brother, and he shall send her a wedding gift."

She looked so bright and young as she spoke, that I felt more strongly than usual how completely she lived for the sake of other people, and said so to her, for which she rebuked me.

Well, the wedding-day came, and went, and the old church which stood close to the Hall was dressed with flowers, and the churchyard path strewn with lilies, and the Doctor and his wife, the former very quiet and grave, the latter beaming in her lilac-coloured silk and white bonnet, came and had breakfast and bride-cake at the manor.

Just before they started for their wedding trip Miss Mary presented Mr. Herbert's wedding gift of a silver teapot and cream ewer, and when they came back at the end of a fortnight she had furnished the little drawing-room for them, as her own present to them both. There they lived very happily for many years. They never had any children; but Antoinette came to live with them after a time, and a winning little creature she was.

She married a Frenchman afterwards, and went back to her own country.

The Doctor died before his wife, and she went to live with Antoinette in her turn; but I thing she got so fond of England, that it was a pang to her to leave it. What wonder, when the happiest part of her life was spent here, and she left behind her her husband's grave!"

SORROW AND SIGHING.

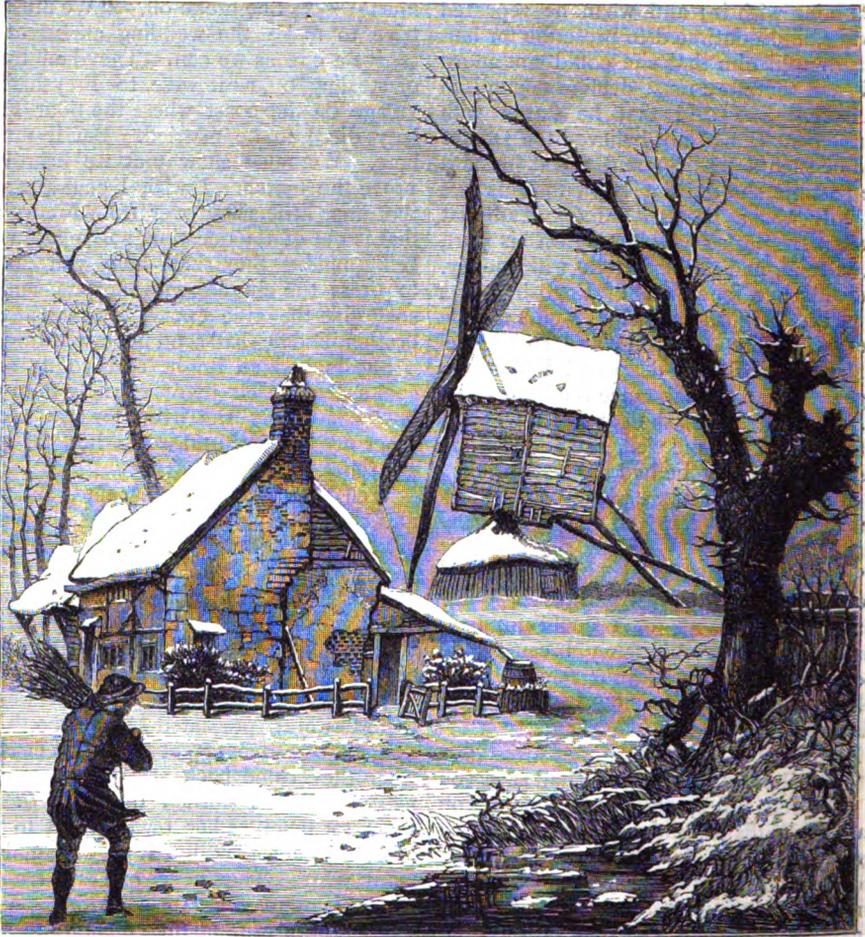
"Sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

I.

THE morn was breaking, the day was fair,
 And heavy with fragrance the dewy air,
 Yet on many a brow were the lines of care.
 But what do the voices of nature say?
 "At length shall dawn a more radiant day,
 And 'sorrow and sighing shall flee away.'"

II.

'Tis winter, and over the hardened snow
 Coldly the bitter north winds blow ;
 Each streamlet and river has ceased to flow :
 Yet a robin is perched on the evergreen spray,
 Singing clearly all through the dreary day,
 "Sorrow and sighing shall flee away."



III.

Now tempest the morning ushereth in,
 And clouds fly o'er us on threatening wing,
 Oh, are there no voices still left to sing?
 Look at that rent, where a single ray
 Through the storm-cloud pierces its lonely
 way,
 Saying, "Sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

IV.

