THE LIFE STORY OF AUNT JANET

Authoress of "Aunt Janet's Legacy"

BY

GEORGE LEWIS

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PORTRAIT OF "AUNT JANET" IN HER 88TH YEAR.

(From Photo. by A. R. Edwards.)

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ILLUSTRATED.

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INTRODUCTORY.

MANY who had read the early editions of "Aunt Janet's Legacy" frequently expressed a wish to the Authoress that she would write another book, continuing the reminiscences of her life, from the time when she kept a small school in the Back Street of Dalkeith until the publication of the "Legacy" in 1892; but the frailties of advancing years forbade the thought of undertaking so formidable a task as she believed it would be. The death of her first husband, James Kemp, as noted in the volume, took place on 5th February 1836, and that is the last date mentioned in the history. It is understood, however, that Mrs Kemp conducted the school for about two years. The account she gives of her humble educational establishment is very brief, occupying less than two pages of the book. It would

appear as if the aged writer had felt her literary task becoming burdensome to her, and that it would be a relief if the written record of her experience were brought to an end; and probably it was under such a feeling that the history is closed all too abruptly. Many other readers since "Aunt Janet's" death, charmed with the simplicity and pathos of her story, have wished to learn how it fared with the authoress during the fifty years, or thereby, intervening between the time when she was left a young widow at Dalkeith, known there as Mrs James Kemp, and the time when she lived in Selkirk, as Mrs Robert Bathgate, and became widely and well known as the authoress of "Aunt Janet's Legacy."

It was the singular privilege of the writer of this Life Story, while sitting by "Aunt Janet's" fireside, to hear her, on many occasions, recount the incidents of her chequered lifetime, always interspersing her narratives with sage reflections on the Almighty's gracious dealings with her, and enforcing the lesson which she sought so earnestly to inculcate on her Nieces, in her Legacy to them, namely, that the Ever-living God is faithful to all His promises, and that He will assuredly give guidance and help to all who put their trust in Him and call upon Him in their time of need. She has told in graphic style, in a preface to the third edition of her book, how she was led, inadvertently, into the writing of it; and in

speaking of its publication and the favour it had met with, she felt that no words could more appropriately or more truly express her sentiments than those of one of her favourite authors, Bishop Hall, who in leaving the chief events of his life on record, wrote, "Not out of a vain affectation of my own glory, which I know how little it can avail me when I am gone hence, but of a sincere desire to give glory to my God, whose wonderful providence I have noted in all my ways, have I recorded some remarkable passages of my fore-past life. . . . What God hath done for me is worthy of everlasting and thankful memory."

From these fireside conversations, from the papers placed in his hands by her nephew, Mr James K. Rae, of West Linton, and from materials kindly furnished by other friends, the writer has been enabled to place these memorials of Mrs Bathgate before the public. The volume, it is hoped, will in some measure satisfy the wish of those who have read "Aunt Janet's Legacy," in supplying further information regarding her life-history. If it should be helpful in impressing on its readers the great lesson "Aunt Janet" had in view in writing for the limited circle of her relatives, it will be a gratifying thought to the writer that he has been a co-worker with her in enforcing a lesson as much needed as ever in this age of the world.

CHAPTER I.

KIRKHILL.

ABOUT two years after Mrs Kemp had opened her children's school in the Back Street of Dalkeith, Mr Buchanan, the parish minister, called, and, after making some kindly inquiries, said he would like to examine her scholars some day. She did not know all that was meant by an examination; she had never passed through or witnessed one herself; but Mr Buchanan had always shown a friendly interest in her, and she had no objection to offer to his proposal. She mentioned to the children that the school was to be examined on a certain day, and they were quite delighted at the prospect of the monotony of the daily round of tasks being relieved by an event so important as an examination by the

minister. On the morning of the day appointed the scholars came dressed in their best, each of them displaying a flower or little sprig on the breast. Mr Buchanan brought with him two other ministers—Mr Brown of Roslin and Mr Scott-Moncrieff of Penicuik—to assist in the proceedings. The reading of the children had consisted mostly of simple passages in the Bible, and their knowledge was largely that of Scripture history and truth. Text cards, now so much used, were scarcely known at that time, but Mrs Kemp had selected a verse for every day in the year, and a friend who took an interest in the teacher's work got sets of these printed for use in the school. Chapter and verse were printed on the cards, showing where the words quoted were to be found, as John iii. 16—"For God so loved the world" etc. The ministers appeared to be much interested in the work of the day, and they expressed their surprise, as well as satisfaction, at seeing the amount of information the children had acquired, and which they had so readily at their finger ends. The teacher handed some of the cards to the minister of Roslin, saying that as a further test, he might mix them if he cared to do so, and ask the children to repeat the passage indicated by the chapter and verse on the card. This they had no difficulty in doing satisfactorily.

A party of ministers had been invited to dine that day at Mr Scott-Moncrieff's (the Duke of Buccleuch's

chamberlain, and in whose family Mrs Kemp had been a servant for many years). The examination, in which several of the gentlemen had taken part, was a subject of conversation at the dinner table. It was incidentally stated by Mr Scott-Moncrieff of Penicuik (a brother of the host) that he had been thinking of starting an infant school for the children of the work-people employed in the paper mills in his neighbourhood; he thought Mrs Kemp would be suitable for the situation, and wondered if he might mention the matter to her, with a view to her being engaged as schoolmistress. Mrs Scott-Moncrieff, the lady of the house, encouraged the idea; and her brother-in-law called and talked with Mrs Kemp on the subject. She said she really did not know anything about the proper way of conducting a school, and did not think herself qualified for the position he wished to give her. This objection Mr Scott-Moncrieff met by saying, "You can just go on as you have been doing here, and you'll do very well." He told her she would have a salary of twenty pounds a year, with a free house and a supply of coal. This was much more than she made by her teaching at Dalkeith, and—though not without some hesitation—she accepted Mr Scott-Moncrieff's offer. In due time, in the autumn of 1838, she went to her new sphere of labour at Kirkhill, near Penicuik.

Kirkhill at that time, it would appear, consisted of

about fifty cottages, low one-storey buildings, with tiled roofs. It was simply an appendage to Esk Mills, a considerable paper manufactory in the neighbourhood of Penicuik. The mills are situated on the North Esk, a stream having its rise above Carlops, in the hollow which forms a dividing line between the Pentlands and the Peeblesshire hills. A few miles from its source, and on its way to fulfil an important part at the paper manufactories established on its banks, the stream passes through the classic dell of Habbie's Howe, the scene of Allan Ramsay's "Gentle Shepherd." Lower down its rocky course, though the volume of its waters is no longer sufficient to give motive power to the machinery of the mills, the stream affords a good supply for other requirements in the paper-making processes, from Penicuik downwards. Half-a-mile below the extensive works of the well-known firm of Alexander Cowan & Sons, Ltd., it comes to do service at Esk Mills. It finds its way thither through a rocky gorge, the banks on either side of the river's course rising to a height of from 200 to 400 feet. The mills occupy a rather cramped position on an area of no great extent at the bottom of the ravine, and almost every yard of ground has been covered by the buildings and reservoirs. There was no room to spare for dwelling-houses for the mill hands. These, as a matter of necessity, had to be provided in as close proximity as possible to the

works, and the nearest situation for them was on the high ground on the left bank of the stream. It is a steep ascent from the mills to the cottages on the height, but at the time when they were erected there was no way of avoiding it. On the hill-top there is a stretch of fairly level ground, on which a number of the cottages were built in two rows, running east and west and facing each other; other three rows were erected in less regular order on the sloping sides of the hill; and an open space called The Green, left for general use, was considered to be the central point of the settlement. On the other side of the hill, facing westwards, the ground is less precipitous, and slopes gently down towards Penicuik. At the foot of the brae stands the parish church; and any one seeing the locality can readily understand how the village on the hill-top got its name. Long before there were any habitations there, the place would be known as the Kirk hill. To-day the extent of the paper mills and their product must be many times more than they were at the time when Mrs Kemp went to be village schoolmistress, and there are evidences of growth and prosperity all around. Between Penicuik and Kirk-hill, handsome villas and houses of modern style now line the way; the hill-top has also got a good many additions, a substantially built public school being amongst them; and down the slope towards the river and the mills, workmen's houses of a superior

description have been reared on all the available stances. Notwithstanding all these changes and improvements, the one-storey tile-covered cottages remain almost intact; and if the visitor will only ignore everything of modern architecture, with slated roof, he will have before his eyes the village as it was sixty years ago. At that time two of the cottages in one of the main rows had been transformed into a schoolhouse, a portion of the space being set apart for the teacher's residence; and it stands to-day not much altered in external appearance. The accommodation, however, has been enlarged, by the space of another house being thrown into it; and the premises are used as a recreation room, reading room, and library, kept up by the firm of James Brown & Co., Limited, the proprietors of Esk Mills, for the benefit of the work-people.

The situation on the hill-top commands an extensive view of the country around. The entire south front of the Pentland range, at no great distance, stands out majestically and blocks the view on the north-west, the foreground being filled in with fertile farm lands and the far-stretching plantations on the Penicuik estate. Looking northwards, in the direction of Edinburgh, and at a distance of a mile and a half, the tall chimney stalk of Mauricewood colliery recalls the disaster there in 1889, by which sixty-seven persons lost their lives—most of the bodies being

interred in the new cemetery on the northern slope of the Kirk-hill. Following the course of the North Esk eastwards, the spectator can catch glimpses of the rich and beautiful scenery in which fair Roslin, Hawthornden, and Melville Castle are embosomed. Passing all these romantic spots, the Edinburgh and Peebles line of railway pursues its course southwards, and a partial view of Kirkhill, with its tile-covered cottages, perched on the opposite ridge across the valley, is obtained as the train approaches Pomathorn station.

It was in this village, then, on the hill-top that Mrs Kemp commenced her labours among the children of the workers employed in Esk Mills. Many of the mothers, as well as the fathers, worked in the mills; and it was Mrs Kemp's duty, in addition to giving lessons to the children of school age, to take charge of some who were too young to learn, but needed to be cared for and amused while the mothers were at work. Through this combination of duties, the new school-mistress was at once regarded as a most useful functionary; as nothing less, indeed, than a blessing to the place. Her educational work was carried out on much the same lines as at Dalkeith, the instruction given being of a kind fitted to influence the hearts of the children as well as to inform their minds. They made good progress in acquiring a knowledge of letters, and ere long it was found that not a few were

deeply impressed by the spiritual truths brought before them day by day—by the sowing of the good seed of the Word of God in their hearts. That it was lasting good which had been got by many of the young people in the humble school at Kirkhill was in after days thankfully acknowledged by some of them, and evidenced by their future life and career.

A good deal of the teaching given in the school was carried by the children into their homes, and by this means the parents and older members of a family sometimes became learners as well. It was Mrs Kemp's custom to get the children into the schoolroom on the Sabbath afternoon, in order to give them instruction of a more directly religious kind; and a spirit of inquiry being abroad, some of the older people expressed a wish that they might be allowed to come and "hear the bairns get their lessons." While the Mistress's words were addressed ostensibly to the children, they were on these occasions made to have quite as direct application to the adult portion of the audience. Some of them were thus taken by guile, and, receiving the truths brought before their minds, the effect soon became apparent in their daily life and conversation. "What way, mother, does my faither an' you never pray to God, like the Mistress?" was a searching question put by a little girl. It was a sharp arrow shot from the bow of a very little archer, but who shall say it was not directed by the Spirit of

God? It led to serious thought on the part of the parents, and that was followed by the commencement of family prayer in their household; and in other families of the hamlet there was an altar erected for God's worship.

The work of the school had gone on steadily and quietly for some fifteen months, very much to the advantage of the children and for the general good, and greatly to the joy of the teacher in seeing her labours attended with so much success, when an incident occurred which had important consequences; bringing about a new condition of things in the village, giving a new direction to the current of affairs, and affecting to a serious extent the amicable relations and friendly feeling that had hitherto existed among all parties in the place.

A little girl, while attending to household duties, had her clothes caught by the fire, and she suffered severely before the flames could be extinguished. She was one of the school children, and a motherly interest was taken in her by Mrs Kemp, who was much by her bedside, doing all that was possible to alleviate her sufferings and speaking words of love and comfort to her in the hours of sore distress. All that could be done by the kindly offices of the sympathising neighbours availed not for the saving of the poor child's life, and she succumbed to her injuries in about ten hours after the lamentable occurrence. Mrs

Kemp sent an account of the accident and the attendant circumstances in a letter to a lady friend in Edinburgh, giving some details of her conversations with the little sufferer on her deathbed and telling of the composure and peace that filled her spirit in the prospect of death. The lady who received the letter was much impressed by what she read, and thought the narrative of so much interest as to deserve publication. With this in view she sent it to the "Witness" newspaper, then under the editorship of Hugh Miller. The letter readily found a place in the columns of the paper, and was copied into various periodicals of the time. It was thereafter issued as a booklet, and in this form had a wide circulation. It was also translated into French, if not some other European languages.

The story is in itself an affecting one, and it is of special interest as being the first published writing which came from Mrs Kemp's pen. It is told in simple, unaffected terms, but the fact of its being reproduced in so many publications of the period is high recommendation of its merits; and taken in connection with the success which the larger work of her old age achieved, it is not too much to say that if she had enjoyed greater educational advantages, and had her time and talents been devoted to literature during the fifty years which ran their course between her first and last attempt at authorship, the humble

schoolmistress at Kirkhill might have attained a high place as a writer of interesting books.

About two years after the letter had appeared in the "Witness" it was reprinted in the "Children's Missionary Record" (William Whyte & Co., Edinburgh, vol. 2, 1841). It appears there under the title of "The Little Flower." The editor introduces it with some sympathetic remarks, and says, "The narrative is the substance of a letter from the teacher of the Infant School at Kirkhill, near Penicuik, in the County of Edinburgh." It is from the "Missionary Record" that we transfer these pages:

It was on the 10th of October 1838 that R—— entered my schoolroom, with his daughter Eliza in one hand, and her younger brother Hugh in the other. He told me that he had brought his little boy to my school; and as he went off with Eliza, I could not help looking after her, and wishing from my heart that she also had remained. In a few minutes, however, he returned, and said "I have brought back my little girl. She has besought me with tears to allow her to attend your school; they are motherless children, and I cannot bear to hear them cry."

I shall never forget the emotion of my heart at the sound "motherless!" I felt my mind solemnised as I beheld the dear children seated together, and I lifted up my heart to God, to pray that He would give me wisdom and grace to supply to them, in some measure, the want of a mother—in an especial manner to Eliza, who had sought it with tears. God heard and answered my prayers; and although He has frustrated my plans, His plan is best.

A few weeks passed by without anything particular occurring. Eliza was one of my best readers, naturally sprightly, and a good singer. She was regular in her attendance, and always came very clean, although her father's only housekeeper. I am told that her management of household affairs was quite wonderful for one of her age. One day, when I observed her sad, and inquired what was the matter, she burst into tears, and told me that her brother had used a bad word. She had entreated him to pray for forgiveness, which he refused to do, and she looked in my face most tenderly, saying, "Oh, ma'am, I am afraid he will go to hell."

In the beginning of March 1839, she came to me, looking very happy, and said, "Mistress, I have got a halfpenny to buy a roll for my dinner, but I wish rather to put it in the mission-box." I told her that God did not require so much at her hand—that I only wished her to bring the halfpence which she used to waste. She added, "Please, ma'am, put it in; I am so sorry for the poor children who have no teacher, no minister, no Bible, and who do not know how to pray to God." As I took the little, or rather the great sacrifice, I felt ashamed of myself, for I had never made such a one. She continued to bring her halfpenny every day, and when I tried to dissuade her, she would look so sweetly in my face, and tell me she would run and get a potato from her grandmother. In the course of the following month, another little girl brought me a halfpenny and said, "Please, ma'am, take this to help to get light for the poor children who live in darkness." Before I had time to reply, Eliza said, "Margaret, the children in Africa have the sun as well as we—it is the darkness of the heart."

Soon after this, Eliza's father was seized with inflammation in the eyes, which appeared to distress her sorely. She often told me what a good father he had been, and that she was afraid lest

he should die; and when I tried to comfort her, by telling her that God is a father to the fatherless, and that he would care for her and her little brother, she still looked sad, and said, "Oh, my dear Mistress, if my father dies, will you take me and Hughie? and we will work for you when you grow old." So much tenderness combined with grace was indeed a lovely sight. I took her with me once to visit a dying child of her own name, one who I believed was also a child of God, and remarkable for patience. Eliza was deeply affected; and I learned afterwards, from the mother of the child, that she had called several times by herself, had sung some of her hymns, and said the prayer used in the school—doing all in her power to cheer and comfort the dying girl.

She was of great use to me in the school, and all the children loved her. I think I see her at the dinner hour, making the little ones repeat from her own lips a grace. Words cannot express the care and love this little girl showed myself, when I was confined to bed; she walked so softly through the room, and often read to me. Once when going from home, I asked Eliza to sleep with the little girl who had lived with me. On my return, I asked if they had read a chapter, and said their prayers. She answered, "Oh, we were very happy; we sang the 8th Psalm; I read a chapter, and Eliza prayed." Will not these children rise up and condemn those who neglect this duty? Verily, 'out of the mouths of babes and sucklings God has perfected praise!'

My reader may ask, Were there no traits of our fallen nature in this child? Did she never behave amiss? did she always display such a lovely picture of a child of God as you have described? I must confess that in many respects she was much like the other children; still with all her faults, there was something more than nature—grace had been at work. On one occasion she told a lie, but she was soon brought to feel this

grievous sin, came and confessed it before the whole school, and begged that I would pray God to forgive her.

I must now come to the last day she was in school, Sabbath, 19th January, 1840. Every one observed her on that day to be unusually attentive, and that her eye never wandered from me for one moment. I remarked it myself, and thought she was afraid I did not love her as I had done. Little did I think she was within a few hours of eternity. O, may God give me grace to be more diligent in discharging my duty to the little lambs under my care, that I may have to say at last, "Lord, here am I, and the children with me!"

On the Monday following, Eliza was left at home to prepare the dinner, while her aunt was at the mill. In putting the pan of potatoes on the fire, her pinafore caught the flames, and before any one came to her assistance she was burnt in a dreadful manner. It was about one o'clock when they came to tell me the sad news. On entering the room I saw the form of a child standing in the bed, and heard from it a well-known voice—"Mistress, do you know me? I'm a' burned. I have no mother, and my father is far away. O, this is dreadful suffering!" I took her in my arms, and said, "It is, my lamb; but you know who suffered more." "O, yes;" she exclaimed, "my Saviour; I know I am dying; but I am not afraid to die. There is no fire in heaven, that happy place." I said "are you glad, my dear, that you have been taught to know and love your Saviour?" She said, "O, yes! if I had not known and loved my Saviour, I must have gone to hell, where I could never have got a drop of water to cool my tongue. But though this fire burns my body, it cannot hurt my soul; and I cannot go to hell, because I love God, and He loves me." I could not help saying to myself, "Happy child! though the chariot be of fire that is come for thee, it will safely carry thee to thy Father's house, into the immediate presence of God, where there is

fulness of joy, and to His right hand, where there are pleasures for evermore."

She repeated several of her hymns—in particular, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds," and "Here, we suffer grief and pain." I asked her if she was able in the midst of her own sufferings to think of her Saviour's. "O, yes," she said; I will soon see Him; and he will not have a crown of thorns on His head." Her sufferings were extreme, and it was only for a short time that she could speak. She said, "O, Mistress, Heaven must be a happy, happy place! You told us on the first Sabbath of the year, that it was possible some of us would die before the year was over. You said you did not know which you could best spare, but God knew which to take. I must die first! but I am not afraid. How sweet is that hymn—"But if some one of us should die!" She said, "Oh, let me see my own brother Hughie!" I took him in my arms to the side of her bed, when she said, "Oh, Hughie, keep from the fire, say your prayers, and do not learn bad words, or you will go to a bad place."

She asked me to lie down beside her, which I did, and heard her repeat "Oh, send Thy beloved angels to carry my soul, like that of Lazarus, into Abraham's bosom, which is Heaven, where holy children dwell." This was part of a prayer she had learnt at school. She bore her sufferings with great patience; and they must have been very great. The flesh was quite burnt off her hands—I saw the bare bones, yet she murmured not. She showed great affection for her friends, asked if they had all come, and often cried out for her dear father, who was then at work in another part of the country. When I asked her if she would like the minister to pray with her, she told me he was not at home, and bade me pray myself. I asked her if she wished to get better. She looked at me half surprised, and said, "Oh, I cannot get better; pray that I may go to Heaven,

that happy place." I felt my whole soul drawn out in behalf of the little sufferer. She lay perfectly quiet, and listening to every word; and when I had done, she said, "Thank you, ma'am; will you kiss me? I know you love me; do not cry; it will not make me better. We will meet in Heaven, that happy place."

At about half-past ten the same evening she breathed her soul into the hands of her Redeemer. My heart was filled with gratitude to God for his mercy in releasing her so soon. Eliza R—— died on 20th January 1840, aged nine years.

The editor of the "Missionary Record" appends the following:—Thus did the Lord of the vineyard take this tender little plant, so rich in promise of abundant fruit, out of the dark bleak wilderness of a sinful world, and put it in the Paradise above—in the light and warmth of His own unclouded countenance. For

> Planted in that realm of rest,
> Where roses never die,
> Amidst the gardens of the blest,
> Beneath a stormless sky
> She flowers afresh like Aaron's rod,
> That blossomed at the sight of God.

CHAPTER II.

TROUBLOUS TIMES EFFIGY-BURNING.

THE period in which the events recorded in the previous chapter occurred was a time of great interest in religious matters in many parts of Scotland; and through the reading of the story of the little girl's death, as given in the press, the schoolmistress at Kirkhill was brought into unsought-for notice. This led to her receiving many letters, and not a few visitors, suggested and attracted by the touching story she had written. Among the visitors were several young men connected with the Independent Church in Richmond Place, Edinburgh, under the ministry of Henry Wight, and fired with some of the zeal of that honoured evangelist. These young men, two and two, would make a Sabbath afternoon's journey to Kirkhill, to have an opportun-

ity of seeing and learning more of the religious movement that had been going on so quietly and with such blessed results among the young people there. And as they listened to Mrs Kemp's simple addresses to her audience in the schoolroom, and were in close sympathy with her in her earnest efforts to promote their spiritual welfare, it was for her Edinburgh visitors an easy transition from being hearers to becoming speakers ; and so one and another were found not unwilling to address a few remarks to the little company of young and old. Under such an arrangement as had now sprung up, the interest in the meetings grew and spread, the number attending them increased ; and the quiet work begun in the Sunday-school developed into a movement which stirred the whole hamlet and extended to the village of Penicuik—a place, it may be stated, of much less importance then than the thriving town it is now.

The time of which we write was, as has been remarked, one of deep religious interest. Other views of Gospel truths than the stern Calvinism commonly preached from the pulpits of Scotland were finding acceptance among the people ; these were not, however, regarded with favour by Synods and Assemblies ; and, generally, they were combated and denounced by the ministers of the Churches—Established and Dissenting alike. The Rev. John M'Leod Campbell of Row, because he maintained the

universality of God's love to mankind and of Christ's atonement for sin, and kindred doctrines, was deposed from the office of the ministry by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland; and some years later, the Rev. James Morison of Kilmarnock was on similar grounds deposed by the Synod of the United Secession Church. Lay preaching, or evangelistic work outside of the recognised religious organisations, was looked on with unfriendly eyes, and not to be countenanced or encouraged. The meetings being held at Kirkhill, therefore, came to be regarded with suspicion; the feeling grew into dislike, and that issued in positive prohibition. Such unauthorised, unlicensed preaching was not to be tolerated, and the schoolroom was not to be used for meetings on Sunday, unless they were under the superintendence of the parish minister. The meetings in the schoolroom were henceforth to be—not under the schoolmistress's management, but meetings under the control of the parish minister and the two Dissenting ministers of the near neighbourhood, who had become parties to the arrangement. Thus there was a breaking up of the good relations that had subsisted between the teacher of the school and some of those who had taken an active interest in its establishment and support. The people of the locality were not indifferent to the course of events, nor as to what the issue would be; some approving

of the action of the ministers, and some sympathising with the teacher in keeping up the meetings. Mr Brown, of Esk Mills, who had been a warm supporter of the school, made it known that if Mrs Kemp was not to have anything to do with the meetings in the schoolhouse, some other place could be got for them. There was a ballroom attached to a public-house in the place; this was hired for her meetings, and they were thereafter held in it. Arrangements were made for continuing meetings in the schoolroom, under ministerial management, but they were not attended with success. Mrs Kemp thought it proper for her as schoolmistress to have the room put into proper order and open for the ministers' meeting, and this she attended to; but there, she considered, obligation and duty ceased. Her heart was in the meeting being held elsewhere, and her work in connection with the schoolroom being discharged she felt perfectly free to go to the other meeting. It was there also that the people preferred to go; and so while the ballroom was generally crowded, scarcely any one went to the schoolroom. This, as may be imagined, was exceedingly disappointing to those who had taken over the schoolroom meetings, and if the state of matters was uncomfortable before, it became much more so now; and the next order given out was that Mrs Kemp must give up her appointment and leave the school. The order was brought

to her by the district constable, who informed her that her quarter was up on the following Monday, and she was to hold that her engagement then terminated. Now, perplexity was added to the trouble and anxiety that existed previously; and the outlook before the poor teacher was sufficiently dark. But the gloom was not of long continuance. On the morning following the receipt of the dismissal order, the prospect brightened, and her fears were much allayed, when Miss Brown, a daughter of the gentleman who had already befriended her, called to say that she was not to allow herself to be greatly troubled. She was not to leave the place. The schoolhouse was her father's, not the minister's; and he would see that she would not be put out of it. Her good work in the place must not cease.

Speaking of this trying episode in her history, Mrs Kemp used to say it was a great grief to her, and not the least of her life's trials, that she should incur the disfavour of Mr Scott-Moncrieff, who had shown such confidence in her, and bestowed such favour upon her, as to appoint her to the charge of the school at Kirkhill. The thought that she would be counted ungrateful for all the kindness shown her was distressing to her, but she felt herself placed in a position in which she must give effect to her convictions, whatever the consequences might be. Reviewing the

whole circumstances which had led to the present difficulty, she could not charge herself with blame for anything she had done. She felt convinced that the work in respect of the meetings was of God, and that she would be unfaithful to Him and his cause if she were to give it up and, willingly, be put to silence. The situation was, in her judgment, similar to that of the two apostles who were taken before the Jewish rulers for preaching to the people, and were commanded by them "not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus." And she felt impelled to follow the course which they chose when they answered, "Whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye, for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."

The meetings went on in the ballroom with undiminished interest, the place being generally crowded. Some who had been in hearty sympathy with the original meetings in the schoolroom, but had not attended them, now gave their influence in favour of the movement by attending those in the ballroom. Among those who did so were the Misses Brown and Mr Somerville of Dalmore. Up till now the meetings had been held in the afternoon after the church service, being generally preceded by an open air meeting on the Green, but as the interest in them deepened and extended among the people around, it

was thought advisable that arrangements should be made for holding a meeting on Sabbath forenoon also—a good many who attended not being connected with any church. As has been noted, the meetings had been instrumental in awakening a feeling of concern in spiritual matters among many of the residents; but while this was the case, there were those who condemned them as being quite uncalled for, and disparaging to the regular ministry. To this there was the ready reply that the place had been neglected, and if the ministers had been doing their duty, there would have been no need for such meetings. Others there were who felt no interest in religious concerns themselves, and these called in question that any good had come to anybody out of all the stir and confusion. By these, the blame for introducing the innovations and bringing about the prevailing excitement was laid on the schoolmistress. "What richt had she to begin to preach, an' bring folk about the place that had nae better richt to preach than hersel'? She set hersel' up for bein' a great deal better than every ither body, but she wasna what she pretended to be. She wasna a guid woman at heart, or she wadna treat the bairns at her schuil in the cruel an' shamefu' way she did. The neebours saw her one day bring a little lassie oot to the door an' wash her face in sic a harsh an' unfeelin' way that the bairn screamed an' cried

till the neebours thocht that the puir wee thing wad never get ower't. An' the story that she wrote to the papers aboot 'Liza Robertson, the lassie that got hersel' burned, wasna a' true. The things that she said the bairn said were juist things she imaigined hersel'. There were ither folk in the hoose when she was at the bedside speakin' tae the lassie, an' they said they never heard ony sic words as she pat intae her mooth. There had been sic a steer sin' she cam to Kirkhill that it wasna like the same place. It maybe wad hae been better if they had never seen her." Such like were the outpourings of spiteful tongues against the schoolmistress by some who had no other feelings towards her than envy and malice, and evil surmisings and insinuations were not wanting to complete the indictment against her. The ill-spoken words, alas! found a too ready lodgment in the minds of some of the baser sort; and burning her effigy was suggested as a good way of showing "what they thought of her and her meetings." The idea was considered a capital one—if they could not kindle the flames around herself, they could set fire to her effigy! And it was resolved that this should be done. Preparations were set about for carrying the suggestion into effect, and at the appointed hour on a given night, an effigy was brought out to the Green and set fire to amid the howling and mockery of the thoughtless and profane portion of the crowd, and

to the deep sorrow of those of Mrs Kemp's friends who were witnesses of the proceedings.

Anything like a detailed account of the scene would not have been for profit, and there cannot now be many survivors of those who constituted the crowd that night at Kirkhill who could furnish a description of it. Enough, however, of its bad features is to be learned from a letter written by Mrs Kemp to a friend soon after the event. Though necessarily lacking in details as to the burning, the letter is valuable on another account: it is finely descriptive of the feelings produced in her mind and the reflections suggested by what had taken place on that night. The spirit breathed in the letter is eminently Christian, finely exemplifying the supporting power of true religion under persecution and suffering. It is, indeed, the spirit which had its highest expression on the Cross on Calvary, and which has been echoed by the dying words of the great host of martyrs, throughout all the centuries and in many lands, until the present day. The account is closely written, in a clear hand, on the four pages of a sheet of the large paper then in use for correspondence. The substance of it is given in the following passages:

"I will now tell you how I was occupied on the said night, and give you a few words on my own experience. It was our female prayer meeting night. There were only Mrs Muir, Mrs Lowrie, and Margaret Miller there. I had read from the Word

of God the narrative of Achan and the accursed thing, and showed them as well as I could the parallel in our own case, and pressed them to personal searching and purity; and doubtless God was in our midst. I was quite overcome with the humble, fervent intercession of my beloved sisters on my behalf. They had heard what was up, but I was unconscious of what was going on. I had no idea that at that moment they [her enemies] were engaged in dressing my effigy. I felt humbled on account of the evil spirit that had got in amongst us, and I found that God gave me strength to wrestle with Him. Yes, and I knew that I would prevail through the blood of His dear Son. O how sweet the season was to my soul! Mrs Lowrie asked me to go with her, as Jane was to have some supper ready for me—porridge and churn milk, which she knew I liked. Well, when we went outside, every door was occupied, and there were men and boys on the Green, not a few. Some of them called, 'Stop, woman, and see your effigy!' But I kept on my way. After supper and family devotion, I returned to my quiet home. I found at the door of my house a few half-burnt sticks and half-burnt rags. As I turned the key of my door, I said to myself, 'Here are materials for self-examination; so I gathered up the sticks and set me down to see what I could draw from them. These, said I, are the remains of that which represented this poor body; but, O! how many have given their body to the flames for the cause of the dear Redeemer. O my soul, what has this Redeemer done for thee! Instead of thy effigy, soul and body deserved to be cast into outer darkness, where the fire is not quenched. And who and what is He, and what has He done that thou shouldst be redeemed from such awful destruction? No other than the eternal Son of God, of spotless purity, without sin, neither was guile found in His mouth. See Him led like a lamb to the slaughter, yet He opened not His mouth. Think, O my soul, it was not his effigy that was

crowned with thorns, it was not his effigy that was nailed to the accursed tree. My effigy was cut into with a knife by a young man to show his abhorrence of the person, but the sacred body of my Lord was pierced with a soldier's spear, and there came from His blessed side blood and water! Yes, blessed Jesus, and that for me, for all! O had I ten thousand bodies to give, to promote Thy glorious name, I could give them cheerfully for the poor blinded people of Kirkhill. And though I had, what would it be but nothing, and less than nothing? Awake, my soul, to activity, and wrestle with thy God for this wicked people, who are trampling the blood of Thy dear Son under foot. . . . O my Lord and Master, Husband, Brother, Friend, though my poor worthless body were this night given to the flames, I would cry with my last breath to the poor wicked people here, 'Behold! behold the Lamb, who has taken away your sins, bearing them in his own body to the tree.' O that I had ten thousand tongues to tell of Thy love and to speak Thy praise.' . . . O my dear brother, when we see by faith that finished work of redeeming love, how unable are we to put into words that which the soul enjoys. I have given you but a faint outline of the blessedness I enjoyed, and do still enjoy. It verily is that which the world cannot give and cannot take away. I believe that I was the happiest person in Kirkhill on the said night. I could indeed say with Cowper—

> The oak strikes deeper as its roots
> By furious blasts are driven,
> So life's vicissitudes the more
> Have fixed my heart in Heaven.

My paper is again done, before I have got half through. My heart is full of matter. I am, dear brother, your sister in Christ Jesus. JANET KEMP."

A sad result of that night's doings may be mentioned.

One of the school-girls who witnessed the proceedings, and supposed that it was the Mistress herself that was being destroyed by the flames, was thrown into such a state of excitement that reason was for a time unhinged, and her condition gave great concern until she was calmed by the assurance that it was only a likeness of Mrs Kemp, and not herself, that had been burned.

CHAPTER III.

FAILING HEALTH. PARTINGS. AT HOME.

SOME difficulty exists in fixing the exact time when the burning of the effigy took place, for the account which Mrs Kemp gives of it is evidently but a sequel to the letter she had written to her friend, and this second portion bears no date. It may, however, be concluded that it was in the summer of 1840, not many months after the child's death.

It does not take many evil-disposed persons to get up a tumult or such a scene as brought discredit on Kirkhill that night. Probably, there were not more than two or three ringleaders in it, though many thoughtless youths might be found ready to take part in the hubbub. The chief actors had taken an opportunity of venting their malignity against the woman who had been seeking only the good of the

community in which she lived, and it may be hoped that the morrow's reflection would make them ashamed of themselves and their disgraceful work. The account which Mrs Kemp gives of the affair shows how patiently she suffered under the indignity done to her, how different were the feelings excited in her breast from those which possessed her persecutors, and how her own injuries were forgotten in deep concern for those who had done her such wrong. Severe as the trial must have been to her sensitive spirit, she did not allow it in any way to interfere with the work of the school. That suffered no interruption, and it may be supposed to have been as efficient as could be looked for in the circumstances. "Aunt Janet" says in her "Legacy," she had few educational advantages in her youth; she had never been six weeks at a regular school at one time; but she had read a good deal, and made full use of the opportunities she had of improving her education. A good example of this is given in what she says of her stay in the Pringle family at Yair. She relates that while acting as attendant to three young girls there, she used to go to the schoolroom when they were being taught by the governess; and while plying her needle she gave close attention to the lesson, marking the pronouncing of words and inwardly going over the spelling after the children; and thus, unobserved, she was adding materially to her own learning and increasing her knowledge.

The appliances which Mrs Kemp had for carrying on the work of instruction in the school were scanty and of a primitive kind. As one of her surviving scholars, whom we visited at Penicuik in the end of 1901, informed us, there were no properly assorted class-books—the bairns just brought any books they had at home, and got a lesson on them. A number of the younger children were at school, more for the sake of "being off their mothers' hands" or kept out of mischief than for anything they could be expected to learn, and a set of brass letters answered well for keeping them employed and amused. They were shown how to form little words and simple sentences with them; one of the elder girls would occasionally be set to act the part of monitress to them; and in this way the progress of the infant class was advanced by easy stages. A wooden frame with wires across it, and coloured balls on these, served the double purpose of amusing the children and imparting a knowledge of numbers and the simpler rules of arithmetic. A set of natural history pictures decorated the walls of the room; and these, it may be said, completed the furnishings of the unpretentious little seminary. One day in the week was set apart for the study of the pictures, and the natural history day was always looked forward to with interest by the children. The subject in hand was made interesting by anecdotes and historical information; and, as may be imagined,

the wisdom and power of the Creator, as seen in His lower works, were themes on which the Mistress delighted to discourse on these occasions.

If the educational work at Kirkhill did not afford an example of the pursuit of knowledge under difficulties, it certainly was an instance of carrying it on under disadvantageous circumstances. As to its general character and results, something may be learned from the story of Eliza Robertson's death: it would be chiefly oral, and consist more in imparting Scripture knowledge and inculcating religious truth than in any systematic course of elementary education. For the former she was qualified in a high degree, and it lay nearest her heart; for the latter she was but poorly fitted. How earnestly and assiduously Mrs Kemp laboured, week-day and Sabbath-day, in her school at Kirkhill, can be deduced from incidental remarks in some of the letters received by her at this period. One of her correspondents writes, "You say you have an evening class from 5 to 8, besides your day school, and then sitting up to 1 in the morning. This may do for a short time, but it will not do to continue it." She had, indeed, in her zeal been undertaking too much and overstraining her mental and physical powers, and the break-down came ere long. As Mrs Kemp, when speaking in after years of this part of her experience, said her health gave way under pressure of grief, her voice failed, and she had to give up the school

for a short time. Doctors counselled her to do this at once, and obtain the rest and relief she could only get by complete cessation from the work of the school. Acting on this advice, and yielding to the persuasion of anxious friends, she gave up her charge and went to live with her widowed mother, then at Galashiels. What was all included in the expression "pressure of grief" we never heard her explain; but it appears from letters that there had been a change in the management of the school in March 1841, after which it is spoken of as "Mr Brown's Infant School at Kirkhill," and under the superintendence of Miss Henrietta Brown, his daughter. What circumstances led to the change is not apparent. It may be supposed that it came about through arrangement among those who had foumded the school, and had up till now been its supporters; but there may have been considerations connected with it which to the teacher brought sorrow of heart, and that "pressure of grief" under which, along with the poor state of her health, she became for a time unable to continue her work in the school. Only in one letter, dated 11th March 1841, is there found any reference to the change of management; in this a correspondent of Mrs Kemp says, "You may well rejoice in the care God has shown you in your late change."

The rest at Galashiels, though not of long duration, had been beneficial; for in the end of the month

(March 1841) Mrs Kemp had returned to Kirkhill and resumed her duties. But from this time onward there are frequent allusions to the unsatisfactory state of her health; and in the beginning of 1842 mention is made of "an assistant for the school," and of her seeking medical advice from an Edinburgh physician. With the school work resting heavily upon her, and the thought of having to resign the situation and becoming a burden to her relations pressing on her spirit, this must have been a season of deep solicitude to Mrs Kemp, and her feelings of concern and anxiety find expression in a letter to a friend about this period. On returning to Kirkhill from Edinburgh, where she had been consulting a medical gentleman, she wrote to her friend, explaining how matters stood with her in relation to continuing her charge of the school. She says:

I spent the afternoon at Mr Brown's, and there was nothing lacking of their usual kindness. I felt a good deal agitated when the school was spoken of, lest I should make some blunders; but it was not long till I was relieved by Mrs Brown saying that if I was able to try the school on Monday, to be very careful of myself and not keep the children too long in. Miss Brown said they were thinking of an assistant. Mrs Brown said that as the school was much fallen off since I left it, they thought it would be soon enough to speak of that when we saw the attendance increasing. She said the school gave Mr Brown very little concern in comparison of my health, and he would not allow me to want anything in the school, or otherwise,

that would add to my comfort—that I had only to say the word, and it would be done. So it was concluded that I should just go on in the school as I had done formerly, until they would see how my health returned, and then they would take into consideration about one to help me. Thus you see this mountain removed. This is a great relief to my mind."

In the same letter, Mrs Kemp recounts some incidents on the road between Edinburgh and Penicuik, and the way in which she moralises on them affords a good illustration of her keen perceptive faculty and strong reflective powers. Considering that the occurrences came before her at a time when it might be expected that her personal affairs and prospects would have occupied all her thoughts, we have also a disclosure of her deeply religious nature and of her concern for the spiritual welfare of others. The lessons which she sought to deduce from the incidents give a no less good example of her high intellectual gifts and her capacity for enforcing instruction. She says:

Two circumstances that occurred on the road served me for meditation. First, an old man and a young woman were walking along; they appeared worn and weary. As the coach passed them they looked, but made no sign to get on. After passing them a few yards, the coachman drew up, and called aloud, naming the man, and asking him if he was going home. The old man answered in the affirmative. The coachman then cried, "Come away then, come up." The old man, as if he had got renewed strength, laid hold of the hand of the woman, who

was his daughter; and as if youth had returned, and with joy in his every look, he climbed up to a seat on the coach, the daughter following. I felt sorry that he was not seated within my reach, that I might have asked him if he had, or would have accepted the gift of eternal life as willingly as he did the offer of a seat on the coach, and if he would rest his soul on the atonement of Jesus Christ till he reached the Father's house. As we passed along, I said to myself, "There is a lesson to be learned from everything that passes before us. The passengers on the coach are like a company of the children of God travelling through this world: on their way they pass the unconverted who are busily engaged in the affairs of life. Would to God that every Christian was as faithful as the coachman, by crying to their fellow sinners, 'Come thou with us, and we will do thee good; for the Lord has spoken good concerning Israel.' And O, that every sinner were as willing to accept of the gift when they are called on as the old man and his daughter. Let me learn from this circumstance," I said, "to sow beside all waters." While I thus mused, I saw a little before us an aged man, moving slowly on, leaning on his staff. The sight of his grey hairs and slow pace made me willing to give up my seat to him if that were needful. As we drew near he came off the footpath, and made signs that he wished to get on. The coachman alighted, and the man asked for an inside seat. The coachman told him the inside was full, but there was room outside. The old man, with the assistance of the coachman and one of the passengers, made every effort to get up, but all in vain. His limbs were stiff, and his frame feeble. He looked wistfully up in my face, and I could not refrain dropping a tear at his unsuccessful struggle. At last, with a look of sore disappointment, he said, "You must just leave me." O, my dear friend, I cannot put into words how this little incident affected me. That passage of Scripture rushed into my mind, "When once

the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying' Lord, Lord, open to us." As I lost sight of my aged fellow-pilgrim, I prayed to God that the same disappointment might not belong to his soul—that he might not be too late in coming to the common Saviour, for He hath said, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."

There does not appear to have been any lasting improvement in Mrs Kemp's health from the time of her entering anew on her school duties. Two months afterwards (on 20th June 1842), writing to a friend she says: "My health is better this week. I only feel wearied with the new arrangements and the long hours in my school, but if I was a little accustomed to it, I think I will not feel it so much." This expectation was not realised, for the next letter we have in her handwriting is dated from Glenormiston, on Tweedside, near Innerleithen, 25th August 1842; and from it it appears that she had found herself unable to continue her work at Kirkhill, and had practically given up the school. In this letter, addressed to a friend in Edinburgh, there are some interesting and affecting passages, embodied in the following extracts. She says:

I arrived here yesterday, and was kindly welcomed by my friends, vieing with each other in trying to render me comfortable and happy. My old mother was exceedingly pleased to see me; and this day, though rather wearied in body, my soul has been much refreshed by the pleasing intercourse I have had

with many of those who have paid me visits. The beauty of the place, the freshness of the air, and the kindness of my friends all combine and call for my gratitude to Him to whom the earth belongs, and the fulness thereof. Verily, His mercy is from everlasting to everlasting on them that fear Him and hope in His mercy. O, that I had ten thousand tongues to praise Him for all the mercy and truth that He is making to pass before me. day by day. . . . You ask me how I got on with the Misses Brown. My visit to them was both pleasant and painful. The Lord was in our midst. His love was the theme of our conversation; His goodness in bringing us to Himself through faith in His Son, the circumstances which brought us together, the pleasing intercourse we have had with each other, and the present separation were too much for their tender hearts. We wept together till we were ashamed of ourselves. Again and again we endeavoured to dry up the tears of love and affection which dropped from every eye, for they were not the tears of grief. On Wednesday they spent the greater part of the day with me, also on Thursday. There was not a word said concerning what I intended to do; only Miss Brown said, if I got well in a short time, would I take a situation as a housekeeper? I said that I had been thinking of something of that kind. Miss Jane said, "Your health is the first thing to be looked at; when you are well, return and stay with us, and there is no fear but you will be provided for. . . . When the people of Kirkhill learned that I was going to leave, many of them came to see me, and others sent kind invitations, all expressing their gratitude. I called upon the greater part of the children that were in attendance when I gave up the school. The conversations I had with the children in the presence of their parents, and the affection the children showed deeply affected many of them, who wept sore when I left them. So much for the faithfulness of my God to his promise that "when a man's ways please

the Lord, He makes his enemies to be at peace with him."