In every clime is the hopeful strain,—
 For ever repeated again and again ;
 And we can but listen, it sounds so plain ;
 We'll join the chorus, as well we may ;
 With singing we'll welcome the glorious
 day,
 When "sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

MAT COPPINGER'S LESSON.

I.

ON Christmas-day, 18—, a son and heir was born to Mr. Coppinger, of Marsh Abbots. It was not only a son and heir, but an only child after ten years of marriage. Great were the rejoicings, though they were necessarily subdued as yet, and though they even tended to subdue the festivities of the season both in the dining-room and the servants' hall. Mrs. Deer, the portly house-keeper, said she did not care a "pickle," though the forfeits and snap-dragon were curtailed, now that there was a young master, at whose coming of age she would still hope to carry the keys of the store-room and linen-presses of Marsh Abbots.

Mr. Coppinger himself, an extremely reserved man, became almost demonstrative in the expression of his happiness.

"It is the best Christmas gift I ever got," he said to his unmarried sister, who resided with her brother and his wife at Marsh Abbots.

"I hope it will be a gift to more than you, George, considering the day on which our child has been born," answered Nunks Coppinger. She had been familiarly called Nunks, not only because her proper name was Unton, but because she was a name-daughter and remote descendant of the very Unton who, becoming the wife of a popular statesman of his day, was termed Nunks by him, in heavy playfulness, in the letters which have since passed into national property.

"I trust little Mat—he'll be named for our father, Nunks—will do no discredit to his name and antecedents," said Mr. Coppinger, with a shade of dryness. He held that his sister, Nunks, though an excellent person, like most single women of her style, zealous over-much in good works.

It was characteristic that Mr. Coppinger called his son "little Mat" within an hour of his birth, while Mrs. Coppinger clung to the fondling word "baby" after the child was a sturdy little fellow, running about, and progressing from petticoats to knicker-bockers. But one reason for the mother's habit was, that as Mat had no predecessor, so he had no successor of his own generation.

The frosty, starry night closed in on the new, blessed element vouchsafed to what had been the somewhat stagnant peace and prosperity of the childless house.

The use and wont revels which had followed on the morning's attendance at church,

received compensation for the cautious "hush!" whenever the mirth threatened to grow fast and furious, by the permission to drink the young squire's health in a special bumper, and by the announcement that Mr. Coppinger, in addition to his express bounty to the poor on the occasion, was to allow a "thundering" donation to the ringers, who had, in spite of the holiday, made known the late event to an interested neighbourhood.

Mr. Coppinger lingered over his coffee in the solitude of his dining-room, not caring to break the solitude by repairing to the drawing-room to the society of his sister. Already he had withdrawn into himself with his dreams and schemes, and at that moment he was better company for himself than any other mortal could have been for him.

Little Mat would carry on the old name, and win for it fresh distinction. In his mind's eye Mr. Coppinger did not see the pink morsel whose long flowing robes were so out of proportion to the small bit of humanity which they surrounded and set off; but a chubby boy learning to ride, an active lad the captain of the cricket-field, a thoughtful young man, possibly a double first at Oxford, a more or less distinguished member of the Bar, with a seat in Parliament as a further stepping-stone to his rising ambition—a seat provided by the influence and wealth possessed by Mr. Coppinger, not as the squire of Marsh Abbots alone, but as the proprietor of West Indian estates which had been in the family for three generations.

All that Mr. Coppinger had ever in his secret soul imagined that he himself might be, but had not been, except in a lame and impotent manner, he saw his late-given son and heir triumphantly achieving.

If Mr. Coppinger's views were in the least degree shared by his household, no wonder that in the spacious room overhead the great object of attention and admiration was not the glad, pale mother among her lace, cambric, and damask, but the unconscious infant with winking, unseeing eyes and ungrasping hands.

The mother was the first in bestowing the homage. "My baby, my beautiful baby," the weak voice kept repeating. "Are you sure he is all right, nurse? Is the pillow soft enough for him, and does the curtain shade him sufficiently? I must show him to his father again before I go to sleep for the night."

Miss Coppinger put aside the last of her multiplied Christmas work in the big empty

drawing-room, and looked out of the window nearest her on the pure whiteness of the hoar-frost covering the earth below, and on the deep blue of the sky lit up by the stars above, while she listened to the regular footfall of her brother as he paced the dining-room in his happily-mounting fancies—to the muffled movements of the nurse in Mrs. Coppinger's room, to the faint cheerings and rappings of the table from the servants' hall. She thought of the child born in Bethlehem who gave name and meaning to that day, how rude was his cradle, and in what a life of labour and sorrow as the ransom for many, the manger was the first resting-place.