The change from Kirkhill to Tweedside, which at that time of the year was a scene of surpassing beauty, had a wonderfully restorative effect on Mrs Kemp's health. Not many days after her arrival at Glenormiston she writes, "My health is much improved since coming here. I am about quite well; only a slight pain in my side in the morning, just like a friend to arouse me from my slumber and sloth, as I feel much better when I am up. The pure water from the mountain runs close to my sister's door. I repair to the stream whenever I rise, and drink my fill, and I really feel much refreshed. My spirits, too, are good."

Mrs Kemp was well known to the people at Glenormiston before that time. Her father had been a farm-servant on the estate for many years, and the family home was there. While carrying on the school at Kirkhill she frequently visited her parents and relations on Tweedside; and, ever mindful of the spiritual welfare of those she might be brought into contact with, she found opportunities of entering into conversation with young and old as she met them. The work which had been going on at Kirkhill was always at hand as a topic of discourse: the story she had to tell was well fitted to gain attention, and it

served admirably for leading the thoughts of her auditors to their own spiritual condition and needs. It was, as already remarked, a time when much interest was taken in religious matters in many parts of Scotland, and at Glenormiston Mrs Kemp found ready listeners to what she had to tell them of God's love and mercy to sinners and of the way of salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. She would gather the children into some quiet shady nook about the place, and there in the afternoons she delighted them with stories from the Bible and the book of her own experience, and by singing to them hymns they had never heard before—"There is a happy land" and others which were new to Scottish children then, but well known now in all the Sabbath-schools of the world. She would make friendly calls among the neighbours during the day, mentioning to them that a meeting would be held in her brother-in-law's house in the evening, and inviting them to come to it. There, in an easy conversational way, she would speak to them of the great verities of the Christian faith, and press them on their attention with all the earnestness of one who realised their supreme importance to every son and daughter of Adam's fallen race. A deep interest in spiritual things was thus awakened among the cottagers and farm-servants of the neighbourhood; and the meetings which Mrs Kemp made arrangements for were prized by many as channels of spiritual

blessing. As opportunity offered, some Christian friend would be got to give an address at the meeting, and with good results. One such occasion, at an early stage of the movement, was specially memorable as a time of enlightenment and decision. The speaker that night was the late William Gray, of Galashiels, who on a homeward journey from Edinburgh, by way of Peebles, had turned aside at Glenormiston to see Mrs Kemp's mother and other relatives there. He had heard of the meetings, and was in full sympathy with their objects, and it needed no great persuasion to induce him to stay over night, addressing the meeting in the evening. One who was present furnishes some particulars regarding this meeting. He says, the theme of Mr Gray's address was the love of God to sinful man. He set forth simply and clearly the Divine declarations on the subject, and enlarged on the crowning manifestation of God's love in the gift of His Son for the redemption of the world. The word spoken that night was truly in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. The truth brought before the minds of the hearers was like a new revelation to many, and it was blessed to the conversion of not a few of them. Among these were Mrs Kemp's sister Nellie and her husband, John Rae, gardener to William Stewart, Esq., at that time the proprietor of Glenormiston, and afterwards to Dr William Chambers, the famous Edinburgh publisher, who became

possessor of the estate in 1849.

How long Mrs Kemp remained at Glenormiston at this time does not appear, as among the papers she left at her death there are few letters, written or received by her, relating to the closing months of 1842 or the beginning of 1843. But that the state of her health had been giving renewed anxiety to her friends during the period becomes apparent from a letter sent to her by her friend Miss Brown, at Esk Mills. This letter is dated 30th March 1842, and is addressed to Edinburgh, where Mrs Kemp then was, temporarily. The writer says:

I was glad to learn that you felt a little stronger, and I hope that God will bless the means used for your recovery, and that you may soon be restored to health and strength, and be long spared as a useful and successful labourer in His vineyard. You must not hurry home if Dr Black wishes you to remain in town. It is of great importance that you should attend strictly to his advice, or we cannot expect that his medicines will be of use to you. You should ask him if teaching is likely to hurt you, and not attempt to do so if he disapproves of it. I have not been able to visit the school as I intended, but Bridget was up, and she says that Margaret Murray manages very well; so you need not keep yourself uneasy on the subject. . . . I regret that you had not seen Dr Black some time ago, before you were laid up. . . . I observed you looking ill for some time, and wish I had spoken about it sooner.

What opinion Mrs Kemp got from her medical adviser as to her fitness to resume teaching, or the

probability of being able to continue it, is not stated, but in a few days after the date of Miss Brown's letter, she returned to Kirkhill, and entered anew on the work of the school. As time however showed, her strength was not sufficient to stand the strain of her duties, and in three months afterwards she finally resigned the situation, and went back to Glenormiston; a Mrs Hume, from Edinburgh, being appointed her successor.

There is no account of Mrs Kemp's final leaving Kirkhill and her parting with her friends and the children there, such as is recorded in connection with her leaving the place a twelvemonth before. If any written statement had been left it would probably have been found to be no less affecting and interesting than on the previous occasion. The only link with Kirkhill after this is found in a kindly letter from Miss Brown, Esk Mills, along with which she sends a formal certificate to Mrs Kemp, wherein she speaks of her qualifications as a teacher and "the great proficiency of her scholars in the different branches of education which she taught, particularly their knowledge of the Scriptures."

On her return to Glenormiston for the second time, it was a source of great joy to her to find her relatives rejoicing in the truth which they had found, and earnestly engaged in promoting the evangelistic work

which had been going on among the people on that part of Tweedside. John Rae, her brother-in-law, had been elected a deacon in the Independent Church at Innerleithen, then under the pastoral care of the Rev. William Dobson. The prayer meetings held at the Gardener's Cottage, Glenormiston, had been recognised as a branch of that church's work, and from that time until November 1851, when Mr Rae and his family removed to Gourock, they were kept up summer and winter, with unfailing regularity. Among those who, along with Mr Dobson, addressed the meetings was Mr David Waters, a well-known evangelist of the time in the Border district, and afterwards a Methodist minister in England. In a farewell address to Innerleithen, he speaks of the cottage at Glenormiston as being to him a Bethel and the services there as seasons of rich blessing to many souls.

CHAPTER IV.

SECOND MARRIAGE. REMOVAL TO GLASGOW. UNDER M'LEOD CAMPBELL'S MINISTRY.

ONE of the young men who used to go from Edinburgh to Kirkhill on Sabbath afternoons and take part in the meetings mentioned in a former chapter, was Robert Bathgate, who held a good situation in the establishment of John Clapperton & Co., cloth merchants. Mr Bathgate was a deacon in the church in Richmond Place under the pastorate of the Rev. Henry Wight, and took a warm interest in its affairs. Along with others similarly disposed, he shared in the evangelistic work carried on by Mr Wight in the city, and out of it. Street preaching in Edinburgh at that time was decried and counted beneath the dignity of the ministerial office, and some earnest ministers were only hindered from engaging in it by the pronounced disapproval of some of their

people. Mr Wight and old Robert Flockhart (who was regularly to be found holding forth from a chair at St Giles's Cathedral) were the only men we can remember who proclaimed the Gospel to the crowds that thronged the High Street at night. The young men of Richmond Place Independent Church stood by their minister as he raised his voice in warning against the abounding iniquity, and pleaded with sinners to give heed to the message of mercy he was there to deliver. "Standing by" the preacher and leading the singing was the young men's part, rather than addressing the audience in the street; it was in quieter spheres and less prominent places that they found opportunities of making known the Gospel message, as they had learned it from the Scriptures and their pastor's lips. They had read the story of "The Little Flower" and had talked over it, and were anxious to know what more fruit had resulted from the teacher's efforts to promote the spiritual good of the young people at Kirkhill. It was thus that Robert Bathgate and others were drawn to the village, and led to take part in the meetings in the schoolroom. The friendship then formed between Mr Bathgate and Mrs Kemp became in time a more fervent feeling, and ultimately resulted in their marriage. It was some three years after their first acquaintance that the union took place. This was at 23 Drummond Street, Edinburgh, and the officiating minister was the Rev. C. H. Bateman, who

had succeeded Mr Wight in the pastoral charge of the church in Richmond Place. Mr Bateman, it may be remarked, was the compiler of the little book of children's hymns which soon after publication became very popular in Scotland, and Bateman's collection, enlarged and revised, is still a favourite one in Sabbath-schools.

Not long after their marriage, Mr Bathgate was transferred to the Glasgow branch of Messrs Clapperton & Co.'s business. This implied a change of abode, and the couple removed to Glasgow, taking up their residence in Kingston district, on the outskirts of the city. Their church connection was at first with the Evangelical Union congregation in Montrose Street, of which the Rev. Fergus Ferguson, junior, was then minister. Shortly afterwards, however, they were attracted by the preaching of the Rev. John M'Leod Campbell, who some years before this had, as already noticed, been ejected from the parish church of Row, on account of certain theological views which he promulgated. He was now preaching, without any salary, to a congregation that had gathered round him in the city. Mr and Mrs Bathgate were at one with Mr Campbell in regard to the matters for which he was deposed from the ministry in the Church of Scotland. These were his views affirming the personal assurance of salvation on the part of believers of the

Gospel, and the universality of the great atonement of Jesus Christ for sin. The distinctive feature of Mr Campbell's teaching which was new to Mr and Mrs Bathgate was in regard to the *nature of the atonement.* Apart from his theological tenets, the saintly character of the man and his devoted and unselfish labours exerted a great influence upon his hearers; and among those who imbibed his views on the particular subject referred to, and attached themselves to the Christian community to whom he ministered, were Mr and Mrs Bathgate. Like others, they showed themselves zealous in maintaining and extending the views which had given satisfaction to their own minds. A weekly meeting for prayer and fellowship was held in their house at Paterson Street, Kingston, and on these occasions some cardinal doctrine of the Christian faith would be discussed—in the light, as might be expected, of Mr Campbell's discoursing upon it. Many who have studied the learned theologian's work on the Nature of the Atonement, published since that time, have found it stiff reading, and have not been able to yield assent to the author's reasoning and conclusions. It does not appear, however, that on Mr and Mrs Bathgate's part there had been any hesitation in accepting Mr Campbell's opinions; but, as respects Mrs Bathgate, it has to be observed that she had very special opportunities of being enlightened on points which might not be clear to her at first. While her

husband was engaged with business she had leisure time at her command, and having a cordial welcome to the home, Mrs Bathgate was a frequent visitor in Mr Campbell's family. There she had the advantage of hearing him dilate on his favourite topics in a freer and homelier style than he could do in the pulpit. She had the further advantage of making known her own opinions, and having them commented on or replied to in familiar language. Enjoying such facilities for arriving at a fuller comprehension of Mr Campbell's peculiar tenets, it is probable that Mrs Bathgate obtained a more intelligent grasp of them than many of those who have had to study his writings for themselves. At all events, she was in full agreement with them, and they bulked largely in the store of her beliefs. She was fully satisfied as to their soundness, and never swerved from them. She had a ready way of introducing them in course of conversation, and used to expatiate on them with wonderful copiousness and fluency. Mr Campbell was to her the beau-ideal of a preacher and Christian minister. She said she had derived more spiritual help and benefit from his teaching than from any other uninspired source. She esteemed him highly for his work's sake, the sacrifices he had made, and what he was willing to endure for what he felt to be precious truth. She venerated him in his lifetime, and to her last days cherished his memory with fond affection. Mr

M'Leod Campbell (on whom the degree of D.D. was conferred by the University of Glasgow in 1868) spent the last two years of his life in quiet retirement at Rosneath, on the Gare Loch, where he died on 27th February 1872. Mrs Bathgate was then living in Peebles, and the intelligence of the death of her greatly respected pastor filled her heart with sorrow. It does not seem to have been usual with her when writing to friends to prepare any draft or outline of a proposed letter or to preserve a copy of it. In a few cases, however, there are traces of this having been done, and in a note book found among the papers left by her she had set in order the things she intended to say. One of the instances in which she did this was in relation to Dr Campbell's death. Writing to his widow soon after the event, she says:

I had seen in the "Glasgow Herald" a notice of the death of my beloved pastor, for since the first day I sat under his ministry I have never called any other man by that name Having heard from you so lately of his good health, I was not prepared for the sad tale of woe. I was so struck that I could neither speak nor weep, but ran through my little room in an agony of grief, while the unexpressed language of my heart was—"My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof." May a double portion of his spirit rest on thy bereaved family and on me; yea, on all the world; for his loving heart embraced all. Nor was it till I got dear Miss Campbell's loving letter that the deep fountain of grief in my heart found expression in a flood of tears; and yet there is a joy mingled with the whole. How wonderful that although sin can bedim and becloud our joy,

sorrow cannot! Little did I think the last time I wrote you, asking your sympathy, which was so tenderly responded to, that I should be so soon called to sympathise with you in your widowhood. Having drunk deep of this cup of sorrow, I would in my humble way seek to comfort you with the consolation wherewith my heavenly Father hath comforted myself. . . . You can now think of your departed husband as having encountered the last temptation that his Christian faith shall ever have, that he has wrestled and overcome. The last tear has trickled down his cheek, the last sigh that he shall ever know has been breathed, and the last pang he shall ever feel has been suffered, and is over and done. . . . Truly I can in the midst of deep sorrow mingle my tears with yours. Rejoice that our much-loved one is home, home with his Lord. I am truly glad to hear by dear Miss Campbell's letter that you are calm and peaceful. You know on whose arm to lean, and when this your seed-time of tears is over and the reaping time has come, when the weary night of tribulation shall have passed away and the long looked-for dawn of everlasting day at length has come, may you, too, enter into the joy of your Lord, taking your place beside your loved ones amidst the pure and the holy, the just and the true! And as your dear family follow in the footsteps of their parents, in so far as you have followed Christ, and finished their course, may you and their dear father, who has often taken them in the arms of love to a throne of grace have the joy of leading them to the feet of the dear Redeemer, saying, "Here, Lord, are we and the children thou hast given us!" And may I be there to say Amen!

When you or Miss Campbell is able, will you write me a few lines and let me know if he suffered much at last, and where the precious dust sleeps? I may yet be permitted to shed a tear over it. I know that wherever it rests, God will have his eye on it and angels will hold the place in honour. With deep sym-

pathy for you and dear Miss Campbell and the whole family—the poor dear boys in India, how I feel for them! I am, my dear Mrs Campbell, your sorrowing yet rejoicing

JANET BATHGATE.

In another letter to Mrs Campbell, sometime afterwards, Mrs Bathgate says:

Many thanks for your kind remembrance of me in sending the sermon preached by Mr Story after the death of Dr Campbell. I have read it with much interest and many tears. It rejoices my heart to hear so many testimonies borne to him. While I feel that they are all truth, yet I am constrained to say, like the Queen of Sheba, "the half has not been told." My dear departed husband used to say that he never heard any minister so desirous to lead his hearers to look away from everything to the Living God; seeking himself to fall into the shade. Yet no man did more to draw the hearts of his hearers to himself than he did. . . . I feel humbled to the very dust for the little progress I have made heavenward under such teaching. I find that his death has recalled to memory much that I was letting slip; and I am seeking to renew my strength, that I may be a humble witness for the truth of God which he taught.

The stay of Mr and Mrs Bathgate in Glasgow is chiefly memorable for their coming in contact with Dr Campbell, and on account of the influence which his teaching and ministry had in enlarging their view of religious subjects and intensifying and strengthening their spiritual life. Their spare hours were largely spent in connection with the meetings and affairs of the Christian community with which they were

identified, and the personal friendships they formed were chiefly in that religious circle. Their residence in the city was only for a few years, and it was ended by Mr Bathgate making arrangements for commencing business on his own account in his native town of Galashiels.

CHAPTER V.

REMEMBRANCES OF FORMER DAYS.

IN May, 1851, Mr Bathgate opened his drapery and millinery establishment in Bank Street, Galashiels. The latter department of the business was placed under the charge of a qualified manager, but Mrs Bathgate took a special interest in it, and ere long was able to give efficient help in carrying it on. There was not at that time the hurry and push and keen competition which came to be the rule in all kinds of business in the latter half of the century. Nor were there the calls, in connection with public affairs of a local kind, which now make serious encroachments on the time of those engaged in business pursuits. Personal superintendence, close attention, and integrity were the qualities which commanded success then, as they will do still; and

such essentials were fully supplied in the conduct of the enterprise in which Mr Bathgate had embarked. He and his partner, being free from external engagements, were able to give their undivided attention to the management and development of the business. One in spirit and aim, it might be said of them more truly than of many, they were "diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." A fair measure of success rewarded their efforts, and for a number of years the current of their every-day life flowed on placidly and uneventfully beyond the common experience of men and women in this work-a-day world.

It was in this tranquil period that an incident occurred which afforded Mrs Bathgate great joy, and into the spirit of which her husband entered heartily. There was a strong vein of humour in Mrs Bathgate's nature, although not often displayed, but it came out in a bright and cheery way as she narrated the incident in question. It afforded a good illustration of the truth of what has been already said with regard to the lasting good got by the school children at Kirkhill and the feeling of gratitude expressed by some of them in after years. The case is given as a typical one, and the narrative which follows is in substance as Mrs Bathgate related it.

A man who had been abroad for many years came back to Scotland sometime in the 'fifties, and he made

it a chief concern to find out the person who had been schoolmistress at Kirkhill some twenty years before, in order that he might make known to her his gratitude for the good that had come to him through the teaching he had got from her lips in the school there. He had made inquiries among the people of Kirkhill and at Penicuik as to whether Mrs Kemp was still alive and where she might be found. Most of the inhabitants he had asked were strangers in the place, and had not known Mrs Kemp. Others could tell him that she had left Kirkhill long ago, and had gone to Edinburgh, or Glasgow, or some place in Peebles-shire, but where they could not tell precisely. Others had heard that she had been married again, and was then living in Galashiels; they had been told that her husband was in business as a shopkeeper of some kind; they thought it might be in the drapery line, but could not say for certain. No one, however, could remember the gentleman's name, if they had ever heard it. All this afforded the inquirer but a faint clue to the discovery he was so anxious to make; but he resolved to make the most of it, and took train for Galashiels to prosecute his further search. But landing there, he felt the difficulties of his task as he had not thought of them before. He was seeking for Mrs Kemp, but he remembered that she had been married again since he knew her as such, and she must bear some other name now. He had been told

that her husband was in business; it was supposed in the drapery trade, but his name nobody knew. The stranger felt the situation to be indeed an awkward one. Nevertheless, having come so far and, in a way, having got on the track, he determined that the expedition would not end in failure, if success was at all attainable. But how to set about the work of discovery was puzzling. It had been mentioned, though in a dubious way, that the husband of the lady was a draper; he would take that to be the case. But how could he go into a shop and say to any gentleman, "May I ask, sir, if you are a married man?" That seemed to be the first thing he had to ascertain; but the question looked altogether too impertinent to put to any one. If, by way of answer, he was not shown the shortest way to the door, other questions would be sure to follow, from behind the counter. "May I ask who you are, sir, and what right you have to ask such a question?" Even supposing he were to get an opportunity of answering these queries, other inquiries, scarcely less impertinent, would have to follow, such as, "May I now ask, sir, what your wife's name was and how old she might be when you married her, and did she ever keep a school at Kirkhill, near Penicuik?" No man, he concluded, would stand that, and he saw that another line of tactics must be adopted. After no little cogitation on the difficulty he had to contend with, and if possible

overcome, he came to this conclusion—that he would go into the various drapers' shops, and in a straightforward way explain that he was an entire stranger in Galashiels, that he had just returned from America, and had come to the town for the purpose of finding a lady who he believed was living in it, but he really did not know her name. That looked very foolish, he would admit; but she had been married since he knew her many years ago, and that accounted for his ignorance of the name she bore now. He had been informed, however, that her husband carried on business in Galashiels—it was thought as a draper—and he was anxious to know the address at which she might be found. His questions, he would confess, might seem more than foolish, but he would express the hope that his anxiety to know her whereabouts would be taken as his apology for putting them. And so he did proceed.

Beginning at the end of a business-looking street, with his eyes specially on the drapers' shops, he entered several, and rehearsed the story he had framed, but without any success. "Sorry I am unable to help you, sir; but I do not know and cannot think of any one answering the description," was the reply given in these cases. At length he turned into another street, and came to the shop of Mr Robert Bathgate. Stepping in, he stated the object of his call in the usual terms. Mr Bathgate did not at once

satisfy the curiosity of his visitor. He did so far, however, by saying that he was married, and that his wife was alive and well. "Then excuse me, sir," said the stranger, "for asking if your wife was a widow when you married her?" Mr Bathgate was kind enough to reply, "Yes, she was." "Was her name Kemp?" "Yes, she was a Mrs Kemp." "And was she at one time the schoolmistress at Kirkhill?" "Yes, she was schoolmistress at Kirkhill." These latter questions and answers followed alternately in quick succession, and as the climax was reached, the gentleman, in the exuberance of his joy, took Mr Bathgate by the hand, saying, "I am glad to know that. Now, may I ask if I could see her?" "O yes, I daresay you might see her," was Mr Bathgate's reply; "but may I ask who you are, and how you are so much interested in her?" "Well, sir, the questions you put to me, an entire stranger, are quite proper. I must tell you that she was my teacher when I was a little boy at Penicuik. I have been in America for many years, and have just come back to the old country. I have never forgotten Mrs Kemp and the good teaching and advice I got from her, and I made up my mind that if ever I got back to Scotland and ascertained that she was alive, one of the first things I would do would be to find her out, that I might thank her for the good I had got from her instructions and let her know how helpful they

have been to me in life." The gentleman was then taken upstairs and introduced to Mrs Bathgate as one of her old scholars at Kirkhill. Need it be added that if there was joy in the heart of the one at their meeting it was fully reciprocated by the other?

Perhaps no period in one's lifetime is so often recalled or its memories more fondly dwelt upon in after years than the days spent at school; especially is this likely to be so, if they have been passed in the country, where nature's beauties and varied aspects were ever in view, and the scope for the rural sports and pastimes of youth was unlimited and free. On this account, Kirkhill and its school remembrances and surroundings would be fondly regarded by the enterprising visitor—and this sentiment would have been in a measure gratified while prosecuting his inquiries in and about the village—but his predominant feeling was an earnest desire to meet with his old schoolmistress. As has been already seen, it was a special aim of Mrs Kemp that her teaching should influence the heart as well as the intellect of the children under her care, and the fact that it had been effectual in the case of this grateful stranger, and that she had seen the fruit of it after so many days, could not fail to afford her great delight. No doubt it was the persuasion in both minds that God, in his overruling providence, had been guiding their wandering footsteps through all the perplexing paths of their life.

Mrs Bathgate and the family guest would have many inquiries to make and much information to give each other, to all which Mr Bathgate would be an interested and sympathetic listener; but the great theme of that night's conversation was sure to be the Almighty's goodness and mercy in all His dealings with them until that day.

One summer season Mrs Bathgate and her husband planned a visit to St Mary's Loch, intending to make a short stay there. By reason of early experiences and associations the country at the head of Yarrow and around the Loch had special attractions for Mrs Bathgate. Her interest in it was indeed as intense as is the spell cast upon other minds by the charms and glamour of this romantic region. The poetic descriptions of Scott and Wordsworth, the tales of Hogg, the song and story of the old ballads, and the wondrous beauty of Lone St Mary's and its environment have for generations attracted many visitors to the classic ground. But Mrs Bathgate's return after two-score years was to turn over the first pages of her interesting, though then unwritten, life story with her husband. For here it was she entered on life's experiences, tasting more of the world's hardships and discomforts than its pleasures and enjoyments. Times were hard then. Labour was poorly paid, meal and the necessaries of life were dear, and pinched and

straitened circumstances formed the lot of the common people. The difficulty of rearing a family was therefore great—such, indeed, as those who lived in the end of the century knew nothing of. Of "honest poverty" there was no lack, but people were not ashamed of it; and a spirit of sturdy independence nerved them to "set a stout heart to a stey brae," and to battle bravely with the difficulties of their position, if so be they might fulfil their obligations and keep clear of debt. And it is wonderful how they succeeded. It was under the stress of such circumstances as these that John Greenfield and his wife consented to allow their little Jennie, while yet under eight years of age, to go out to service in the moorlands for less than sixpence a week of wages. No part of the story "Aunt Janet" tells in her "Legacy" is more interesting than the account she gives of her service in the shepherds' cottages in the district which she and her husband had now gone to visit. She had often spoken to him of the early years she had spent there, dilating, as she usually did, more on the good she had got than on the privation she had endured. It was there she had discerned the power and influence of religion in the daily life of the God-fearing dwellers on the loch side, and there she had learned much of the ways of Providence, which learning was of inestimable value to her in all her future life. And now that, after the lapse of forty years and more, she gazed

again on the scenes of long by-gone days, busy memory recalled the figures of the men and women who had lived around the loch then, but were now scattered abroad in the world or numbered with the dead. Their characteristics and peculiarities, and the incidents in her own experience while living among them, were topics on which, at her own fireside, she used to discourse with delight to herself and greatly to the gratification of those who listened to her; and, doubtless, she would enlarge on them with more than ordinary feeling when in close contact with the localities, and in the company of the happy partner of her married life.

To the cottage at the foot of the loch the Disruption of 1843 had added a church and a school, and the spirit of the age had called forth a post-office and a police station; but saving these changes, the hand of Time had scarcely altered any feature of the landscape. St Mary's Loch lay in lonely loveliness and unsullied purity as in all the past centuries; the grand green hills, sloping down to its shores and reflected in its waters, had known no ploughshare, and had scarcely suffered change. Only the road ran along the loch side at a lower level. Mr and Mrs Bathgate obtained accommodation in the schoolmaster's house, and a short walk sufficed to take them to the ancient churchyard overlooking the loch. There, on the old tombstones, they could read the brief records of the farmers

and shepherds who had peopled the quiet, secluded region in long past years ; and by stepping a little way up the hill-side, Mrs Bathgate could point out the smearing house at Dryhope, in which, for want of any better dwelling, her father's family, herself included, had to make their temporary abode, on arriving from Philiphaugh on the flitting day well nigh fifty years ago. From the same spot she could indicate the place where, on the memorable day she left the parental home for her first place of service, she was carried across the Yarrow on Wattie Laidlaw's back ; the worthy man stilting the stream and holding her little bundle of clothes between his teeth. There, too, she could point to Summerhope, where she had "served a' the simmer" with Willie Brydon and his wife, Peggie Hogg. The recollections of them were altogether pleasant. Like the master and mistress whom Lucy (in the song) had served in the glen, "they had been guid till her," and considerate of her tender years, never asking her to do anything beyond her strength. Peggie, her mistress, had shown her much motherly care and kindness. She had given her a Bible lesson on the Sabbath-day, and tried to instruct her in the fear of the Lord. And there, at no great distance, was the spot by the side of Megget where, with tears in her eyes, Janet parted with her kind mistress on the term day, then waded the stream, and proceeded on her twenty miles

journey on foot to her father's house on Tweedside.

No object in all the countryside was of greater interest to her than the large whinstone at Summerhope. Beside it, as she watched the sheep, she made her first curious attempt at "letter writing," a pin point being made to perform the part of pen and ink on a scrap of paper. To this stone, locally known as the "Greystone," and still there intact (1902), Mrs Bathgate took her husband one day during their stay at the Loch; and she told anew the story of the wonderful letter she had written there, how it had led to one step and another which had important bearings on her after career, and in which she traced the guiding hand of a gracious and overruling Providence. The letter and its results were to her a verification of the great dramatist's axiom, that

> There's a Divinity that shapes our ends,
> Rough hew them how we will.

It was a part of Mr and Mrs Bathgate's programme that they should cross over the hills from St Mary's to Ettrick, that they might have the joy of seeing that Jaiky Brydon * of whom "Aunt Janet" tells in

* In Selkirkshire, as in some other parts of Scotland, Joan was often turned into Jaik or Jaiky, as John is still into Jack; and, according to a custom of the district and the times, a woman after her marriage usually retained her maiden name. So it was with Mrs Glendinning. In her old age she was still known as Jaiky Brydon. Her remains were laid beside those of her husband in Ettrick Churchyard in the year 1872, aged 78 years. Adam Glendinning and his wife were a well known and much

her "Legacy"—"a God-fearing, warm-hearted young woman," for whom the younger Janet had a great affection: "the love that bound the two hearts together," she says, "might well be likened to that of David and Jonathan." The depth of that true affection is touchingly described in the following passage from the "Legacy"—

> On the day that Janet leaves for home, Jaiky accompanies her a mile on her way; and when they must part, they not only weep, but their wailing is heard at a distance. They pledge their love to God and each other while life lasts, and they part in the hope of meeting soon; but, alas! fifty long years had passed ere they met again. That was for the first and last time, at Ettrickside, on Thirlestane estate. Jaiky was then the worthy wife of Adam Glendinning. The fifty years had whitened the heads of both, but their hearts were young and warm as when they parted that summer day on the banks of St Mary's Loch.

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respected couple in the upper part of the Ettrick valley. They are the prototypes of Adam Symington (the Cameronian elder) and Jennie Grieve in "Drummeldale: Lights and Shadows from the Border Hills," by C. M. Thomson.

CHAPTER VI.

CHANGES.

SOME eight or ten years after settling in business at Galashiels, Mr Bathgate's health began to give way. On the advice of his medical attendant he gave less attention to business than he had been doing; but the improvement expected from this partial relief and the medicinal treatment he was receiving was not realised to any great extent. An Edinburgh physician of high standing was then consulted. More freedom still from business concerns was advised; and visits to health resorts and other expedients were taken full advantage of, but without permanent benefit; and Mr Bathgate's illness had a fatal termination in the autumn of 1863. Mr Bathgate was a member of an old and respected manufacturing family in Galashiels, and his personal

virtues and upright life commanded universal respect in the community. The excellences of his character have been well portrayed by one who enjoyed rare opportunities of forming a correct estimate of his gifts and graces. This friend, writing from the north of Scotland, says, "Robert Bathgate was a man of a truly noble type; cultured, intelligent, and large of heart. And, best of all, these natural endowments were crowned with moral goodness and Christian meekness. I never met with one who had penetrated more deeply into the very spirit of Christianity or who had a livelier appreciation of its practical significance. He lived in Christ, and Christ lived in him, and the life which he lived was indeed a life of faith in the Son of God. I was never in the society of one who breathed more of the spirit of Christ."

After Mr Bathgate's death and the settlement of his affairs, Mrs Bathgate made arrangements for receiving, as boarders, a few girls attending school in the town, but whose homes were at a distance. This involved a sort of guardianship over the girls as well as attending to their daily wants. Mrs Bathgate was well qualified for rendering the services expected of her, and the employment of her time in such a way was much to her liking; and there need be no doubt that the responsibilities and duties of the position would be duly considered and faithfully attended to. She had been so engaged for about eighteen months,

when a vacancy occurred in the pastorate of the Galashiels East United Presbyterian Congregation; and this necessitated provision being made for the reception and entertainment of the preachers sent to supply the pulpit during the vacancy. This matter rested in the hands of the office-bearers of the church, and they made arrangements with Mrs Bathgate that she should act as hostess to the young men during the time they were fulfilling their engagements and staying in the town. This she did for a short time in her own house, but it was thought fitting that this service should be rendered to the preachers in the church's own dwelling-house, and Mrs Bathgate accordingly removed to the Manse. In this appointment she recognised the considerate kindness of the office-bearers and their sympathetic regard for her in her widowhood; she took it also to be a proof of their confidence in her; and she valued it all the more as she was connected with another church (the Evangelical Union) in the town. How well and satisfactorily she did her part in the Manse is to be inferred from letters she received from a number of the young men. They breathed a grateful spirit, and her "motherly care and kindness" were thankfully acknowledged. These letters must have been very gratifying to her, and the fact of their having been preserved until her death is sufficient evidence of her appreciation of them.

One of these young preachers was the Rev. John Barr Pollock, upon whom the choice of the congregation fell, and who up to this time has discharged the duties of the ministerial office with much acceptance and success; and whose public spirit, it may be added, has told in many ways for the good of the community. Mr Pollock, in ready response to the writer's wish, has supplied some reminiscences of his stay in the Manse in Mrs Bathgate's time. He says, "My first entrance into the Manse was during the vacancy in the ministry of the East United Presbyterian Church. At that time Mrs Bathgate resided in the old Manse, by an arrangement with the office-bearers, to entertain the several preachers who supplied the pulpit until the settlement of a pastor. She had under her care the daughter of a farmer in the neighbourhood attending a girls' seminary. What survives in me from the beginning, and was confirmed to the latest instance of fellowship with her, was the brightness of her countenance as welcoming in smiles, a radiance emanating from deep sources within her, and a something in the whole of her demeanour which grew on one as a spirituality of character. I shall not repeat what fell from her lips on the threshold of that old manse, for ever memorable as the life haunt of one of the finest preachers and saintliest of men of the Border land, the late Dr Henderson. But it will be sufficient to repeat, as indicative of the woman she

was, how she hoped that, whoever came to Galashiels to preach the Gospel in that church, or any other, God would send men who would hold forth a living Saviour and a holy life; for the place was very much given up to the love of gain and the things of the world. Such was the atmosphere in which the student preacher lived for about a fortnight or so when he became acquainted with the dwellers on the Gala."

When Mrs Bathgate's services at the Manse were no longer needed, through the ministerial vacancy being filled by the election of Mr Pollock to the charge, she had a pressing request from the trustees of an orphan family in Partick, Glasgow, to undertake the care of the children (a son and two daughters) and the management of the household affairs. The parents had been among those whose friendship Mr and Mrs Bathgate made during their stay in Glasgow. The intimacy had been kept up by correspondence, and made closer and firmer by occasional visits, and it needed little persuasion to induce Mrs Bathgate to give favourable consideration to the request. Respect for the memory of the deceased parents and desire to do a mother's part to the bereaved children were considerations powerful enough to influence her to give an affirmative response to the proposal of the family's guardians. It was in connection with Dr Campbell's ministry that she and her husband came to know

and esteem Mr and Mrs William Hamilton, and it was with the feelings of a friend indeed that she now accepted the charge of their orphan children. The daily round of household duties would call into active exercise all Mrs Bathgate's managing skill and tact, and the comfort and material welfare of the young people would be well attended to. But it could not be that in Mrs Bathgate's hands their moral training and religious upbringing would be neglected. That it was not is evident from some written scraps among her papers. These show that the younger daughter, who was in delicate health, was the object of deep solicitude to her, and that she had been tended with all the tender care and sympathy that any mother could bestow. Mrs Bathgate had discerned symptoms in the girl's illness that excited dubious thoughts in her mind as to the issue of the trouble. This made her all the more concerned in the spiritual welfare of the poor sufferer, and she longed to see her enjoy the peace and rest which the belief of the Gospel imparts. Very much to her grief, however, adverse influences were felt to operate against her endeavours for good; and it is with a feeling of sadness she records that she did not experience the joy that she longed for with intense desire—the joy of knowing that her anxious efforts to promote the highest good of her charge had not been crowned with success.

Mrs Bathgate's stay with the Hamilton family was

from the autumn of 1865 till the spring of 1871. By the end of that period the daughters had grown up, and had got sufficiently acquainted with the ways of managing a household to undertake housekeeping for themselves. She then felt that she should vacate the post she had occupied for the past five and a half years. The one thing that gave her sorrow in resigning her charge was concern for the younger daughter in her delicate state of health. Writing to a friend in 1872, and referring to her leaving the family, and separation from the suffering member of it, she says, "Neither the brother, her sister, or herself apprehended any danger, but I did; and it made it very trying for me to leave on that account." That her fears were only too well grounded is shown by what is added—"She died on the 3rd of February."

On leaving Partick in April 1871, Mrs Bathgate went to Greenock to stay for a while with her widowed sister, Mrs John Rae, who with her husband and their family had been living on the Clyde since they left Glenormiston twenty years ago. While there Mrs Bathgate decided to take a house at Peebles, with a view to add to her means of living by letting apartments to visitors. Being settled there, her time was well occupied during the summer season, but when that was over she had more time on her hands than she desired. Her taste for reading stood her in good

stead in these circumstances, and she found a never-failing source of comfort and strength in her study of the Scriptures and meditation on spiritual things. As descriptive of her feelings at this time, it is interesting to note that it was from Peebles she wrote to a friend, "I find it is good to be alone with God, and a time of solitude is profitable for self-examination." But much as she would enjoy these seasons for quiet reflection, it was not her nature to find rest and satisfaction in inactivity, and she found a sphere for the exercise of her gifts and energies in a young women's class in the town, conducted by Lady Hay of King's Meadows. Mrs Bathgate found an introduction to the meeting, and was kindly welcomed by the president. It had not been long until Lady Hay observed how helpful their visitor might become in connection with the class; and she gave a cordial invitation to Mrs Bathgate to lend her services to the promotion of its objects. Her ladyship, in intimating the resuming of the meetings of the class, writes, "Do come if you can, and bring any other Christians with you. The class will be carried on all winter, and I should feel so glad if you were to be there to help. Will you try to take it up as a matter of work for the Lord and of helping Christians in the place to come out more, and enjoy more fellowship and communion with each other?" Mrs Bathgate readily responded to the invitation, and rendered willing service to the class,

which appears to have been a large one, so many as ninety members being mentioned as attending it.

It appears, however, that a smaller number of young women having leisure met in Mrs Bathgate's house, in the Edinburgh Road, on the afternoon of certain days; and it may be supposed that they would profit largely by her ripe experience and teaching gifts. One of these young women, who had become the wife of a missionary in India, writes her old teacher after they had both left Peebles. The letter indicates the nature of the subjects which would occupy the minds of teacher and taught at these quieter, and, it might be, more select gatherings. It is finely expressive, too, of the young lady's feeling of gratitude for the good she had got at the class; and it is interesting to observe from it that words spoken and made profitable on the banks of the Tweed were being re-uttered by a loving heart to an open-minded convert from heathenism on the banks of the Godavery. The letter is worthy of being quoted in connection with Mrs Bathgate's stay and services at Peebles. It is dated

Nussapoor, Godavery District,
10th August, 1878.

My dear Mrs Bathgate,

I was so pleased to hear of you last week through our friend Miss A—— S——. I am always pleased to hear of Peebles and the class, etc. I look back with great pleasure and gratitude to God for the class and time spent with you in your

upper room. You remember the lines of poetry you gave me to read, by a worldly young lady who had been converted. I copied them out, and have them near me now. And the other night I was telling a young native convert here what you told us about the moon. It was shining so brightly at the time. You said that although there were dark spots on the moon, still all its light came from the sun; and so although we could not be perfect, still all the light in us should come from God, and thus we would be as moons to cheer and guide others, and reflect God's glory. . . . I am not of much use here as yet. My husband and I are still studying the language. This is our waiting time, and that is God's work too, we know. I have not been well, and been confined to bed for six months, and have to write while lying, but it is so good to be able to write and sympathise with one another. Is it not a wonderful tie, the bond of a common Father, one family, all hastening to the one bright home, to be with Him who bought us the right to it with His own precious blood! This world is lovely, but what will that be! "Eye hath not seen," etc., and this is for you and me, dear friend. My husband sends very kind regards to you; he too will see you some day *at Home*. Much love from myself. I am your loving young friend, J—— M——.

Mrs Bathgate left Peebles and came to reside in Selkirk in 1875, taking up her residence at 40 Buccleuch Road, in the outskirts of the western part of the town. Thus, after nearly seventy years' experience of life's ups and downs, she came to end her long pilgrimage almost in sight of her birthplace and in full view of the scenes of her infancy.

CHAPTER VII.

EVENTIDE. EARLY SCENES REVISITED.

IT was in the summer of 1875 that Mrs Bathgate came to live in Selkirk. She had left home just across the valley in 1813, when but a girl of seven years; and she had seen very little of the locality and of the old burgh town on the hill-side during the intervening long period. And now, after not a few flittings since that well-remembered one when her father and the family left Philiphaugh farm for the head of Yarrow, she was brought back to spend life's eventide amid scenes that were ever recalling the happy and hallowed associations of her childhood. From her early years Mrs Bathgate had a firm and abiding persuasion of the overruling providence of God in the affairs of earth, from the fall of a sparrow to the overthrow of an empire, and she recognised His

THE CORBIE LINN, PHILIPHAUGH.

guiding hand in ordering that the remainder of her days should be spent in a neighbourhood which above all others was dear to her memory.

It would be folly to conjecture what might have been the prominent features in Mrs Bathgate's future history had her steps on leaving Peebles been turned in some other direction than down the Tweed to Selkirk. Any such surmising, too, would be quite contrary to her cherished conviction that God is over all. "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy steps" was to her more than a mere article of belief: it was a rule of daily life and an assurance of the Almighty's presence and guidance. But, putting speculation aside, it is easy to trace the connection between the local circumstances in which the lot of her old age was cast and the writing of that artless and unpretentious story which has afforded instructive and profitable reading to many people and gained a unique place among literary productions in the close of the nineteenth century.