II.

The treatment bestowed on Mat Coppinger during succeeding Christmas-days, and the numerous unmarked days between, took its colour from the treatment bestowed on his first day. From his father he had what discipline he received, his mother gave the chief indulgence, and his aunt Nunks held up before him a higher standard.

Mat was still a lad when his mother died. Her illness was sudden, and by the time he was brought home from school, she was barely able to recognise him and take leave of him. But she roused herself by a great effort, the passion of mother-love swelling at her heart serving her for a stimulant.

"Are you there, my boy? Don't be frightened," she said in her faint voice.

"No, mamma," answered Mat, swallowing a sob manfully; "but oh! ain't you any better?" he questioned wistfully.

"I'll never be better in this world," she answered, with conviction. "I'm going away from you all. Are you sorry to lose me, Mat?" she added quickly, with the human craving for sympathy.

"To be sure I am," replied the bewildered boy, with boyish bluntness. "I would do anything to make you well again; you must get well, mamma."

"No, no, it is not God's will; pray to Him, dear, that we may meet again." Her voice was sinking in exhaustion, and she looked feebly for help to her sister-in-law.

"You bid him be a good man for Christ's sake and yours," prompted Nunks Coppinger, thinking for both mother and son through her own sorrow—above all thinking of Mat's future, how he would never forget this meeting and parting, and that a promise doubly sacred, because given at such a time, might be a help to him in the battle of life.

"Yes, Mat," his mother assented, with all the strength left her.

"Yes, mother," was Mat's subdued pledge.

He was sent out of the room, not loth to be released from a position so strange and trying to him, that his mother might try to sleep—a sleep which proved that of death.

III.

Mat Coppinger took no honours at the university. He had fair abilities, but he did not work hard to win honours. He was not plucked; for just as he stopped short of being a reading man, he stopped short of being a fast man.

Mr. Coppinger had wished his son to study for the Bar, and Mat entered his name and ate his dinners, and then discovered that he had no bent for the law.

Mr. Coppinger became a little more demonstrative over this last contradiction on Mat's part. "Since you are disposed to be content with the modest position of a country gentleman, and find that you have no vocation for anything higher," he wrote to his son a little dryly, "I think that you had better come home at once, and acquaint yourself with country matters—I mean with what may be in justice looked for from you after you fill my place, and with the management of the Marsh Abbots estate, on which your prospects will depend to a greater extent than I had at one time believed, not only from your abandonment of the Bar, but from losses which I am sorry to say have arisen in the Jamaica property. I propose to go out to Rocca myself in about a month. Your residence at Marsh Abbots will be the more desirable because of my absence. You are aware that old Broderip is dead. Griffiths, the new steward, promises fairly, but has hardly had a trial. Even your aunt Nunks is affected by the spirit of change. She has agreed to accompany her old friend, the late vicar's daughter, who has been ordered to Madeira as a last chance for her health."

Mat did not dispute his father's will, though he exercised his Englishman's privilege of grumbling. "What am I to do poking down at Marsh Abbots, when my father and Aunt Nunks are off. Had not he better have remained at home and entrusted me with the West Indian business?" The idea had just struck Mat. He knew very little of the family's West Indian concerns. Neither had he, young man though he was, any very burning curiosity to see how that tropical land lay. His long vacations had included as much travelling north, south, east, and

west, from Norway to the Grecian Isles, with a run over to the United States, as would have appeased the wandering hunger of all save an ardent vagabond; but Mat Coppinger's defect was that ease and self-indulgence had robbed him early of ardour.

Marsh Abbots had a great mansion-house of white stone, built in the days when no country house was held complete without pillar and portico. It was set down in its park-like paddock, in an old fen country abounding in sedgy pastures and willowy coppices.

Mat's disgust was like much about him—superficial.

In however fault-finding a spirit, he meant to fulfil his part of the contract which his father had set him. He put his shoulder languidly to the wheel, and warmed a little to his work. Very soon he got into a regular track of occupations and amusements, and was tolerably well occupied and amused.

He rode and walked by degrees over all the acres which were destined to belong to him. He examined crops and live-stock, and tried to settle to his own satisfaction the degree of cultivation which the land was receiving, and whether it would bear more with corresponding remuneration. He looked at every building and bit of fence; he inquired into the drainage. He did not neglect the condition of the tenants and labourers, as their prosperous condition seemed to him essential to the prosperity of the whole concern. He had consultations with the new steward on fresh systems of manure and cropping, on fresh applications of machinery to country operations.

Under the head of amusement Mat took what hunting was left him; he revived his personal interest in the rearing and breaking in of colts and puppies. He even condescended to return to his boyish partiality for poultry, plagued the heart out of his hen-wife by his stringent laws and requirements, and became fanatical on questions of spurs and hackles.

The neighbours were old friends of Mat's family, and he visited them faithfully (though not one of them was particularly congenial to his taste and temper), and his runs up to town were brief and occasional.

He spent an hour or two in the library every morning, and after he had studied the newspaper he took to brushing up his classics better than he had brushed them up in his college. He was musical, and he had his Aunt Nunks's old grand piano replaced by his own cottage piano of the latest and most approved construction, on which he

could rattle, dash, or meander, and bring himself into harmony with twilight and moonlight, cloudy gloom and brooding sunshine—while he said that he detested sentiment.

In conclusion, as Mat attended church regularly every Sunday morning, he had the reputation of being an exemplary, irreproachable young fellow. But without the faintest sense of being a hypocrite, though a formalist must needs be a modified hypocrite, Mat had no more idea of taking prayers and lessons to himself, and seeking to act them out in his every-day life, than tens and hundreds of thousands of Christian worshippers of every creed and denomination.

I do not say that no effect was produced on Mat Coppinger by his nominal Christianity. Yet I cannot conceive that a man could be losing his life to save it, whose own profit and pleasure—granting that they were lawfully vested so far—were his single consistent aim. He heard of the world lying in wickedness and misery, and whether he gave thorough credence to the fact or not, he never lifted a finger to deliver the world, unless by helping its material prosperity in pursuing his own. He was a man who knew nothing of repentance, of spiritual struggles, of aspirations which rose high above the world while they held the whole world within their grasp.

IV.

Mat's life at Marsh Abbots, at which he had kicked to begin with, but which he had come in his youth to rejoice in mildly, after the fashion of sated and half-weary young men, was still not so full as to prevent him from hearing with some self-congratulation that the nearest country-house had been taken by an exceptionally desirable tenant.

Mr. Hoare was one of her Majesty's judges, whose reputation had penetrated even to the rural parish of Wrinkleham in which the Wildernesse was situated. Happily for the neighbourhood, the judge had taken a fancy for the only picturesque and the most out of repair and inconvenient dwelling in the parish, which was yet capable of being converted into a temporary home for an accommodating family.

The house was a yellow, red-roofed pile of main buildings and out-buildings, in which gables and stacks of chimneys were conspicuous above a close drapery of ivy and roses. The original situation had been in a hollow between two coppices—the undergrowth of which had been allowed to encroach and tangle till the place was like its name.

Mat Coppinger was not oppressed with

want of confidence any more than the mass of his compeers, but he did have a feeling as he was setting out to call on Mr. Hoare, that the distinguished judge might be disposed to treat a young fellow and a country neighbour *de haut en bas*—either to smile in calm superiority over the notion of such companionship, or to shake off the very idea with privileged irritability. Fortunately for Mat, he found the great man had left his greatness behind him, if he had brought his goodness with him.

When Mat arrived he discovered the greater part of the Hoare family in the glade which served for a lawn, before the house, so engrossed in tossing its crop of hay that they were some moments before they were aware of the presence of a visitor. The judge was there with straw hat and a shooting coat, while his legs were encased in such gaiters as Mat had not seen squires wear in his day. A brown-haired, brown-eyed young lady, who looked like a shepherdess in a pastoral, in her white gown and blue ribands with her rake, came next. There were two little girls still in grey linen frocks; while to help the judge to keep order and get any work done, there was one other man, a well-grown, sedate-looking lad of nineteen, whose sedateness gave way at times to a double abandonment of frolic, as was evident from the manner in which Mat saw the son of the house suddenly turn and, leading the irregular forces, make a dash at the judge with the hay. The next moment the wearer of her Majesty's ermine was enveloped in a cloud of flying grass, which he fought to parry and cast back upon his assailants, while he shouted in as great glee as the youngest, "You shockingly disrespectful children, shame! to take a man at a disadvantage. Fair play, Bill, Katie!"

Everybody stopped, and stared when the servant announced Mat; but nobody was disconcerted, least of all the judge, though being a stout man he had to deliver his greeting pantingly.

"I hope you do not object to horse play, Mr. Coppinger. You see we are abroad for the holidays, and I am afraid we forget ourselves sometimes."