On her return to the banks of the Ettrick, Mrs Bathgate had few acquaintances outside the circle of her relatives living in Selkirk. She had no written history then. She was not ready to court new friendships, and was not much out of doors. Comparatively few people, therefore, knew her as a resident of the town. In time, however, an intimacy was formed with some helpful neighbours, and she became well

known to the members of the E. U. Church, with whom she had formal Christian fellowship. But for some years after settling in the town her life was one of quiet retirement. At that time she possessed a fair amount of bodily vigour, and, when summer days were fine, she took great delight in revisiting the much loved spot on Philiphaugh farm where her childhood's days were spent. Her father's house was one of a row of thatched cottages, pointing nearly north and south, in a field to the west of the modern model farm steading. Since she had last seen the place, the spirit of improvement had been in active exercise on the Philiphaugh estate, under the tasteful guidance of the last but one of its proprietors of the ancient family of Murray; and new buildings, alterations, and transformations met the eye on every hand. The old paternal home had disappeared from the scene, the field in which the cottages stood had been cleared and levelled, the little burn that of yore wimpled past the doors now pursued its way to the Ettrick by another channel, the favourite nooks and spots dedicated to childish sports had been claimed for common purposes, and most of the old landmarks were obliterated. Near by the cottars' houses, from time immemorial had passed the old drove road* along which the herds

* This old drove road from the north crossed into the lowlands by the "Cauldstane Slap," a gap between the hills at the west end of the Pentlands. The road traversed Peeblesshire from north to south, and came, by way of Traquair, over the

of Highland cattle were driven from the great fairs in the North to the English Midlands. The droves of the far-travelled shaggy, great-horned oxen, as they went on their weary way southwards in the autumn months were always pleasing and interesting sights to the children; but from many years disuse the highway had been overgrown with grass, and its course could scarcely now be traced. Towards the sheltering hills on the west, the changed aspect of the country was not less striking. The swamps and moss hags that made the footpath over the hill to Yarrow a difficult one to traverse had been improved off the face of nature, and the road had gone into desuetude. The heathery and ferny waste—in which aforetime the muirfowl and blackgame had made their nests, and over which the far-sounding call of the whaup, the wailing cry of the peesweep, and the gladsome song of the lark had been heard the livelong day in summer—was now transformed into well cultivated, fertile fields,

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hills into Selkirkshire. . The purchases of an extensive cattle dealer at a tryst or fair in the north were usually separated into droves, which were placed under the charge of men who knew the road; and the movement of the herds was regulated by the owner or a subordinate, a topsman he was called. The rate of progress was leisurely, ten or twelve miles being the ordinary distance travelled in a day. "Time immemorial" had established a right of passage through the open country, allowing the beasts a resting time, and a bite of the pasture by the roadside as they proceeded on their way. The cattle thus driven would be on the road for three or four weeks according to the distance they had to travel. This old time mode of transit has ceased entirely, and cattle are now transported by rail to their destination in many parts of England in ten or twelve hours.

and the hill-sides were clothed, artistically, it must be said, with blooming coverts and flourishing plantations. All was changed, changed for the better, and the landscape had been beautified by the changes to a high degree. Yet our aged visitor would have preferred to gaze on all things as she had seen them in the lang-syne days. Still, the locality had a peculiar fascination about it for her. It was invested with joyous recollections and pleasurable associations, and no spot in all the neighbourhood had attractions so strong as that where the old homestead stood. "My footsteps," writes 'Aunt Janet' in a preface to the third edition of the 'Legacy,' "often turned in that direction, and I spent many hours on Philiphaugh farm. Sometimes it was where my father's house stood; at other times it was near the Corbie Linn,* or by the little well

* The Corbie Linn is a waterfall, a full mile up the glen. Like many other places on Philiphaugh, it has undergone important change. In "Aunt Janet's" youthful days it was not more than eight or ten feet in height, and the water fell over it without attracting much observation. The fall could only be seen properly by the visitor making his way up the course of the burn or sliding down the precipitous bank. Sir John Murray, with a keen eye for the picturesque, discerned how the stream with its craggy environment at the place might be made a pleasing object in the landscape, and his plan was carried out with admirable effect. By throwing an embankment across the pass, some distance above the fall, the water was dammed back and raised to a considerable height. From this higher elevation the stream was led along the bank to a point overlooking the ancient linn, and thence made to tumble over a precipice some thirty feet high. When there is a good flow of water in the burn, the cascade, coming unexpectedly into view at a bend of the road, affords an agreeable surprise to the stranger approach-

ing it. The transformed Corbie Linn is a standing evidence of the late baronet's innate perception of the beautiful and romantic. By the artistic way in which he dealt with the situation he at once added to the attractions of the ancestral estate and provided an interesting sight for the visitor. And as

"A thing of beauty is a joy for ever,"

the reflective observer will not fail to recognise the thoughtfulness of the late proprietor, who in carrying out his scheme had regard to the pleasure it might be made to yield to generations of the public yet to come.

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among the rushes, so well known to me as a child. There I mused on former days, muttering to myself the while on the wonderful ways of God towards me; and the musings took shape in the verses at the end of the book" (The 'Legacy'). "In this way, speaking to God and myself, I spent many a quiet hour."

On one occasion, when Mrs Bathgate was visited by a niece (Mrs Strother of Sunderland) and her husband, she took them to Philiphaugh farm, and while sitting on the bank above where "the auld hoose" stood she related some incidents in the family history and repeated the verses referred to. She never regarded them as having any poetical merit, but as simply expressive of her emotions in view of the changes that had passed on all around during the flight of years. The following stanzas are from the piece:

* * * *

Again I sought the weel ken'd spot,
Where stood my father's hame,

And thought on a' the dear loved friends—
Alas! where are they gane?

* * * *

The happy vision cometh back:
A father's reverent air,
A priest upon his throne, he sat
In the old high backed chair.

And when the evening shadows fell,
And labour all was o'er,
He brought the big auld Bible doon,
And mother lock'd the door.

Then with a father's kindly smile,
And an approving nod,
"Now bairns, compose yoursel's," he'd say,
"And let us worship God."

O had they let the auld wa's stand!
They might have had a tongue,
And echoed back the prayers and psalms
That oft therein were sung.

From this special visit of "Aunt Janet" and her friends to the place of so many memories may be dated thoughts and suggestions which eventually led to the writing and publication of the "Legacy." How this came about must be told in "Aunt Janet's" own words in another chapter.

In her quiet home at Buccleuch Road, Mrs Bathgate's time, when not occupied with household duties, was spent largely in reading and keeping up correspondence with old friends. Some of these, as appears from letters received in return, were members of the Scott-Moncrieff family, whose acquaintance and

friendship she had gained when in their service at Dalkeith. Members of Dr M'Leod Campbell's family and other friends whom she had come to know during the time she lived in Glasgow were also among her cherished correspondents; and she wrote not infrequently to her kinsfolk, scattered abroad. In her letters to the latter she seldom failed to refer to spiritual matters, pointing out the provision which God had made for man's need as a sinner, and seeking to impress them with the supreme importance of attending to those things which relate to the soul's everlasting good. It was at Peebles she wrote, "I find it is good to be alone with God, and a time of solitude is profitable for self-examination." In circumstances not dissimilar at Selkirk, but in a less buoyant mood at the moment, she wrote, "I have here a small room with a bed-closet off it. I am quite alone, and sometimes feel lonely; yet thankful I am not altogether a stranger to that faith which trusts in the dark. My God has often led me by a way I knew not. What variety of circumstances, what perplexities and contradictions does my life contain! Yet I know God's eye is over me for good. He will some day make all things plain." It was said of an old humble pilgrim that "he made shoes and lived in communion with God." It might not inappropriately be said of "Aunt Janet" that she lived in communion with God and meditated on His Word and ways day and night.

In her reading, Mrs Bathgate regarded the Scriptures as paramount. They were to her the great storehouse of Divine truth, the one sure and unfailing guide to soul-satisfying peace; and she had large portions of the Word treasured up in her heart and memory. She did not discard or undervalue other books: only they must be such as would yield solid and useful knowledge, and be worthy of having time spent upon them. For works of fiction, and such as had no higher object than mere amusement, she had no liking, counting time too precious to be wasted on such reading. Works on theological and religious subjects, history, and biography were what she prized most. In these she sought to trace the hand of God in the great events and epochs of the world's history, His government among the nations, and His providential dealings with individuals; and she was well informed in these departments of literature. A fully stored mind, a far reaching and retentive memory, and a gift of ready expression for her thoughts made Mrs Bathgate an excellent and entertaining conversationalist. As she became better known in the town, and was spoken of as "no ordinary person," visitors increased, and she welcomed the opportunities she thus obtained of having her liking for social intercourse gratified. A conversation, however, which began with an interchange of remarks and opinions on passing events and commonplace topics did not

usually continue long in that strain, but would be turned by the old lady to matters of higher importance, when the largest share of the speaking devolved upon herself; and thus an interview with "Aunt Janet" sometimes became an occasion for hearing her discant at length on some Scriptural or spiritual subject. Not every one appreciated these prelections, and those who did not feel any special interest in them thought her somewhat inconsiderate and dogmatic; but her discoursing on favourite topics was always interesting, and was found to be profitable by patient and sympathetic hearers. The Rev. J. A. Christie of Darvel, who made Mrs Bathgate's acquaintance while fulfilling preaching engagements in Selkirk, said of her in an obituary notice, "She was one with whom it was not only a pleasure but an education to converse. On one occasion I found her reading Stanley's 'Jewish Church,' a somewhat unusual occupation for an old lady of eighty-four, but quite characteristic in this case." Another gentleman, who had been impressed by her conversational gifts, supplies the following reminiscences:—"A friend in Selkirk took me to see Mrs Bathgate one Sabbath afternoon in the summer of 1884, and we were frequently at her house after that, on the Sabbath and also on week nights. On these occasions she seemed to understand that we had come to listen to her rather than to talk, and it seemed a perfectly natural thing for her to open

the Bible and speak to us on some passage which she had been considering. I remember that I was much struck with her apparent close acquaintance with the Scriptures, and the ease with which she could express her views. One phase of Divine truth in which she seemed to find special delight was the attitude of the well-beloved Son and Representative of the human family to the Father's will. This aspect of truth was then new to me, and I have neither read nor listened to anything on the same subject since which has been to me so clear and forcible as Mrs Bathgate's words at these times. She expounded the 22nd Psalm to us, I remember, and I shall never forget how graphically and forcibly she spoke—often with the tears coursing down her cheeks—of the fulfilment of the words of that psalm in the life and experiences of the Messiah. These are about the only incidents which stand out in my memory connected with "Aunt Janet," but it just occurs to me that some of the truths of Scripture which have been most helpful to me in my experience in later years were first suggested to my mind by Mrs Bathgate's exposition of the 22nd Psalm."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE "LEGACY."

NO time in the world's history has afforded fuller verification of Solomon's saying that "of the making of books there is no end" than the present. Their number is indeed legion, and many are the motives and considerations which have led to the writing and printing of them. Strange, too, are the circumstances in which some of them, like the Bedford Tinker's immortal work, were produced; but surely very few authors could say of their works what "Aunt Janet" could truthfully say of her "Legacy," that she did not at the time know she was writing a book—she never intended any such thing. The question was often put to her, "How did it occur to you to write a book, when according to your own account you had got so little

education?" To this inquiry the answer was just such as that given above—that she did not at the time know that she was writing a book. But such an answer was more puzzling than satisfying to those who sought information. The reply itself needed explanation, and it frequently led to other questions, which it took "Aunt Janet" some time to answer. However interesting the explanation of the enigma might be to the listener, the frequent rehearsal of the circumstances connected with the production of the "Legacy" was likely to become irksome to the reciter; and on the suggestion of some who had heard how it came into existence, she was induced to put her explanatory story into writing, thinking that as it had satisfied those who had listened to it from her lips, it might prove interesting to others whom her living voice could not reach. This she did in a preface to the third edition of the "Legacy." It is a unique narrative, simply and unaffectedly related, and besides answering the question it affords some information as to the latter period of her history, regarding which many readers of the book were anxious to know more than it contained. In this preface, dated November 1895, she says:

About twenty years ago, by the wonderful providence of God, I was led to take up my abode in Selkirk, in a little dwelling on the banks of the lovely Ettrick, not far from the place where I first saw the light of day. The window of my little room took

in the view of the scene of my childhood's days. Living alone, and having then few acquaintances, my footsteps often turned in that direction, and I spent many hours on Philiphaugh farm. Sometimes it was on the spot where my father's house stood, at other times it was near the Corbie Linn, or by the little well among the rushes, so well known to me as a child. There I mused on former days, muttering to myself the while on the wonderful ways of God towards me; and these musings took shape in the verses at the end of the book. In this way, speaking to God and myself, I spent many a quiet hour. Thus after a troubled day of childhood and youth, I was spending the evening of a long life; lonely, yet not alone. About this time I was greatly refreshed by a visit from my niece, Mrs Strother, and her husband, from Sunderland. The day being fine, I proposed a walk across the valley to Philiphaugh, to which they gladly agreed. It was while sitting on the bank above where her grandfather's house once stood, that after relating some family incidents I repeated to them the verses referred to above.

Having mentioned her niece's urgent desire to have a copy of the verses, which had not at that time been committed to writing, Aunt Janet continues:

My niece wrote me sending her thanks for the verses. She also said, "Excuse me for further drawing on the resources of your memory; but my father did not tell us much about our ancestors, and I have often wished to know more about them; so you would oblige me very much if you can give me any information regarding them." Along with this letter came a packet of printed copies of the "poem." I was surprised, at the same time somewhat pleased—perhaps a little vain—to see my humble production look so well in print. "This," I thought, "will give me the pleasure of sending a copy to each of my

friends; and in gratitude for this unlooked-for kindness, I cannot deny her reasonable request. I will set about recalling all I have heard of the family history, along with what may be interesting in my own."

In the twilight of a summer evening, as I sat at my window looking out upon the scene of my childhood, trying to recall what might be of interest to my young friends, my whole life passed before my mind as if but yesterday, and I saw more and more the wonderful guidance of an Unseen Hand in it all. Though I had seen it dimly, sometimes not at all, while passing through it, I now beheld as I never had done before how every link in the chain of my life had so fitted as to lead me to trust in the living God; and I was filled with wonder and praise when I saw how often He had blocked up my path when I would have destroyed myself by taking my own way. When I was thus meditating on the past and present, the thought occurred to me that my niece had a large family of grown-up sons and daughters, and that were I to write out my own life's experience, along with any traditions of our forefathers, in the way of a story, I might be helpful to both young and old in leading them to put their trust in God, the Father of the spirits of all flesh, and so that they might find their birthright, lost in Adam, restored in Christ Jesus. I saw that if I could in any measure follow out this line of thought, it would be glorifying to God and helpful to my friends. Committing my way to God in this matter, I determined to try; so I got a close-lined copy-book and commenced to write a tale of real life. But no one could be more surprised than I was myself when I found, after the copy-book had been filled, that the history was not well begun; so I got another and another, and as the copy-books increased in number, so did the story grow in my hands. "Where am I to stop?" I asked myself; "I am now in the middle of the sixth copy-book, and there are yet to be recorded the events of eight

years of my first widowhood, my twenty years of a second marriage, and nearly twenty years of a second widowhood. The record of all these might be interesting to my friends, but it would not carry out my original object;" so I thought I would not continue my history farther than a little beyond the death of my first husband. And with this I finished my sixth copy-book. I then packed up the whole and sent them off to my niece in Sunderland."

The loss for a time of two of the copy-books was the occasion of no little grief to the friends at Sunderland, but a cousin in Canada who had got a reading of them had made two copies, and he was thus able to supply the missing link. The incident suggested to Mrs Strother and her family that the record of their aunt's experience, so much prized by them, should not again run the risk of being irrecoverably lost, and they spoke of having some copies printed for private circulation—"just a few for relations."

I had misgivings (says "Aunt Janet") as to the wisdom of what was proposed. I did not know anything whatever about matters connected with printing, but I feared the cost would overbalance the profit; and though I valued my friends' kindness I feared the expense, and could do little to help them. . . Shortly after this a letter came from Mrs Strother, in which she said, "Dear Aunt, the publisher has looked over the manuscript, and he said the cost of printing the few copies we wanted would be twenty-five pounds. This took the breath from me. I was dumbfounded, and all my high hopes of seeing your book in print were dashed to the ground. We had thought that ten or twelve pounds were sure to cover what we wanted. The

publisher saw my disappointment, and he said, 'It is a good story, but it is one more for Scotland than England. Get subscription papers printed, and send them to the locality where the people and the places referred to in the story are, and you may get subscribers for twice the number you want; the larger the number, they are in proportion cheaper.' This raised my hopes, so I have sent you by this post some subscription papers. Do your best to get subscribers, and all will turn out well, and Aunt's book will yet have a wide circulation."

"Aunt's book will yet have a wide circulation" filled my mind with amazement. In these days of learning and bookmaking, shall an old, humble, uneducated woman presume to go into the field? What presumption that would be! The public would be sure to laugh at the very idea; and how could I have the face to ask for subscribers! Oh, no! the whole thing must be stopped. I wrote my niece to that effect, begging of her that the thought of printing might be given up. Such a sum of money could never be raised; and if what I had written were to come out as a book, subscribers would be disappointed with the contents. My story could only be interesting to relatives and considerate friends. What interest could the tale of poor bare-footed Jenny have for the public? In this dilemma I told my griefs to two of my friends to whom I had read part of the story, in the hope of some help coming to my troubled mind. They laughed at my fears, and said they would willingly subscribe themselves, and also take a few of the subscription papers and hand them to their friends; and they were sure to prize the book. . . . Shortly after this Mrs Strother wrote —"Dear Aunt, cheer up, we have got half the cost of the publishing subscribed for." And a few days afterwards I wrote, I had got sixty subscribers in Selkirk.

My readers (concludes the Authoress in the preface) have now before them an answer to the oft-repeated question, and how it

was that "Aunt Janet's Legacy" ever came to be in print. It was truly not a matter of her own seeking; but she is thankful to know that the simple story has afforded both instruction and profit to its many readers.

While the "Legacy" was in the printers' hands the Authoress wrote to her nephew, James K. Rae, then in Canada (April 20, 1892) saying, "I have delayed writing you in the hope of telling you that the little book was out. But I cannot say so. It has been unexpectedly delayed, the delay being occasioned by the publishers—not for want of subscribers, for they are more than will cover the expense of the five hundred copies. I am filled with wonder at the interest it has awakened in Selkirk and locality. A hundred and twenty copies have been subscribed for; this both by rich and poor—ministers, ministers' wives, doctors, landed proprietors, shopkeepers, booksellers, manufacturers, millworkers, and poor widows. It all appears to me so wonderful, I having, as it were, no hand in it. My only fear is that its contents will not come up to the expectations of subscribers. But God is over all things. If any one is helped to trust Him, to his name be all the glory."

It has not been an unusual experience for those who have rushed into print "without a name," and placed the result of their intellectual labours before the world, to find that these have met with little

appreciation; and it has often been a further disappointment to find that even patronising subscribers, who have given their money freely for the book, have bestowed only a perfunctory reading on the pages which, whatever be their literary merits, have entailed great mental toil, much precious time, and no small expense. This was in no sense the experience of "Aunt Janet" in connection with the publication of her "Legacy." Its readers found an undefinable something about it which secured their attention at the beginning and retained it to the end. Many felt so charmed by the simple story that they were not satisfied with one reading, but went over it a second, even a third time almost without a break, and with undiminished interest.

The first edition of the "Legacy" was published by Mawson, Philipps, & Co., Sunderland, in 1892. A large number of the 500 copies printed being subscribed for, the venture did not entail any pecuniary risk, and the surplus copies brought in a few pounds to the authoress. Nothing had been done by advertising, or the ordinary trade means, to make the book known or to push its sale; but it was not long until the edition was sold out. It was of course very gratifying to "Aunt Janet" that everything connected with the publication had turned out so well, but there were other effects on which she put a higher value than on the financial benefit she reaped from it: it

gained for her many sympathising friends, and brought many visitors to her humble dwelling in Buccleuch Road. Not a few living in distant parts of the country made special journeys to Selkirk to see "Aunt Janet" and enjoy her conversation; and in many of the letters she was getting from correspondents at home and abroad, there were expressions of gratitude for good received from the perusal of her book. These gave her great joy. She had written solely for the benefit of her relatives, making use of her own experience to set forth God's providential care over those who truly seek His guidance and help, and His faithfulness to all His promises; and in the interest manifested in her unpretending literary effort and the testimonies of good got from it by many readers, she had the satisfaction of knowing that her object had been accomplished in a way, and to an extent, she never dreamt of. It was also a matter of devout thankfulness to her that she had been able to do something, however feebly, for the glory of the God who had been her guide and helper through all the vicissitudes of her long pilgrimage. Thus were the latter years of her life cheered and brightened in a way that was quite congenial to her nature. She loved the communion of kindred spirits and opportunities of conversation with them. The infirmities of years now prevented her from being much out of her own home. Through means of the "Legacy," however, she had the

pleasure of social intercourse supplied to her in a way not anticipated, but yet very pleasant to her.

The demand for the "Legacy" still continued, which caused "Aunt Janet" to consider the matter of a second edition. She was of opinion that the first suffered to some extent by being printed in England where the vernacular tongue was not so well understood as at home. The work, as she has fully explained, was never intended to go into the hands of the public; and it was put to press without revision by herself or any one else. Seeing the book in print, she became aware that by some re-arrangement of the matter and dividing it into chapters, with appropriate headings, it might be considerably improved; and her suggestions were carried out in a second edition, published by the local firm of George Lewis & Son, in 1894. An excellent portrait of the authoress (photographed at the time) and views of scenes in the district referred to in the text were added, and these and a more ornate binding enhanced the attractions of the new edition. In a short preface, Mrs Bathgate says, "The author of these Recollections was not more surprised that they ever appeared in the shape of a book than she has been at its acceptance by the public, the whole of the first edition having been sold within a year." A third edition increased her wonder that the book should have had such success; and in the close of the preface to that issue, from which we

have quoted some passages, she says, "Surely, looking back over all the long past, and all the way in which she has been led, she may well say, "God moves in a mysterious way."

Other two large editions have been issued since the death of the authoress (by George Lewis & Co., Selkirk), and "Aunt Janet's Legacy" is still a popular and well-read story.

CHAPTER IX.