Then Mr. Hoare welcomed Mat with urbanity, and named to him the judge's daughters and son. "Shall we move into the house, or should you prefer to remain with us here? Right," he said with hearty emphasis when Mat decided in favour of the latter suggestion; "we have not such a drawing-room," added the judge, letting his eyes travel admiringly round the space encircled by hazel, hawthorn, and elder bushes. "As for a study,

we turn our back upon it for the present—nor have we such a couch," waving Mat to a seat and throwing himself down with a long-drawn sigh of content on the fragrant swathes of grass in the shadow of the half-formed haystack of an earlier crop. "And now, chits," he told the little girls, "go in and see if Lambert cannot send us out luncheon, in which Mr. Coppinger will perhaps join us."

Mr. Hoare entertained Mat with the charm of a gracious bearing and no mean talent for conversation—sitting behind the haystack. But although the host was willing to follow where the guest led, it was plain that Mr. Hoare was inclined to let politics, social science, and town's talk drop into the background, and that the wish of his heart that day, was to give himself up to country interests. Mr. Hoare was as full of the rat hunt which his Scotch terrier Jock had conducted with success the preceding evening, as he might have been expected to show himself in the case of a difficult legal decision.

Mr. Hoare was not singular in taking to the country. Bill betrayed an alarming addition to natural history by an unprovoked inquiry whether Mr. Coppinger had any particular acquaintance with the habits of the ousel. Even the little girls wished their papa to ask Mr. Coppinger whether hedgehogs were very common in the neighbourhood, since they had found one by the edge of the wood, before breakfast. And Jane Hoare, the young lady with the brown eyes, who had also good-humouredly saucy dimples in her fresh cheeks, politely questioned Mat's deprecatory statement that the Hoares had got the only pretty bit of scenery in the parish of Wrinkleham within the broken-down fences of the Wilderness.

"If Mr. Coppinger knew that you make pictures yourself, my dear," said Mr. Hoare, with a comical little bow, "he would probably give more weight to your opinion."

"Papa, it is too bad of you to prejudice Mr. Coppinger against my taste as that of an amateur artist. He'll expect me to make my hand into a telescope and quote Tintoret next," protested Jane, wincing a little.

When Mat was gone, the judge remarked—

"I daresay he is a nice enough young fellow—that neighbour of ours; but he might quite as well have turned up in Piccadilly or at Kensington. Young men are no longer divided into beaux and bucks, in town and country now they are cut after one pattern."

The next time Mat went to the Wilderness he saw Mrs. Hoare, fat, fair for her years, sensible and motherly.

He found his next neighbours so agreeable that he became a frequent visitor at the Wildernesse, for although the judge lamented for his own sake that Mat was not more rustic, still he made Mat cordially welcome, and the friendly mistress was ready to admit to her own genial family circle the young man whose own family circle was broken up for the time. His case might be Bill's one day.

Mat's father wrote home that his business in Jamaica would detain him there for another year; but Miss Coppinger's friend ventured back to England for the summer, so that his Aunt Nunks was able to be at Marsh Abbots for some weeks, a fortunate circumstance which helped to consolidate his friendship with the Hoares. Miss Coppinger took kindly to the whole family, and Mat was able to have them all, ladies as well as gentlemen, over frequently at Marsh Abbots.

v.

Some peculiarities in the Hoare family awoke Mat's attention, and had their influence on him as he grew fond of one and all.

The Hoares, young and old, were whole-hearted in always doing whatever they found to do, whether of work or play, with all their might, and had never any time to get palled. They laughed a little, quite openly, and without ill-nature, at Mat's sprouting *laissez aller* and boredom. He was prompted to show the Hoares that he could work, whether at hay-building, or thatch-mending, or carpentering; and play, whether at cricket, or croquet, or gipsy teas, or coppice charades, with the best, and so he began to earn the esteem of the juniors of the party at least.

Both Jane and Bill Hoare were incipient artists, and their present house was a stumbling-block to them. They could never give over making desperate attempts to "take" the yellow, red, and green gables, and stacks of chimneys, when they were not "studying" old tree-trunks in the coppices, rickety gates, groups of cows, and flights of birds.

The brother and sister threw as much energy into their pursuit for any three days as would have served Mat Coppinger for three months. Yet Bill would leave off in the very heat of his performance, retire within doors, and remain invisible for a time.

"What is your brother up to?" Mat inquired of Jane, the first time he missed him.

"To his mathematics," answered Jane.

"Is mathematics his hobby also?" Mat cross-questioned.

"I am afraid not," Jane said, shaking her head and laughing. "Bill's hobby is natural

history—didn't you know? And after natural history, I think he does not object to moral philosophy. Papa says that is mathematics applied to the mind, so far as it is possible. Both Bill and papa are anxious that he should make progress in mathematics."

"But look here, Miss Hoare; Bill has plenty of time for taking his degree," objected Mat. "Mr. Hoare need not require him to read this summer."

"But the question is not about taking his degree; it is about knowing mathematics," explained Jane. "And papa does not require Bill to read; it is Bill himself who would not omit reading an hour every day."

"He would prefer painting," said Mat.

"To be sure he would, but for that reason he would be careful of neglecting his mathematics; and now I am going to stop also."

"Are you going in to read mathematics?"

"Not to-day; I should only be a hindrance, though 'Bill has taken me beyond the Ass's Bridge—indeed, he has. I am going to see Mrs. Armitstead, at the vicarage."

"Why are you leaving that bush of ivy, which you wished particularly to finish, to go on a visit which I should think would do as well any other time?"

"You are wrong. This is the afternoon when Mrs. Armitstead's class get their sewing lesson, and I promised to help her."

"Just like my aunt Nunks," complained Mat, though he could hardly tell why he was dissatisfied. "She must always have a train of poor folks, old people and children, to break in upon her arrangements. I daresay she has left such a train behind her in Madeira. You ladies seem to get up a kind of female apostleship—particularly in the country."

"But Bill is going to meet the vicar's class of young men to tell them about the ways of the Black Forest, where we were last year," argued Jane; "and in town I am junior secretary, under mamma, to a private little parish relief society. We cannot do much, but we have provided a Home, and we are getting up a crèche, in which Katie and Mat are to be allowed to help."

"I suppose Bill likes to practice holding forth on his travels to our ploughboys and mechanics," suggested Mat, with a little shrug of his shoulders.

"No," she answered, "Bill does not like holding forth, as you call it, one bit. He has not much to say, and he is shy, so it goes altogether against the grain with him."

Mat said no more about Bill, but as he was helping Jane to gather up her brushes, he remarked, apropos of seeing the judge

and Mrs. Hoare come out of the house and go for a stroll. "I am glad that Mr. and Mrs. Hoare are such a comfortable-looking couple; it is what seniors should be."

Jane paused for a moment, and then, with a merry twinkle in her eyes, replied, "Yes; and the one reason why they are comfortable is, that papa is one of the hardest-working judges in England, and mamma has energy to spare from her household."

"You must not keep us longer," little Mat Hoare strictly forbade her big brown namesake, when he met her and Katie, in one of the lanes, and after having assisted her to secure the first blackberries, proposed to show her where to find mushrooms.

"And why not, madam? Shouldn't you like to gather mushrooms, or are you afraid they would prove toad-stools?"

"Oh, dear no, if you showed us the right ones; besides, mamma would try them with salt and a silver spoon. It would be great fun—I should just like to surprise papa with a lapful," exclaimed the little girl wistfully. "But we have got to go home and have tea ever so soon"—she hastily pulled herself up—"in time to let other people—Bessie there, and Anne, and Lambert—go to the flower-show at Ford."

"Of course you have," declared Mat, with a tone of profound conviction; "but don't you find it hard to go in even to oblige other people, whether you like it or not?"

"Well, it is a little hard," hesitated Katie, who was shy, like Bill, "at first, but the hardness soon goes off, you know," added the child; "and then to do what we don't like, but what is right, grows best of all."

"You little ascetic!" cried Mat in surprise.

"I don't know what ascetic is," declared outspoken Mat, "but Jane says that it is grand to do right things which we don't like to do, and that though it does not feel nice at first, it will soon feel nice."

"Do you know how it feels?" asked Mat, amused.

"A little," owned the other Mat modestly; "because Katie and I have to go to bed dreadfully early."

"But Mat," amended conscientious Katie, "Jane comes and sits by us, when the pleasant things are going on in the drawing-room, and that makes us ashamed to feel cross."

Mat Coppinger was considerably improved by his intercourse with the Hoares, though his feelings with regard to them were soon far from disinterested. His regard for the family had culminated in an attachment to Jane. If he could get Jane Hoare to think

well of him, to listen to him, to marry him, Marsh Abbots would become a new place, and he would be a happy man. He was not without hope, though it was tempered by fear, with regard either to Jane or her family. If he had known it, his best hope lay in the fact that having begun by laughing a little at him, they had seen him amend his error, and owed him that among other debts of gratitude.

It was in favour of Mat's projects, that at the end of the judge's recess, he remained so enamoured of the Wilderness, that he entered into terms with its owner, and took the house for a period of years, intending to repair it so as to prevent its falling to pieces, and to use it for a retreat at Easter and Midsummer.