CORRESPONDENTS AND VISITORS

THE publication of the "Legacy," as has been stated, gained for "Aunt Janet" many sympathising correspondents and brought not a few visitors to her home. The discovery of long-lost friends among these correspondents and visitors was a source of great delight to her. In the closing pages of the "Legacy" she records how, while at Dalkeith, some shop lads, seeking after self-improvement, used to come and have conversations with her husband, James Kemp, who was then confined to the house through greatly impaired health. That illness terminated in his death, and his wife was left in very necessitous circumstances. The young men did not forget the widow in her affliction, but called now and again to inquire after her health; and out of a feeling

of gratitude for the intellectual help they had got from her deceased husband, and with a thoughtfulness and generosity which did them infinite credit, they put their contributions together, so as to make up a sum of two pounds, and presented it to the young widow. That was at a time when her resources had more nearly reached the verge of exhaustion than either they or any other persons were aware of. As she writes, she knew that "the gift came to her because of the high respect they had for the dear departed, and she expressed her gratitude for it in a flood of tears." Many long years had passed since that good deed was done, but the memory of it had not faded in "Aunt Janet's" mind. When the "Legacy" came to be in print she sent a few copies to friends "with the author's compliments," and she did not forget the "young men" who had so befriended her in the day of her need at Dalkeith. She had not seen any of them or heard from them for a long period, but as she did now and again hear about them in the intervening years she rejoiced in the honourable and useful part they were performing in the world, and in the prosperity which attended them. One of them was James Tod, who, along with his brother John, was now at the head of the prosperous firm of J. & J. Tod, merchants, Dalkeith; another was his brother Andrew, who was not less successful as a partner in the firm of A. & R. Tod, Ltd., Leith; a third

was William Anderson, who for fifty years was an honoured missionary of the United Presbyterian Church at Old Calabar, on the west coast of Africa. It was some time before these recipients of the volume came to know who its writer was. The book was in their hands "with the author's compliments," but the name was strange to them; and why the book should have been sent to them did not appear. The first to solve the mystery was Mr James Tod, who in explaining how he discovered who the writer was, said he had not been in a hurry to read a book coming to him in that way, and it lay for some time unheeded; but on taking it up one day, and looking over its pages, he was tempted to begin to read it; and as he read he became interested in the story. Coming to the passage in which four young men are spoken of, it was with strange surprise that he identified himself and his companions as the actors in a scene which had almost passed from his remembrance. After not a few inquiries he found that the Janet Bathgate whose name appeared on the title-page was their old friend Mrs Kemp, and that she was now resident in Selkirk. The correspondence which followed on this discovery could not fail to be most interesting to all the parties. A special journey, on different days, was made by the brothers to see Mrs Bathgate. They did not go alone, but each took a son with him. The younger men were quite in sympathy with the fathers

in their errand to Selkirk, entering heartily into the spirit of the occasion, and sharing in the gladness felt by them in renewing acquaintance with a long-lost friend. One of the sons, who was home on a visit, and shortly afterwards returned to New York, was so interested in the old authoress and her story that he took with him a number of copies of the "Legacy" for friends in the States and Canada. These, it was afterwards learned, were read with a measure of delight which can only be experienced by the Scot in a foreign land. In language which some will regard as extravagant, but no doubt heartfelt and sincere, one writer says, "In reading it I felt in pastures green, beside still waters, and as if under influence divine; and I thanked Heaven, the authoress, and the bestower of the gift. The book has the essence of a whole library of sermons, and for its lessons of patience, endurance, and self-sacrifice, you can return to it again and again." The other son, as he visited Selkirk on business, was a frequent caller at Buccleuch Road to see and have a ten minutes' crack with "Aunt Janet." In many ways and on many occasions the Messrs Tod, fathers and sons, manifested in a practical manner their great interest in the welfare and happiness of their old friend. Mr Andrew Tod, who was an influential elector in Mid-Lothian, sent a copy of the "Legacy" to Mr Gladstone, at that time the county's representative in Parliament, and he was

greatly gratified in receiving and in transmitting to Mrs Bathgate the Premier's opinion of her book. In Mr Gladstone's characteristic way, it was expressed on a post-card, as follows: "Dear Sir, I thank you for Mrs Bathgate's book, which, with your letter dated June 9, '94, came to my hands last week. I find it an edifying work, eminently well written, and full of interest. Your very faithful servant, W. E. Gladstone." Mr Tod, about the same time, wrote the authoress that he had forwarded a copy of the "Legacy" for Queen Victoria's gracious acceptance, and had received a letter from Sir Henry Ponsonby, her Majesty's private secretary, in which he said, "I have to thank you for sending me the enclosure, which I have shown to the Queen." Such tidings as these could not fail to gratify and delight the old woman. Referring to them, she would say, in a jocular strain, she wondered what would happen next—she would not be a bit surprised if the Queen herself were to drive up to her door some day."

As already noted, one of the other young men associated with the Tods in that beneficent deed done to the young widow at Dalkeith was William Anderson, missionary to Old Calabar. Mr Anderson had been on a preaching visit to Selkirk while Mrs Bathgate was living in the town, but that was some years before the "Legacy" was published, and consequently before the incident of pathetic interest to

the parties concerned in it had been brought to their remembrance; and for this reason there had been no meeting. Through physical infirmity and inability to travel, the two never had an opportunity of seeing each other face to face, to recount the great things the Lord had done for them and speak of the goodness and mercy that had followed them in their life. The lack of this privilege was so far made up to "Aunt Janet" by a letter from Mr Anderson, which she counted among her treasures, and which we here reproduce:—

1 Gladstone Place, Edinburgh, 27/3/93.

My dear Friend,

I should have thanked you long ere now for your kindly sending me a copy of your "Legacy." I also received your kind letter of 23rd, including grand text for 24th. Your former name was familiar to me when I sojourned at Dalkeith. Dear me! about sixty years ago! The young men of the venerable establishment of John Gray & Son frequently talked to me about the pleasant visits to Lugton and of the great excellence of the couple they were wont to visit. I have been trying to make myself believe lately that I walked over with one of them one evening to your house, but I can recall nothing substantial about the circumstances, and so conclude that it must be only a vagary of the imagination. Friend James Tod tells me that he took me one evening over to your house in Back Street. I cannot recall any other visit. I wonder whether you have any remembrance of ever seeing me.

Our Father on high has been wonderfully gracious to you and me. How few of our Dalkeith centemporaries are now to the fore! I was preaching in Dalkeith lately, and I told my hearers that I claimed to be one of its oldest inhabitants! I was born at

Galashiels (strictly at Buckholmside), April 15, 1812. At the Auld Term Day of the following year, 1813, my father flitted to Dalkeith, so that on May 26, 1893, eighty years shall have passed away since I became an inhabitant of Dalkeith. I wonder whether your father and my father were fellow-members of Dr Lawson's church. When I was preaching at Selkirk some years ago, Rev. John Lawson, grandson of the Doctor, showed me from the Session Minute Book that my father was inducted one of Lawson's elders on October 4, 1804. He continued in Selkirk congregation till Galashiels congregation was formed, but I do not know exactly when that was—possibly about 1808-9; so it is possible that both our fathers may have been fellow-members for a time. Were you baptized by Dr Lawson?

Probably you are aware that threatened blindness was the cause of my return from Africa. I was among the blacks for fifty years, and would gladly return to them. Our great oculist, Dr Argyll Robertson, removed cataract from the right eye three years ago, so that I can see to read a little. But the eye soon wearies. I could continue my crack with you for a good while yet, but I must stop for the present. I hope I have made a good beginning. Grace be with you! Cordially yours,

WM. ANDERSON.

Those who have reached four-score years, or thereby, can readily understand that while memory has never lost hold of some occurrences—they may be very trifling—in the days of childhood and youth, retaining a distinct impression of all the attendant circumstances, it has let slip, beyond recall, the recollection of other occurrences and events of much greater importance. So it seems to have been with the

aged missionary and the incident at Lugton. Mrs Bathgate had never any doubt as to his being one of the four young men, and she used to mention circumstances which if repeated to him would likely have led to a remembrance of the transaction referred to, and other things which happened at that stage of his career. Probably Mrs Bathgate would do so by letter, but of this there is no record. Regarding the two points on which Mr Anderson sought information, Mrs Bathgate would have had no difficulty in satisfying him. The fathers must have been for a considerable period fellow-members of Dr Lawson's congregation. The child Janet Greenfield, as is mentioned in the "Legacy," was baptized by Dr Lawson; and John Greenfield, her father, was for some years precentor in the church. "It was on the Auld Term Day of 1813," says Mr Anderson, "that my father flitted from Buckholmside to Dalkeith." It is worthy of remark that a comparison of dates leads to the conclusion that on the same day John Greenfield and his family flitted from Philiphaugh to the head of Yarrow—an event which forms the starting point of "Aunt Janet's" interesting history in the "Legacy."

Those three lads who showed kindness to the young widow in the day of her sore need, and whose friendship with her in their old age was renewed under circumstances of exceptional interest, all predeceased

her by a few years, and were gathered to their fathers like a shock of corn fully ripe. Men they were of high repute and sterling worth, known for their manifold good deeds and Christian labours.

One afternoon a carriage and pair was driven to Mrs Bathgate's door, three ladies being seated in it. One of them came upstairs, and introduced herself as Miss M'Gregor. She said that she and her friends had come from Melrose, where they were staying for a little while, in order that they might call and pay their respects to her. They could scarcely have ventured to trouble her in this way, had it not been that when they left Edinburgh, their friend, and her own friend and correspondent, Miss Douglas of Rosebery Crescent, had urged them, when they were at Melrose, to drive up to Selkirk and see "Aunt Janet," whose "Legacy" they had read with much pleasure and profit. Miss M'Gregor said the two friends she had left in the carriage—whom she named, and who had been engaged in missionary work at Constantinople and in Italy—were both rather feeble, and might feel the stairs a little trying for them. Besides, they hesitated to come up, so many together, lest they should trouble her too much. Her friends, however, would like very much to see her face; they had heard her so much spoken about; and it would be a great joy to them if they could be so favoured.

Would it be too much to ask that she would go to the window and look to them in the carriage, now at the other side of the road? She did so, and sent across a few words of greeting, but she could not raise her voice to a tone loud enough, she feared, to be heard; but it was evident by the kindly smiles, moving of lips, and waving of handkerchiefs sent back in return that the visitors had been highly gratified by this curious interview with "Aunt Janet." She used to rehearse the proceedings of that afternoon, commenting with a good deal of humour on the new rôle in which she had been induced to appear; and she wound up her story by saying, "I've made a show o' mysel' for yince, but if I've to dae it again in the same way, I maun make a chairge for't!"

Many instances of a similar feeling of interest in "Aunt Janet" and her book became known to her in her declining years, and were very gratifying. Some of these belong to a later period in the Life Story, and will have their place in the order of time; but of numerous others which might be quoted the two following will be an appropriate close to this chapter. A gentleman who had been in Selkirk on business made a hurried visit to her home. He said he had only ten minutes to spare before getting the train about to leave the station, close at hand; but he had called to say that at his home in England his wife had been reading "Aunt Janet's Legacy" to his

mother-in-law (who belonged to Peebles and was blind); and the old woman had been so much pleased with it that it had to be read "over and over again," until she could say good large portions of it off by heart. The other acknowledgment was of quite a unique kind, and tendered in a form which gave "Aunt Janet" both pleasure and surprise. A young lad from Yarrow called one afternoon, bringing a sonsy Scotch haggis with him. "Laddie," she said, "what am I to dae wi' that? and where has it come from?" "It's for yoursel'," said the youth; "I've brocht it frae ——;" and he added by way of explanation, "my faither has been killin' a sheep, and he thocht he wad like to send 'e a haggis, because his faither's name is mentioned in yer book!"

CHAPTER X.

A DISTINGUISHED VISITOR.

AMONG "Aunt Janet's" visitors was the late Lord Napier and Ettrick. Calling at her house one day, his Lordship made himself known, and told how he had enjoyed the reading of her book; all the more so, he said, as some of the places where she had been serving when a girl were on the Thirlestane estate, and many of the people she mentioned had been well known to him. Mrs Bathgate felt herself greatly honoured by having Lord Napier as a visitor, and in narrating the interview, as she took pleasure in doing, she said that at first she was a little flurried, rather lost her usual self-possession, and forgot how she should address him—sometimes calling him "your Lordship" and sometimes only "sir;" and when she tried to correct

herself, he said "O, Mrs Bathgate, never mind; that's just a trifle."

He sat down beside her, kindly took her hand in his, and had many questions to ask about the days and the places of her early experiences and her after life, in all which he showed great interest. The little agitation that she had on his lordship's entry very soon left her; she felt perfectly at ease in his presence, and, as she said, she could crack with him as freely as if she had known him for years. In this mood, and as the conversation went on, reference was incidentally made to the visitor's father. Mrs Bathgate said, "I never saw your Lordship's father, but I used often to hear about him. Lord Napier's name was well known around the Loch, and he was a man greatly loved and respected among the people there. But, though your Lordship may consider it strange, I think it may be interesting if I tell you that I have always had him associated in my mind with an awful fright I got when a little girl, and which I have never forgotten. 'Oh, dear me, Mrs Bathgate,' said his Lordship, 'how can that be? you must tell me about that.' "And he listened," she continued, "with great interest, as I explained to him how the incident that excited my fear came about, and how his Lordship's father was mixed up with it. I told him that when I was serving with Willie Brydon at Summerhope, a little burn ran past the end of the

cottage; and just a few yards before it reached it, the water fell over a rock, forming a little cascade, and it had scooped out a tiny pool, in which we washed the potatoes and vegetables required for dinner. One morning I was attending to this part of the day's duty. Everything by the loch side was still and peaceful, and as I was washing the vegetables I heard the tramp of a horse's footsteps coming slowly along the road, but the end of the hill kept me from seeing it, and who it might belong to. At length I heard by the sound that the horse was coming nearer, and I turned to look just as it came round the hill-end; and I saw something that terrified me greatly. There was a white horse and somebody on its back. The rider's face was black, and whether he smiled or grinned I could not say, but, in doing the one or the other, he showed his teeth. I had never seen a black man before, and when I saw the white teeth and the black face I had no other thought than that it was the de'il that had come to take me away, because I was a sinner. Whatever was in my hands at the time fell into the pool, and I ran screaming straight for the house. Peggie, my mistress, cried out, 'Lassie, what's wrang wi' 'e? Ye've gi'en me sic a gliff as I havena gotten for mony a day. Quick, tell me what's wrang.' 'O, Peggie,' I said, 'it's the de'il on a white horse come to take me away.' 'Hoots, Jennie, that's nae de'il; that's Mark, Lord Napier's black servant,

that he brocht hame wi' him frae India. Mark's a hermless craitur, and wadna hurt a flee. He's juist come ower frae Thirlestane, nae doot, wi' a message for some o' the farmers.'"

His Lordship listened attentively and with keen enjoyment as the story proceeded, and on its conclusion he said, "Well, Mrs Bathgate, what you have told me shows how well your memory has served you. One of my earliest recollections is being brought over by my nurse from Thirlestane to have a sail on St Mary's Loch, and Mark accompanied us and was our boatman." The interview lasted for a full hour, and the two aged worthies parted, invoking Heaven's richest blessing on each other.

Lord Napier and Ettrick (9th Baron Napier) died at Florence on 19th December 1898. The life of the deceased nobleman, embodying the distinguished part he bore in the diplomatic service of Great Britain, has yet to be written. The abilities he displayed in that exalted sphere, and the tact and fidelity with which he guarded the interests of the Empire in its relations with foreign powers were fully recognised by the Statesmen of his day. There were, however, traits in his Lordship's character which the great world never saw: they were observed and known only by his retainers at Thirlestane and the humble dwellers in the vale of upper Ettrick, among whom, in quiet retirement, the last years of his life were spent. It seems not inappropriate, in connection with the incident just narrated, to give a place in this story to a few other illustrations of the true nobility and

LITTLE JESSIE'S FRIGHT.

THE NAMELESS WAIF'S BURIAL.

beautiful humility exemplified by the Lord of Thirlestane in the closing years of his lifetime. The mortal remains of Lord Napier and Ettrick were conveyed from Florence, and interred in the churchyard of his native and much-loved parish of Ettrick; and no more eloquent tribute to his memory could have been paid than that which was paid by the parish minister, the Rev. George Mackenzie, in a sermon after his Lordship's death:

"Never as long as I live," said the preacher, "can I forget the spectacle of a raw March afternoon, two years ago, when the body of that nameless waif, who was found dead within the borders of our parish, was carried to the grave. As a dog is buried, so would the men in brief authority have buried him. But some of you know how the dirt-encrusted lorry they provided was deliberately met by Lord Napier, attired as he would have attired himself at the funeral of a friend; how he followed it on foot to the churchyard gate; how, with a few neighbours he had urged to be present, he helped to lower the rude coffin into its place; and then, according to his custom, stood by me with uncovered head, as the final words of prayer were spoken. It is a story to tell your children and your children's children; for they may live long and travel far before they hear of an incident like that again."

One afternoon, in driving from Hawick to Thirlestane, his Lordship and his coachman, James Gray, found that a hill burn which crosses the road was running in such volume, in consequence of heavy rains which had fallen since the morning, that the bridge under the roadway was insufficient to admit of all the water passing through it. The consequence was that the stream rose above the level of the road,

and a current was sweeping across it. The horses, quite familiar with the road, were startled by the unusual sight, and could not be got to face the stream. How the difficulty was to be surmounted was not long in being settled by his Lordship: James would keep his seat and manage the affrighted team, and he would do the rest. Taking off his boots and sox and rolling up his trousers was but the work of a few moments; and the man who had stood before some of the world's greatest potentates, and having the weighty interests of Britain intrusted to his hands, condescended to do the work of his servant, quieting and giving confidence to the excited horses and leading them safely through the stream. In narrating the incident, Gray would say, "Ye ken, it wad hae been far liker my place to dae that than his Lordship, but that wasna his way. He thocht if I had waded the stream I wad hae been sittin' wet a' the way to Thirlestane, while he wad take nae skaith, as he could gang into the carriage and put on his stockin's and boots again, and be quite comfortable." On another occasion, travelling the same hilly road on a stormy wintry day, the way was blocked by a deep snow wreath, through which it was evident that the horses could not make their way. Leaving the coachman in charge of the horses and carriage, his Lordship went back to the nearest house, not far distant, and, borrowing a shovel and getting such help as was available, a road was cast through the snow, the nobleman doing a fair share of the digging.

Here is an incident not unworthy of being read alongside the Parable of the Good Samaritan. As Lord Napier was being driven home by Gray from Selkirk, where he had been on county business, they came upon a man lying at the roadside, drunk and asleep. His Lordship called to the driver to halt, and asked if he knew who the man was. Gray men-

tioned the man's name and where he lived, a place some distance beyond Thirlestane. "Well," said his Lordship, "it will never do to let him lie there; we cannot allow him to perish in the cold; get him up beside you, Gray." With some difficulty the man was got on to the seat beside James, and conveyed a long way towards his home; and it is to be hoped that he never forgot how much he owed to the kindly heart of Lord Napier and Ettrick.

CHAPTER XI.

DECLINING YEARS. LONG SEPARATIONS.

IT was in the summer of 1890 that Mrs Bathgate was visited by her niece Mrs Strother and her husband, from Sunderland, when she took them to the scene of her childhood's years at Philiphaugh. What she there related to them of the family history whetted the desire of her niece to know more about her ancestors; and not long after her return home, Mrs Strother wrote her aunt, asking that she would favour her with some further information regarding them. The germ of the "Legacy" lay in that expressed wish. How it found a lodgment in the old woman's mind; how, being cherished and allowed scope in the written page, it expanded and developed; and how, unconsciously to herself, it grew into a book, has been told

by "Aunt Janet" in a former chapter. The circumstances connected with the writing of the "Legacy" were indeed remarkable; and the fact of its having been undertaken and carried to so successful a completion when the authoress had seen a good many more years than the allotted fourscore furnishes proof of intellectual vigour and literary powers of a high order.* It has already been seen how the publication of the "Legacy" led to many pleasing discoveries of old friends, how it brightened "Aunt Janet's" life also, and added not a little to her comforts in her declining years. These varied enjoyments helped her, in a good measure, to forget the infirmities of age and to bear up under the burden of years in a way which otherwise she might not have been so able to do. But along with the mild excitement and exhilaration of this new experience, there were many reminders of weakened physical powers and increasing frailty; and in her letters about this period Mrs Bathgate begins to speak of much impaired sight, feeble knees, and decaying strength. From this time onward, as may well be supposed, her infirmities

* A well-known writer in the "British Weekly" (May 2, 1902), in an article on "Men who have done their best work after fifty," including in the range of his inquiry the wide field of literature, says, "My general conclusion is that those who have done little before fifty are likely to accomplish little after it, though there are exceptions. . . . . It is not often that a man makes a new start and a great success after fifty undistinguished years, and yet the thing is not impossible." "Aunt Janet's" case is a notable exception.

increased; and not infrequently she had severe attacks of bronchitis. A letter (dated 23rd March 1893) to her nephew, Mr Rae, who was then in Canada, is interesting as being descriptive of her circumstances and feelings at that time. She says:

. . . As for myself, I have been confined to bed for nine weeks with sore legs. I have been very helpless. I had to get a young woman to come in for an hour or so every day; this drew on my purse, which is getting *long-necked*. But God, whose eye runs to and fro through the whole earth, making Himself strong in behalf of those whose hearts are right before Him, considered my need, and sent help through the sale of my little book. A few copies were over after the publishers' and all expenses were paid, so I am selling one now and again; and that has met all my need. I can only say, "What hath God wrought!" When writing it, I did not know that I was writing a book; far less did I ever expect to gain a halfpenny by it. Truly, God leads the blind by a way they knew not. It is now nearly sold out, but wonderful to think that a second edition is called for, which will be published in Selkirk, in an improved style, with the blunders in the Scotch language corrected, and in a cheaper form. . . Though I am still in bed, my general health is good; and now in my 87th year I have still hope of being raised up. May God help me to live to His glory, praising Him with my latest breath! As yet all my faculties remain unimpaired—only my sight failing; so I fear you will hardly make out this letter, as I am writing mostly by guess. . . Let me know if you get my letters, and if you can read them.

As the sheets of the "Legacy" were passing

through the press the aged authoress got a letter from a long-absent but never-forgotten friend. That was the member of the Scott Moncrieff family she speaks of in her book who in his infancy had been the object of her tender care and solicitude, and for whose well-being she was willing to make any sacrifice. She tells that, under the fatigues of long nursing, with its toils and anxieties, her health was giving way, and the bloom had faded from her cheek. Mother and friends had counselled her, for the sake of her own health, to give up her situation and go home for a little rest. She, however, gave no encouragement to the proposal: she considered that no stranger could give all the attention and care which her charge required, and she believed it to be her duty to remain at her post. The words in which she made known her resolution are memorable. "God has called me to this work," she said to her mother, "and I cannot give it up. I will nurse my darling boy while he requires it. If he dies, I will die with him. And, dear mother, you know love makes labour light." Such love and devotion are far more like the outflow of a mother's feelings towards her own offspring than anything that could be expected to come from the most loyal and attached servant. Love like that could never wane or grow weary; it followed the career of "her boy" with all a mother's fond affection, rejoicing in his well-doing and success; and

it survived, as will afterwards be seen, till her dying day.