But Mat did not mean to wait till the season of cuckoos and primroses. Reckoning, without doubt, on his father's approval, he meditated a winter's visit to town where his fate might be settled. With that not very distant prospect before him he was able to bid good-bye to Jane for the present, with a kind of agitated resignation.

"Man proposes and God disposes." Within a fortnight of the Hoares' departure in October, the simplest thing, pregnant with grave issues, happened. Mat Coppinger going out to have a smoke, a look at the stars, and to think of Jane Hoare, forgot the fact that some new wire fencing had been put up between one corner of the lawn and the shrubbery, stumbled, fell, and as it was judged, severely bruised his knee. Six weeks afterwards Mat was still lying on a sofa in his room. The bruise had resolved itself into a serious injury to the knee-joint.

The suffering, to which he was as unused as to the forced inaction, and the uncertainty were a sharp trial to Mat Coppinger.

He did his best to bear it. He was not without solace in the commiseration and good offices of his neighbours, who were even cruelly kind. He could reflect, if there were any comfort in the reflection, that thousands of his fellow-creatures were a vast deal worse off than he was. Yet Mat found his best resources miserable failures.

He had refrained from conveying to his father or his aunt all the consequences of his accident, though he had been thinking a good deal of the former in the leisure of those long days and nights, his thoughts taking this direction—how would Mr. Coppinger like it if he were fated to see his son a sickly cripple, cut off even from the active usefulness and enjoyments of a country gentleman?

Just at this time when Mat's small stock of

patience was exhausted, when his heart was sinking, when his wounded spirit was beginning to chafe itself, he was at once roused and stunned by the reception of a telegram conveying the bare intelligence of his father's death.

The next post brought a confirmatory letter with the melancholy details. Mr. Coppinger had been much worried and worsted by defalcations in his property, and by disputes, to which the defalcations led, in the colonial courts. He had finally lost an important case which had to do with the title-deed of the larger portion of his estate.

Before he could recover from the fatigue and anxiety of his attendance in court he had been seized with fever and had sunk from the commencement of the attack to its speedy and fatal termination. Among his papers there had been a few lines written to his son after the decision in court, and now forwarded to Mat, according to Mr. Coppinger's last instructions.

"My dear Mat," the unfinished letter said, "I thought to have saved you not only trouble, but the better part of what was my inheritance, and should have been yours, for you are aware that the income from the estates here was always considerably in excess of that derived from Marsh Abbots. I have failed. You will see all the papers, and learn how. It will behove us to practise economy in time to come at Marsh Abbots, and I am afraid these great losses will trammel you heavily. But no more can be said than—God's will be done. I may say that I have fought the battle stoutly, as far as honesty and honour would let me, till I have lost. I am so thoroughly knocked up that I am not able to write further, and must defer finishing this till to-morrow."

After reading that letter the cry which rung through Mat's heart was no longer, what had he done to be stricken down and marked out for adversity? but what had he ever done for his father, who had willingly borne the brunt of the battle, and when beaten had thought more of Mat's loss than of his own?

Mat had done little save abstain from excesses to which he was not animal or scamp enough to incline. He had disappointed his father over and over again without compunction, not because there was not that in Mat which might have fulfilled so far his father's expectations, but because he would not brace himself, or practise self-restraint enough to accomplish his father's wishes. He had never earned his father's confidence, or done anything to break down the grievous barrier of reserve between them. Yet he had

loved his father—Mat never knew how well till now, when he felt what a difference it would make to him to see no more the grey head at the foot of the table, and the quiet face which had looked on at so much as with a silent protest. Had Mat Coppinger possessed his old vigorous health and strength, he might not have sat down long under the contrition and regret which quite as much as sorrow, seized upon him on receipt of these sad news. He might have risen and fled from the reproach and the vain yearning of his thoughts, and from God's dealings with him. It would have been the natural impulse in his love for Jane Hoare, while the fate of that love, hanging in the balance, might have served to distract and engross him still further. But not only were Mat's feet in the stocks for the present, the doctors told him at his own urgent request that all that skill could authoritatively pronounce, was that the mischief in his knee was arrested, and would in all likelihood go no farther, while the injury to his constitution might with care and time be repaired. It would be unwarrantable in them to decline to admit to Mat Coppinger that he was a permanent cripple, and his health much shaken.

On the other hand, had Mat's trifling accident with its disastrous effects been his sole discipline, it is more than probable that he would have lost its lesson. He might have grown sourer and more sullen until he was thoroughly embittered with echoing that arrogant, childish cry which seems to have so evil a charm for one class of sufferers, "What have I done to be so afflicted?" as if the cry had not been answered in the sentence which made the Captain of man's salvation perfect through suffering. Mat was left alone with his sickness and sorrow, and yet he was not alone; for One will come and take up his abode in the honest heart, which humbles itself, to bind up its wounds and break its bonds, to enlarge it indefinitely as well as to bid it go free. Mat looked at the life before him in its gravest aspect and faced the gloom; what could he do else when he had to put the thought of Jane Hoare for his wife out of the question. Impoverished in purse, crippled in person, and in the consideration of such a mere walking gentleman of social life as he himself had been, how could he presume any longer to pretend to Jane? What had he to give her in exchange for what she would bring?

The first thing that Mat did was to curtail his household, and shut up a large part of Marsh Abbots, that he might practise the economy which his father had at once gallantly and

faithfully projected, live in proportion to his narrowed income, and put the disgrace of debt as far behind him as when he was a rich man. When he was so far recovered as to limp abroad, he went to church, where he filled his father's place in the squire's pew. And the place suited the look with which sickness and loss—and something more than sickness and loss—had matured Mat Coppinger's face.

Christmas was approaching, and though Mat was doing well, both bodily and spiritually—though he had thriven as every true man and woman may, under rough buffeting, thrive by God's grace, and was growing up gradually into his full mental and moral stature, there was much depression to him in the season. It ought to have been one of rejoicing, and if life had gone differently with him, the month would have seen him up in London—it might have been free as another son in the Hoares' house. He must resign all such pleasant visions, and resign them as heroically and cheerfully as a Christian man is bound to resign his dearest wish.

But Mat's heart leapt up with gratitude for one mercy vouchsafed him, when one night, sitting in the twilight before dinner, he heard a carriage drive up to the door, and the next moment recognised the voice of his Aunt Nunks. "Mat, Mat!" was all she said for a space, as she kissed him; but he knew that in these two words were included the exclamation, "How much has passed since we parted, and has it come to this with you, my dear lad!" The next minute she was sitting without her bonnet, quietly telling him that she had returned for good, and that she would have set off within the hour she had heard that his illness was serious—the same that had brought the tidings of his dear father's death—but she had been compelled to remain to do the last duties to her friend, who had then been on her death-bed.

One incident more was to happen to Mat Coppinger before Christmas. It was hearing the announcement that the Hoares were coming down to sing their Christmas hymn among the Wildernesse holly in Wrinkleham Church. The judge had taken care that the roof of the Wildernesse was made snow-tight before he left it.

Mat was dubious whether this intelligence did not mock him with a temporary gain, only to undo him with a lasting injury. But he took the good provided for him thankfully, and after he had been once or twice with the Hoares, joyfully.

No doubt the natural man of the judge

had recoiled a little, at first, from his Jane's having anything to do with an encumbered estate and an invalided man; but did not he, as well as his family, hear how Mat Coppinger had borne his troubles, and in what spirit he had come out of them? The Hoares could see how the man was grown in the better part of him, to how much higher a stature he had reached, and was still tending.

Mat was made as free as a son of the house. The judge had never been half so kind, or Mrs. Hoare half so motherly. As for Jane, she was brought face to face with the scars which her former carpet knight had carried out of the fight, and she was soft and sweet, as well as frank and gay, in a way which Mat might be pardoned for regarding as perfection.

On Christmas-eve "a rainy cloud possessed the earth," but to Mat Coppinger it was the tranquil subsiding of the winter's storms ere the world passed anew into the spring sunshine. He could hear swelling roots and bursting buds in that rain, and his Aunt Nunks had been gathering this year's Christmas roses to mix them with the ever-greens in her great jars. Mat had been unfolding to his aunt his plans for retrenchment, and of making the best of Marsh Abbots: he had been calculating with her how much he could spare for the old accustomed charities of the house. She had been reminding him that Christmas-day was his birthday, and repeating his father's words when he had got the best Christmas gift which he had ever received.

"I am not the fellow I once was," Mat had declared, "and probably never will be again in body and estate; though, please God, I shall be a wiser, if a sadder man. It is little that we can do at our best; but if I had given of my best!" he lamented aloud.

"It would have been more to your own credit and satisfaction, Mat," his aunt had acknowledged; "but He who made the stars behind that rain-cloud has but little need of you or me, after all. Do you not think that He can afford to be magnanimous in his fulness? After that gift which He gave nearly two thousand years ago to all mankind on the first Christmas-day that the world ever saw, He has not left us much room for lamentation even over our own lamentable shortcomings. Don't you remember, Mat, the gracious doggrel of the only Christmas hymn which you heartily took to as a boy?—

"God rest you, merry gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay;
For Jesus Christ the Saviour
Was born on Christmas-day."