Robert Scott Moncrieff, when he grew up to manhood, went to India, and many years of his life were spent there and in other foreign lands. When he wrote his old nurse it was always in a strain of warm affection and gratitude, usually addressing her as "My dearest old Nurse Jessie," and subscribing himself "Your very affectionate boy;" and on the occasions of his return to this country, he made it his study to pay her a visit when that was possible. In 1891 Mr Scott Moncrieff had been commissioned by the Society for the Relief of Persecuted Jews to proceed to Palestine to administer its funds among the thousands of perishing Jews in Jaffa, Jerusalem, and other parts of the Holy Land. While at Jerusalem, in the beginning of 1892, he received a letter from a relative, in which mention was made of Mrs Bathgate, his old nurse, as then living in Selkirk, and whom his correspondent had seen a short time before writing. On learning this, he wrote Mrs Bathgate a long letter. The account which he gave her of visits he had made to Bethlehem, Calvary, and other places in and around the Sacred City was intensely interesting to her, and all the more highly prized as coming from one so much beloved by her as the writer. Much information of an important kind, bearing on his mission to Palestine, was given by Mr

Scott Moncrieff in his reports to the Society and in the lectures he delivered on his return to this country; and many extracts might be made from the letter to Mrs Bathgate which could not fail to interest the general reader. We limit our quotation, however, to what he graphically writes of Bethlehem and its biblical and hallowed associations. It is the more familiar portions of the letter that fall within the scope of this Life Story; and these convey a beautiful acknowledgment of the mother-like love and devotion lavished by "Nurse Jessie" on her infant charge at Dalkeith so many years before, and they show how fervent was the affection and gratitude of the writer of the letter to his old friend for the inestimable services she had rendered to him in his infancy. His letter is dated,

Jerusalem, 28th February, 1892.

My dearest old Nurse Jessie,

I must have been a fair-haired laddie when you first knew me, and now I am a white-headed old man, well on in the sixties (the Sabbatic decade, as Dr Chalmers beautifully called it), and yet you are alive to follow me still with your love and your prayers in all my wanderings on the earth. May our Heavenly Father bless you more and more, dear; and He will to the very last step of your pilgrimage, which has proved such a long one. What an abundant fulfilment you have experienced of that sweet promise for aged travellers Zionward—"And even to your old age I am He, and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you (Isaiah xlvi. 4)." And you will praise the Lord with me,

that for me likewise, hoar hairs bring me from day to day fresh evidences of His faithfulness as a promiser.

You will remember old John Corbet,* the head forester at Lugton. It was a saying of his, "Weel, for me the bell 's aboot ringin' in; I've come a lang road; but it has been a pleesant yin, wi' Christ for company." . . Perhaps, when you receive this, dear Jessie, 'the bell will be about ringin' in.' Ah, but I wad like to haud ye by the hand, and get your blessing before ye gang hame! I would like that one of the last things you could hear should be my thanks to our Heavenly Father for his abundant answers to your prayers for spiritual things for me. Weel, weel, we 'll praise Him together in glory some day, "washed in the blood of the Lamb." But the bell may have rung in for me before it rings in for you, and you may find me hame before you!

* * * *

But you would like to know how I am in health, and will be glad to learn that I never was better. As a proof of this, I may tell you that on Sunday last, which was a lovely day, I walked out to Bethlehem, with a dear and like-minded Christian brother; and, after a rest and tea at one of the missionary houses there, walked back again—good seven miles each way. I had not taken so long a walk for years, I believe; and though I was very tired after it, I was all the better for the change of air and the exercise, and the companionship of one who like myself felt that every step was taken on hallowed ground, as it were. The scenery was very beautiful, especially at Bethlehem, as we passed Rachel's Tomb by the wayside, "when there was but a little way as thou comest to Ephrath;" and then leaving on

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* The John Corbet referred to is mentioned by "Aunt Janet" in the "Legacy" as the one who afforded her much-needed relief in the distressful morning after a severe storm, by which his own house had been partly wrecked.

our right the lovely little valley on the edge of which the tomb stands, and crossing a ridge on our left, we turned from the road, again to the left, and paused as we looked far down into a much wider valley, bounded by rocky hills on the further side. Over these we beheld range upon range of rugged heights descending lower, and yet lower, in the far distance to the edge of a great chasm; and beyond that a great wall of mountains, the Mountains of Moab. Could we have seen into the chasm, we would have beheld the Dead Sea; but it was invisible from where we stood, at the edge of a very steep descent terraced for vineyards and gardens, with a few fields at the bottom all green with young corn. Between these we could follow with the eye a narrow winding road leading to the rocky ranges beyond—the old road from Bethlehem to the only passes through the mountains by which it is possible to reach the Jordan. And as we gazed, we thought how weary two poor women must have been one day long, long ago, as they toiled through these passes and along the rugged path between the fields ("it was at the beginning of the barley harvest"), and how tired they must have been when they reached the well beside which we were standing, and how they would probably rest for a little beside it and drink, and lave their faces and their weary feet before stepping down on the dusty road to resume their journey to the gate of the city, about half a mile farther on. They were poor widows, these wanderers. "So they two went until they came to Bethlehem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Bethlehem, that all the city was moved about them, and they said, 'Is this Naomi?'"

And as we lingered by the well we thought of a band of fighting men (but a handful compared with the host holding the city) who were gathered at a spot in the mountains just behind one of those hills below us, and how their leader—remembering keenly the happy days he had spent in his boyhood in this

valley, and how sweet and cool were the waters which he had drunk from this very well near us—" longed and said, ' Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!' and how three of his followers forced their way, sword in hand, up these steeps, " and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem, that was by the gate, and brought it to David."

And as we looked down upon the fields, where we saw sheep feeding here and there, do you suppose we failed to think of that night when,

> While humble shepherds watched their flocks
> In Bethlemen's plains by night,
> An angel sent from heaven appeared,
> And filled the plains with light?

It was with tender hearts that we repeated the dear old paraphrase, and in tender tones each told how he had learned it in childhood at his mother's knee. Our hearts did indeed burn within us as we returned to Jerusalem, " talking together of all these things," but with no sadness of countenance; for each of us had for many years known the living Christ as his Saviour.

* * * *

And now I must bring this long letter to a close. It has given me great pleasure to write, especially to you, on themes so dear to me; and though it may be too much for you to read so long a letter at one time I hope you will be able for a bit of it at a time, and that you will enjoy it. Commending you to the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, and well assured how fully you will realise this, I remain, dear Jessie,

Always most affectionately yours,

R. Scott Moncrieff.

In reply to Mr Scott Moncrieff's much-prized letter, Mrs Bathgate writes, on 24th March, 1892, as follows:

My dear Boy,

You have given me great joy by sending me such a long letter. Please to accept my gratitude for your kind remembrance of me. I read it with deep interest, and was thankful to learn that your health is good and that you are able to labour for the good of the lost sheep of Israel; and also that even in that land at present overshadowed with a dark cloud you have found a brother like-minded, with whom you can take counsel: so you took your way to Bethlehem. I tried to follow you, as you talked one to another. Like two of old, you were sad while you beheld the land which once flowed with milk and honey, and was made glad by the songs of the tribes going up to Zion, all a desolation. But you had not gone far when a third person joined you, and beginning at Moses and all the Prophets He spake, not concerning Himself—for this is not the office of the Comforter, but He took of the things of Christ, and made them plain to your souls. And did not your hearts burn within you while He talked with you by the way, and opened to you the Scriptures, telling you that glorious things are yet awaiting Zion; and you returned to Jerusalem with great joy.

Your old Nurse Jessie, in her eighty and more years is taking wee short steps—not now, as in days gone by, to guide your infant steps, but to listen to the gracious words that you speak. They fell like the morning dew on her old heart, while you spoke of the rest that remained for her, reminding her that "the bells were ringing in."

* * * * *

But I must stop. I know you did not expect me to write you; but love has constrained me to do so. I fear, however, that you

will not be able to make out my meaning; my writing is so bad. But it is likely to be the last I may ever write you. I am able to move about in a frail way. I am, my dear Boy, your loving old nurse, JESSIE BATHGATE.

Not many months before her death, Mrs Bathgate was greatly pleased on receiving a letter from a lady in Edinburgh, in which the writer mentioned that her aunt, an aged woman, had been greatly delighted in reading the "Legacy." She had often thought and spoken of the happy time she had spent at Yair, on Tweedside, and as she did so she frequently referred to Jessie Greenfield, the children's nurse. She had longed to know something about her, and had made many inquiries after her, but had never been able to get any information. One day not long before the date of the letter, a friend, hearing the aunt speak of "Yair," said she had a book in which mention was made of that place, and she would be glad to let her have a loan of it. The old lady read, or had the pages of the "Legacy" read to her; and as the reading went on her interest in the book increased. As it spoke of the silvery Tweed and Fairnalea and Yair, the beautiful scenery of that part of Tweedside rose before her mental vision, old memories were awakened, and she thought with delight of the time she had lived there. As it told of the arrival of Miss Mary Pringle from India, attended by her black woman servant, and of the not easily-forgotten scene

at the parting with her much-loved ayah, the old lady's interest in the story became intense. And when she came to the loving mention of Miss Ronald, the governess, she burst into tears, and fondly kissed the page on which her own name was written. Mrs Bathgate, too, had thought very often and lovingly of the "amiable young lady" who had been her friend at Yair, wondering what had become of her, how she had fared in life, if she were still alive, and where she might be. All her inquiries after her had, however, been fruitless; but now, after seventy years' separation, each of them had come to know that her friend still lived. But, alas! the infirmities of age prevented them from travelling to see each other face to face, and to renew the friendship of their youthful days. To both of them this was a great trial, but had to be meekly borne. "I think," said Mrs Bathgate, in telling the story, "this discovery is something like what will take place in Heaven, when long-lost and long-separated friends will come to know each other, but where there shall be no more parting."

A letter which Mrs Bathgate wrote and addressed to "Mrs E——, Rathdaire, Monasterevin, Ireland," on June 11, 1896, was returned to her from the Dead Letter Office, bearing the intimation that the person for whom it was intended had "Gone away, and left no address." But for the circumstance of the letter

being undelivered and returned to the writer, and preserved among her papers, we would have wanted the pleasing evidence it furnishes of Mrs Bathgate's affectionate interest in another old friend and of earnest longing for her spiritual welfare. Doubtless this is but one of many similar letters, and it may be taken as an example of the writer's fervid epistolary style. The following are the principal passages of the letter:

My dear Annie, . . . My long silence has not arisen from forgetfulness. O no, you live in my heart. But for the few years past I have been very poorly, confined to bed all the winter months. Though I rallied a little in the summer, yet feeble and not able for much. Now, in my ninety-first year, though able to move about in a frail way, I write you a few lines, which is likely to be a farewell before I get the call to set out for the land afar off. And as I would like to meet you there I fondly hope that you are making some progress thither. Perhaps this letter will recall to your memory happy days in Glasgow, when your young warm heart rejoiced in a Saviour's love. They were happy days to me. They come up to me always with you. If this finds you still in the same place let me know, as I wish to send you a little book as a token of affectionate remembrance, in the hope that it will be some help to you in your journey through this weary world. It will explain itself when you read it. . . Your old and faithful friend, JANET BATHGATE.

CHAPTER XII.

AUNT NELL'S STORY

AS time rolled on, "Aunt Janet" became weaker in body, and suffered more from the ailments to which she was subject; yet her mental powers were still vigorous and active, and she was ready to converse with visitors as freely as ever. A new and improved edition of the "Legacy" was brought out in 1894, and the story found many new readers. As the authoress thus became more widely known, the number of her visitors and correspondents increased. Then, she found a new source of pleasure, and of profit also, in the sale of the volume. She had always a number of copies displayed on the cabinet in her room, and she took to the new employment of bookselling with evident enjoyment. Her remarks in connection with it when she had been "doing a good

business" were at times amusing. Speaking of sales she had made she would say, "It's wonderful to think of me lying here and making "siller" by selling books. At another time she would refer to two authors of whom she had read. Questioning each other as to the reasons they had for publishing their writings, one admitted that his object was to gain fame, the other said his aim was to make money; then she would add in a very hearty way respecting her own literary venture, "I naither soucht fame nor money, but I 've gotten them baith!"

In the spring of 1895, Mrs Bathgate's nephew, James K. Rae, who had been a number of years in Canada, returned, with his family, to Scotland and settled in Greenock. When a boy he had lived with his aunt at Kirkhill, while she kept the school there; and his frequent visits to her, at other places of residence, before going abroad, and the interchange of letters afterwards, show that the bond of relationship had been kept close and firm between them. Mr Rae's return, therefore, was gladly welcomed by his aged relative, and from that time till her death he was her frequent visitor and adviser.

When persons of the same family meet, especially in advanced life, nothing is more natural for them than to indulge in quiet and unrestrained conversation concerning their ancestry. They will rehearse with a

feeling of pardonable pride what they have heard or read of the attainments or good deeds or distinctions of any in the ancestral line, going as far back into the distant and obscure past as memory or tradition will carry them. So it seems to have been with "Aunt Janet" and her nephew. Among the notabilities of their family who was brought to remembrance, and whose characteristics were reviewed, was Helen Greenville, familiarly known as Aunt Nell. She was a sister of "Aunt Janet's" father, a good many years his senior; but she would not be called Greenfield, as her brother was content to be. There was a tradition that the Greenfields were descended from a family of distinction in the south of England of the name of Granville or Grenville; and it may go to show that Aunt Nell was a woman of independent mind, and proud of her supposed ancestral dignity, that she claimed the family name. Half of the aristocratic smack about it was lost, however, by a compromise on its first syllable, and Greenville was her ordinary designation. She appears to have been a person of forceful character and a capable manager in the common affairs of life, but not many particulars of her career came down to the younger generation. It was however known that she had been most of her life-time in service in different parts of the country, that she had been married late in life to a country joiner, a widower; that after her husband's death she went

to live with her brother at Glenormiston, that in her last years she was quite blind, and that her remains were buried in Innerleithen churchyard. It was in her visits to Glenormiston that "Aunt Janet" had listened to Aunt Nell's stories. She had many of them in her memory, but it had never occurred to her to put any of them in writing. In conversation with her nephew about Aunt Nell she related one connected with her service as housekeeper on the borders of Mid-Lothian which interested him a good deal. Under the influence of the family feeling referred to above, Mr Rae proposed to his aunt that if she would repeat the story he would write it out, so as to have it preserved. They had plenty of time on hand, and the task might be a congenial one to them both. It was accordingly set about, and completed in not many sittings. After returning home Mr Rae sent a clean copy of the story to his aunt. There had been no thought in either mind of having it printed, and it was laid aside among other papers. About two years after it was written, a lady and gentleman from Northumberland, who were on a tour in the Border district, paid a visit to "Aunt Janet." They had read the "Legacy," and they called to make acquaintance with the authoress. In conversation with them Mrs Bathgate said there had not been anything of hers in print except the story of the child's death at Kirkhill, a piece of poetry, and the "Legacy;"

but she had in manuscript a story which her nephew had written out to her dictation. To gratify the wish of her visitors she handed it to them, and as they appeared to be interested by what they read, she said they might take it with them for a more leisurely reading at home. In returning the story the lady wrote, "So far we have not done anything with it, save that we have taken a copy, and read it to a few friends in our own house. Our minister was very much pleased with it. He thought it was a story the 'British Weekly' would be glad to publish." The idea of publication thus suggested was mentioned by Mrs Bathgate to some of her friends, who thought favourably of it—it could be printed at little cost—and they recommended that it should be done. It was accordingly issued by the Edinburgh Religious Tract and Book Society in booklet form, and was speedily sold out. As it has not been reprinted it is given a place in this Life Story. Apart from any interest which the story may possess it shows what a wonderful memory Mrs Bathgate's was. The fact also that it was dictated by her when about ninety years of age may be held as corroborating the opinion expressed in a former chapter of our volume, that if in early life her way had been directed into the field of literature, there lay in her mental constitution great possibilities of attaining to eminence as a writer. The full title given on the booklet was "Aunt Nell's Story, or a

Feast at Habakkuk's Spring (an incident of the last century), by the author of 'Aunt Janet's Legacy.'"

About the middle of the eighteenth century, and not far distant from the source of Gala Water, stood an old mansion, the owner of which, and of the surrounding estate, was a respected middle-aged bachelor. He had as housekeeper a person named Nelly Greenville, who was well known in the district by the name of Nell, and who, from her shrewd common-sense and active habits, was indispensable to the Laird, who consulted her on matters of every kind. He could at times be angry with others, but was never out of tune with Nell. When busy with out-door matters, he often forgot to come in for dinner; and then Nell would go in search of him, and would be seen linking him by the arm, and bringing him to the house, scolding all the way, on account of the dinner getting cold and out of season.

It was at the time of the dear years—a period long remembered in Scotland, when the almost complete failure of the crops and the famine prices of food and clothing brought ruin and distress alike to many of the tenant farmers and labouring classes.

The Laird, according to the old custom, was in the habit of inviting his tenant farmers to an annual dinner, closely following the Martinmas rent day; but as few were able to pay rents in full at this time the Laird remarked that "they couldna expect him in sic hard times to give the usual feast." Some of them spoke up and said it would never do to give up the good old custom, and others said that "they had hungered themselves in order that they might pay him their rents."

"Aweel, aweel!" said the Laird, "sma' mercies are better than nane; an' as hunger is guid kitchen,

I'll tell Nell to put on the shearers' pot, an' ye can come at the usual time, an' I 'll g'ie ye a' yer fill o' porridge an' milk."

The Laird meant this as a joke, but the farmers took it in earnest: and knowing that he was wealthy, they thought it would be mean of him if he was to deprive them of their usual dinner at the "big hoose," and they resolved not to go near his porridge feast.

As the day approached, the Laird called Nell and said, "Noo, Nell, we'll ha'e to mak' the usual feast for thae farmers, or there'll be nae leevin' wi' them; sae ye maun tell Will Co'burn, the herd, to bring hame the fattest wether frae 'mang the sheep, for they maun ha'e a roast o' mutton; an' tell Sandy Scott, the byreman, to kill a pig for a roast o' bacon; an', Nell, draw the necks o' a wheen hens an' ducks; roast some and boil the rest, an', if need be, ye can roast the bubbly-jock as weel; an', of coorse, Nell, ye'll consider what's needed in the way of puddin's and sic like; an' be sure that ye scrimp naething."

The Laird was satisfied that Nell would fail in nothing, so for a whole week she was busy preparing all sorts of dishes—roast and boiled beef, pork, and mutton; leek and chicken soup, greens and potatoes, roast and boiled chickens, haggis, puddings, and pies of various kinds; and having got everything in order, the Laird and Nell awaited the coming of the farmers on the day appointed.

Amongst some of the poor cottars on the Laird's estate, who were this night feeling the extreme of hunger, were John Thomson and his wife, Nannie, and family. John was a country weaver, who wove the yarn made by the people in the district into blankets and woollen cloth. He and Nannie were frugal, industrious, God-fearing persons, with a

family of nine children. The webs he had woven for the season had all been sent home, but no money had come in; and though there was a great feast prepared that night at the Laird's hall, they were supperless. Nannie in her impatience and distress is blaming the division of this world's goods—the Laird's feast to the farmers, and her poor bairns sent supperless to bed. John rubs his brow and says—

"Guidwife, dinna murmur, God will provide."

But Nannie, in her extremity, thought they might help themselves, and she says—

"Noo, guidman, ye'll just tak' yer spade an' creel and gang away oot to the field and bring in a basketfu' tatties frae the Laird's pit; there's nae sin in't, when we're starvin' this way."

"But, Nannie," replied John, "it's written, 'Thou shalt not steal.'"

"Ay, ay, guidman, but it's also written, 'If a man steal when he's hungry he canna be blamed.'"

"Nannie, I canna say that I mind o' that bein' written in the Buik, but I ken that 'honesty is guid policy,' an' I think we'd better tak' God's way o't, an' leav't wi' Him; tell the bairns to fa' asleep, an' ye'll waken them when the supper is ready."

"Eh, man, John, I wonder to hear ye! They've hardly had as muckle as keep in life for twae or three days, an' if they fa' asleep, they'll never waken in this warl'—an' as for mysel', my stamich'll think that my wizzen's cuttit, for there's naething gane ower't for I dinna ken the time—sae, John, guidman, ye'll hae yer haun's fu' or ye get us a' buried; an' yet yer heart's that hard, that ye'll no save us by bringin' a wheen tatties frae the Laird's pit."

"Nannie, we had better no say ony mair about that; draw the bairns thegither, and we'll in the meantime feast at Habakkuk's spring—'Although the

fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."

And after worship John leaves Nannie to put the bairns to bed, and goes out as usual for a stroll up the burn-side, where he lays his burden in the arms of Him who "giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry." So Nannie has no alternative, but puts the bairns to bed, and then goes herself. We leave John by the burn-side, holding communion with his God, and return to Nell and the Laird at the Hall.

The table, as we have already said, is spread with a most sumptuous feast, and the Laird is well pleased with Nell's ingenuity. But hour after hour passes by, and none of the farmers appear. The Laird at last says to Nell, "Noo, when I mind, I wadna wonder but there 's some mistake. When the farmers pressed me to gi'e them the usual feast, I passed a joke on them by telling them I wad get ye to put on the shearers' pot an' gi'e them their fill o' porridge and milk; and the fuils, I think, ha'e ta'en the joke in earnest. An' noo what 's to be dune wi' a' that meat? for there's no the least hope o' them comin' noo, at this time o' nicht."

"Aweel, Laird, it 's ill dune o' them, after a' our trouble and hurry-burry; but 'There's Yin abune that guides the gulley '—ye 're no' the first that has provided food for them that never ate it, an' if ye tak' my advice ye 'll easily get an ootlet for the dinner. There's mony a hungry mooth on yer ain grun' this nicht. There's puir John Tamson, the weaver, and his wife an' bairns. It 's hard to tell if they 'll ha'e a

bite to pit i' their mooths this nicht, an' I'm thinkin' it micht bring ye a better blessin', and wadna be displeasin' to Him that's the giver o' a' guid to send them an' ithers like them the feast that thae fuils ha'e despised."

"Weel, Nell, I never fand yer advice oot o' the way, an' just ye tak' an' dispose o' the dinner accordin' to yer ain juidgment, and gi'e that puir honest man Tamson and his family the big share o't, for they're daicent folk, an' they weel deserv't."

Nell loses no time; her warm heart makes haste to get baskets filled, and away she sets to John Thomson's house. The door opens with a latch. There is a bit glimmer of fire in the grate; Nannie and the bairns are sound asleep. Nell guesses where John is, for she knew it was not unusual to find him up the burn-side, communing with his God, late at night. She spreads on the table abundance of roast meat, bread, potatoes, and a variety of other things, and leaves the house quietly, unobserved. Shortly after, John returns, and, amazed at what he sees, he exclaims—

"Lord, Thou hast gone far beyond what I expected." John was a man who not only prayed, but expected an answer. He goes to the bedside, and, nudging Nannie, says—

"Nannie, my wumman, waken up an' rise to yer supper, an' waken the bairns tae, for there's plenty here for us a'."

"Eh man, John, but ye're a cruel man, to waken me oot o' my sleep when I was forgettin' my sorrows, an' mockin' me after this fashion."

"Nannie, it's nae mockery; God never mocks. Rise an' let yer een be convinced o' His goodness."

Nannie on looking at the table is quite bewildered; she can hardly believe her eyes, but thinks she is

dreaming, and says—

"Oh, John! If I'm Nannie Tamson an' in my senses, where ha'e thae things come frae?"

"Nannie, there's nae doubt thae things ha'e come frae the Hall. I'm thinkin' God has been usin' warm-hearted Nell as His messenger o' mercy, for I'm gey sure it was her I saw gaun up the road as I cam' in. Never doubt His faithfulness. Oor extreemity is often His opportunity. His word is 'Call upon Me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee.' Blessed be His Name!"

The burden now being lifted, the bairns are wakened—no time to put on clothes. John reverently uncovers his head, and gives thanks to the Giver of all good. Then the hungry family fare well on the bountiful provision so wonderfully placed before them, and they are abundantly satisfied.

> "O, taste and see that the Lord is good;
> Blessed is the man that trusteth in Him."
> Psalm xxxiv. 8.

CHAPTER XIII.

SHADES OF EVENING.

FROM the beginning of 1896 till the time of her last illness Mrs Bathgate in letters to her nephew makes constant reference to the state of her health. The quotations we make from some of these letters indicate the state of her mind and cheerfulness of spirit, as well as the varying condition of her bodily frame. She writes—

March 6, 1896—"I am thankful to say that I am a good deal better, though I do not steadily progress. One day fairly well, the next day not so well. But God is very merciful to me, in that he deals so gently with me in my old age."

May 18, 1896— . . . "I look forward, if spared, to the holidays to see you once more before I go hence, from which I shall not return. If spared to meet, may our fellowship be with Jesus, and it will be sweet. Amen. . . How my heart yearns over you all lest any of you come short of the great

salvation, and I have done so little to help you. And now my foot is in the grave, my powers failing, and I feel in every letter as if I were saying *Farewell*. I do not forget the dear ones in a far off land. God bless the lads!"

July 23, 1896—Referring to a letter she had just got from one of her nieces, who had been unwell, she writes to Mr Rae—"I could only make out a word here and there. She had written with bad ink, and with all helps to sight I could not make it out. I can read very small writing if the ink is black. It's not everybody one likes to read one's letters, so here I am like a hungry person looking at the letter. Will you write me a few lines and let me know how she is, and if they are expected home soon."

November 2, 1896—"I am, I think, improving a little. Able to be up an hour or two every day—not suffering much pain, but a feeling of extreme weakness."

April 5, 1897—"I am thankful to say that I am keeping fairly well, all things considered. Very feeble at best. I rise about twelve, but it is about three before I can move a little through the house. . . Not every day alike. This is one of my best days. The sun is out and the air pure. I have not been downstairs yet; but I breathe easier. . . I look forward, if spared to the summer, to the great joy of seeing you again in the flesh. You have made such a good job of "Aunt Nell" that if memory retains her seat till then I may recall some old events, though perhaps not so good as "Aunt Nell." But I must stop. My hand is beginning to shake, and my een filling wi' water. But I think I have done no ill the length I've gane."

May 11, 1897—"I am still able to be up part of the day. I have no great suffering, but so feeble that I can scarce walk across the floor. My cough and breathing are much better, but the weather affects me much. I am not two days the same"

While in the frail state described above, Mrs Bathgate was visited by the Rev. John Barr Pollock, who, as noted in an earlier chapter, made her acquaintance when he went as a student preacher to Galashiels. At that time she was occupying the Manse of the East U. P. Church, and acting as hostess to the preachers during the vacancy. Mr Pollock furnishes some interesting recollections of his later interviews with his aged friend. He says:

After an interval of more than a score of years, I visited Mrs Bathgate in her own simple, frugal home in Selkirk, together with my friend Mr George Anderson of Heatherlie Hill there. What induced me specially to this renewal of acquaintanceship was the twofold circumstance that I had read appreciatingly her "Aunt Janet's Legacy" and had heard of her enfeebled state of body. Besides, there was the underlying and undying remembrance of her witness-bearing during our far-back intimacy of the old Manse. There she was in bed, in the body indeed; but of such fragility that she might have passed for having a different body, so thoroughly did her active spirit permeate her entire person. The play of mind, of spirit throughout the enfeebled frame was a wonder and a stimulus. Two things from this visit survive in me, and cannot cease from me: the one in the devotional part of our communion. When I had finished the exercise of our common supplication, after a pause, with a remarkable expression of mingled regret and reverence, she quietly said to me, "You made a great mistake—you spoke too well of me to God—'God be merciful to me, a sinner!'" It was a felt, and quickening, and merited, and characteristic expostulation. Humility was in the proportion of

sanctity, and nearness to God was arrayed in the loveliest self-abasement, whilst abounding in the liveliest sense of daughterhood. The other remembrance of this visit is of one of the main subjects of conversation. She went through the Row Controversy, and talked of M'Leod Campbell on the Atonement, with Maurice on the Kingdom of God, and discriminated her own personal views upon the sacrifice of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ with a clearness of apprehension and strength of conviction which showed that the roots of her life had been deeply and vitally fixed in these conceptions of Divine things. In this same connection references to Erskine of Linlathen let one see how kindred sweetness of disposition seemed, somehow or other, to flourish from the like sources of inspiration. But whilst familiarity with this class of expounders of the profoundest mysteries was conspicuous in her conversation, beneath it all, and beyond it all, was her range and aptness of quotation from the whole field of the Word of God. Nor was it memory chiefly that was the medium of her references to the Holy Ghost's writings, for always it seemed as if meditation and experience had first strained their sense before giving them to speech.

The last opportunity of being with her was in company with my wife. Naturally this gave her communications with us the special turn of sympathy with her own sex in what they can peculiarly perpetuate and reproduce of the conduct and service of the blessed women in the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. The decline of physical power was strikingly manifest, but the predominance of mind and faith over the decaying energies was equally evident. That which riveted one's regards on this particular occasion was the transparent busying of her heart in the privileges and responsibility of the younger hand-

maiden in being and in doing all that in her was possible for the love and glory of the Redeemer Lord. Delicacy forbids of course obtruding upon the housetop what was said and meant for the ear in the closet. But that little room was a heavenly place in Jesus Christ. One thought of Socrates as depicted in his last hours, or of Professor John Brown with his Bible and books of Divinity strewn all over his death couch: yet it is a religion ours of an infinite and all-embracing comprehension; so that a great-aged woman of humble origin and station can lie upon the confines of eternity and the grave, conversing in sisterly simplicity and dignity with a younger handmaiden of their Common Lord, and chiefly concerned about the way in which their love to Him may become His love through them to all round about them and beyond them.

I give these fresh as if they were all of yesterday. Their influence is over me as if they were in the day that the sun is now upon me. Such is the effect of sincere godliness and goodness. The Gospel has a power from the life that it can never have from the tongue. This example of grace in character and conduct is for myself immortal, in the sense that though departed she yet speaketh to me, and in the spirit that I may die the death of the righteous and that my latter end may be like *hers*.

Mrs Bathgate, it will be remembered, had a missionary box in her little school at Kirkhill, and she encouraged the children to contribute their spare half-pence to help in sending the Gospel to heathen lands. She maintained her interest in the good cause to the end of her days, and was always gladdened by hearing of the triumphs of the Cross in the benighted

regions of the earth. A friend mentions that on two separate occasions not long before her death he was intrusted by her with what, considering her circumstances, were very liberal contributions to mission funds. In her latter years she manifested a special interest in missions to the Jews, and when she came to know of Herman Warzawiak's evangelistic labours among the Israelitish people in New York she rejoiced greatly in hearing of the readiness of hundreds of them to listen to the Gospel message and to believe in Jesus of Nazareth as the Saviour of Jew and Gentile alike. She talked of the work and its results to her visitors, and mentioned that she was trying to do something to support the movement, so evidently owned of God and productive of saving results. In this way she raised a goodly sum in aid of the work. She did not, however, approve of that part of Mr Warzawiak's scheme which contemplated the building of a great Christian synagogue. She was a firm believer in the Scripture prophecies regarding the restoration of the people of Israel to the land of their fathers. There was at the time a flocking to Palestine of refugees from Russian persecution, Jewish colonies were being established by wealthy Jews in different parts of the land, and there were other signs of the time which seemed to favour the expectation that the prophecies concerning the return of the Jews to their own land were about to be

fulfilled. All these considerations, Mrs Bathgate thought, tended to show that the erection of a large permanent structure in New York would not be in harmony with God's purpose to restore to His ancient people the possession of the Holy Land. In sending the contributions she had collected to Miss C. G. Douglas, Edinburgh, who was acting as treasurer for the auxiliary fund there, she stated in most respectful terms her views on the building of the synagogue; and Miss Douglas, in acknowledging receipt of the remittance, acquainted her that along with the sum collected she would send her "precious little letter" to Mr Warzawiak, and tell him to apply the money to what was the greatest and most urgent need at the moment.

The interest which "Aunt Janet" manifested in one particular Jew with whom she became acquainted in the way of business is worthy of being recorded here. This descendant of ancient Israel was a pedlar, and called at her house, pushing the sale of his wares —shoes and slippers, jewellery, and other articles. Not much time needed to be spent on business, and that being disposed of, the visitor was asked to take a seat and rest awhile. Then "Aunt Janet" set some bread and milk before him, which seemed to give him some surprise; but he gladly partook of the humble repast. Such kindness was altogether new to him,

and he was profuse in his thanks and invoking of blessings on her. It was in very broken English he did so. "No one ever say to me, 'Jew, take bread,' since I come to this country. The Lord bless you! You, good woman!" Then the conversation turned to Abraham, the father of the Jewish people, and "the father of the faithful." They spoke, too, of the God of Abraham, of the great things He had done for His ancient people, and the promises He had given that He would one day bring all their wanderings to an end and gather them into their own land again. On all these subjects there was no difference between the Jew and the Gentile. The Messiah promised to the fathers was spoken of; the visitor listened very respectfully to the little his hostess said regarding Him, and there was no disagreement between them on that subject. The stranger, on rising to go, was again profuse in the expression of his gratitude. "God bless you! You, good woman! I never pass your door all the times I will come to this town, I will come and see you. May you live a hundred years! God bless you!" Once in six months the pedlar came to Selkirk, and never passed Aunt Janet's house without going upstairs to see her. On one of his visits he gave her his name and address, which was in Edinburgh. The last time he called while Aunt Janet was alive, she had a comfortable woollen cravat for him, to wear in cold weather. This token of

kindness seemed far too much for him to accept, and it was only after much persuasion that he consented to receive it; and that on the condition, that she would take a dressing comb from him, and that he might give her attendant the choice of his stock of brooches. If ever the grateful Jew called again at 40 Buccleuch Road, which probably he did, it would be with a feeling of sorrow that he learned of the death of the "good woman" who had showed him kindness above any he had met with in all Britain.

"AUNT JANET" AND THE SABBATH-BREAKERS.

[*The playground and distant scenery are sketched from a photograph taken from the window of Mrs Bathgate's house. Reference is made by her to the country shown in the background as "the scene of her childhood's days."* *See pp. 92 and 93.*]

CHAPTER XIV.

NEARING THE END OF THE PILGRIMAGE.

THE time came when going downstairs at night to lock the street door became burdensome to "Aunt Janet," and was not without a little risk of stumbling; and she left it unlocked. Staying all night in her house without company scarcely gave her a thought. "Because thou hast made the Lord who is thy refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation, there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling," was a promise which dispelled all fear. The unlocked door was her rule for a good many years, and during all that time she never suffered the slightest annoyance or harm. She had very considerate and helpful neighbours in Mr and Mrs Andrew Aitken, who, one or other, were in the habit of calling towards bed-time to inquire how she

was, and if anything was needed then or in the morning. They were quite aware of the street door being left unlocked through the night, and it was a proposal of theirs that when they left her, they should take the key with them; and if it should happen that she required anything before morning, she could give a gentle knock on the wall which separated the dwellings, and they would count it no trouble to place themselves at her service. "Aunt Janet" was quite pleased to fall in with the thoughtful and neighbourly arrangement, but not once did she find it necessary to take advantage of it. While "Aunt Janet" was singularly free from nervousness or disturbing thoughts herself, she was well aware that others were differently constituted, and that what would not give her any concern would put others considerably about. She thought her neighbour might have an "eerie" feeling as she came up the staircase and into the room in dark mornings, not knowing but "a change" might have taken place during the night-time; and in order to prevent any such uncomfortable feeling "Aunt Janet," so soon as the door was opened would speak the first word herself, wishing her neighbour "good morning"—that would let her know, she said, that there was nothing to fear. In this the Aitkens discerned a proof of the old woman's sagacity and considerateness; and the arrangement worked very happily.

Mr Aitken relates an incident which exemplified "Aunt Janet's" regard for the Sabbath, and also her tact in reproving transgressors of the Divine Commandment. Looking out on the Mill Haugh (now known as Victoria Park) one Sabbath afternoon a year or two before she died, she saw some lads indulging in the game of "peg," as on ordinary days. Shocked in a measure by the conduct of the youths, she went out and got into conversation with them. It can only be supposed that she would express her surprise at seeing them so engaged on the Lord's Day, and speak to them of Him whose eyes are "in every place, beholding the evil and the good," who had given the commandment to "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," and who could not be indifferent to any violation of it. That she had succeeded in getting the attention of her youthful hearers was evinced by their upward gaze into her face and the respectful attention they were giving to the words addressed to them. The narrator of the incident, who was an eye-witness of the scene, said he could not forget the sight of the feeble old woman, leaning heavily on her staff, engaged in turning the minds of those lads to the consideration of things of high concern to them. It would have made a fine picture, he said, and he had often thought it a pity that there was not an artist there who could have sketched the scene. "Aunt Janet" had spoken for a

full quarter of a hour before the group broke up. Mr Aitken then went out and met her on the way towards her house. "I doot, I doot, Mrs Bathgate, ye'll no have done much guid by a' that ye've spoken to them," he remarked; but he felt reproved by what she said in reply. "It's oor pairt, Mr Aitken, and oor duty, to sow the seed of truth whenever we have the opportunity, and we can leave the rest to God. We may no see ony guid come o't in oor day, but naebody can say but what some o' the things I've been tellin' thae laddies may come into their minds in after years—maybe when they're far frae hame—and be for their soul's guid." She looked feebler for her little journey across the haugh and the exertion of speaking, and her neighbour thought he should see her safely up the stair. This he did; and "Aunt Janet," thanking him for his kindly act, added in a light-hearted, cheery mood, "It's no every day that one has a gentleman attendant!"

One of my visits to "Aunt Janet," says a friend, was in the end of May 1897, the year before her death. She had just got the house-cleaning over. That good service had been rendered to her by Mrs Dunse, her niece, who had come from Galashiels and been with her for several days. "Aunt Janet" was in a very frail way at the time, and had been occupying one room while the washing and scrubbing were

going on in the other. The dampness had affected her breathing, and she was weaker than usual. The carpet of her sitting-room had been well beaten on the green sward opposite the house, and when brought back it was in one respect better—by having the dust driven out of it—but there were more holes in it than it showed before. This led to the suggestion by her niece that it would be well to get "a more decent-looking one." "Aunt Janet" herself thought it would be absurd for her, "with one foot in the grave and the other following," to be getting a new carpet. It was not worth her while, for all the time she could expect to be here; indeed, it would be folly to do anything of the kind. But the niece had her way, and a new carpet was got. The apartment had been made as clean and tidy as it was possible to have it. After describing in her own blithe way the experience of the past few days, and commenting on the thorough manner in which her niece and an assistant had gone into every hole and corner, she added, "I was saying to them that "if my heart was juist as clean as my hoose, I wad dae." That was her pleasant way of commending her friends for the excellent way in which they had completed their task; at the same time acknowledging her own defects. The remark led her to state that sometimes a visitor would say, when conversation turned on religious subjects—"You must be very holy and good, Mrs Bathgate, living

here so comfortably and quietly, with nothing to trouble you, and having so much time to read the Bible and good books." She always gave them to know that they laboured under a great mistake in thinking so well of her. On one occasion a young lady expressed a little surprise to hear her speak thus of herself, remarking that she thought it would be quite different with her from what it was with other people who were engaged with the bustle of business and the active concerns of life—she had so much time to think about God and heavenly things. She told her visitor that it was no easy thing to fix one's mind and thoughts on things spiritual and unseen, and to continue to meditate on them. She said she would go to bed some times in a calm and peaceful frame of mind, with her thoughts fully set on the things of God and the soul, but "before she knew where she was," as she quaintly expressed it, she would be wandering here and there on the mountains of vanity, and she found that the things which had been occupying her mind were not glorifying to God. The great enemy of souls, she said, did not forget to give her many a call in her quiet dwelling.

"Aunt Janet" spoke with great composure on death and its solemnities. Conversing with a friend on this subject, not long before her decease, she said, I feel it must be a solemn thing to die; and if it

should be God's will, I would like to die intelligently, that is consciously. But she was sure she need not trouble herself about the new experience she would enter on at death. She believed that everything would be right. When she came into this world she had nothing to do. Everything was prepared for her. The milk that was required for the sustenance of her body was ready for her. The little clothes she needed were ready for her. There were loving arms to receive her, and friends to welcome her and rejoice over her. So she believed it would be in the new state of being into which she was about to enter. She said that in thinking of the future state she could not form any conception of the existence of the disembodied. She had no such difficulty in thinking of her Saviour. She thought of Him as the Son of God clothed in human form. She considered that to be a true thought given utterance to in one of the Scotch Paraphrases, that in the heavenly temple

"A great High Priest our nature wears.

She could think of Him as visible in Heaven in His glorious body, but she could not comprehend the state of disembodied spirits. It would be a wonder, she sometimes said, to find death a thing of the past; and it was a precious truth to her that God would make all things new.

In the note book already referred to, in which were some jottings and drafts of letters, we learn how her

thoughts, at another time, had been running in her meditation on the same themes. She had thus written: "We little know the issues of each change we pass through, for we cannot tell the end from the beginning. But when we consider all that happens to us on earth as germs of eternal things, how many blessed combinations of heavenly love and intimacy in the world above may arise from passing intercourse here. Journeys from which we may have shrunk may prove to have been the beginnings of eternal friendships. Strangers whom we may have feared to meet may be a source of eternal joy. Eternity, if we could but realise it, throws a wondrous glow over time, though we get but a glimpse of its grandeur. But it is only when we dwell in Christ, and He in us, that we can think of the future and people it with images of true and real blessedness. Well known, well loved forms will possess new glories and increasing beauty, which may indeed task our imaginations to the utmost, but the joy of recognition and the meeting with them will not be new to our hearts."

It was at times a matter of wonder to Mrs Bathgate that she should have lived to such old age. She came of a long-lived family, she had seen many more years than any of her brothers or sisters; and now she was the last survivor. She felt that her part in

life was done, her strength gone; and it looked to her as if she could be of no more use on earth. With long life God had satisfied her, and she was ready to depart whenever the summons might come. It did not come so soon as she had looked for it; and when, after periods of much weakness and prostration, she rallied a little, and regained such a measure of strength as enabled her to go out of doors, and have a short walk along the grassy haugh opposite her dwelling, it appeared as if, contrary to all reasonable expectation, her lease of life was to be extended for some time longer. One day, as she had been ruminating on the subject, she gave expression to her musing in a remark which impressed the hearer as being quite unique. "It almost seems," she said, "as if God had forgotten that I'm still here, and is forgettin' to send the call for me!"

It is not unusual for those who have been long sufferers to utter the wish that if it were the Divine will they might be released from pain and trouble by death; but the cases must be rare in which the unlooked-for prolongation of life is attributed, even in passing thought, to oversight on the part of the Almighty. Perhaps such an idea is only possible to the very aged whose near kindred and the friends of their youth have all been removed by death. So it was with another aged pilgrim known to the writer. About two years before her death, which took place

when she was 94 years of age, she was speaking of long-past days and long-departed friends. "But they 're all away now," she said; "every one o' them. I 'm the only one left." In fine harmony with her feelings at the time, she commenced to repeat the 51st Paraphrase—

> Soon shall this earthly frame, dissolved,
> In death and ruins lie;
> But better mansions wait the just,
> Prepared above the sky.

She had got to the lines in the third verse—

> Waiting the hour which sets us free,
> And brings us home to God.

Then, as if a new thought had flashed on her brain, she stopped abruptly, and said in a questioning tone, and hurriedly, "He 'll no ha'e forgotten that I 'm aye here yet?" "O no, Grannie, that cannot be," was the reassuring reply.

Not long before "Aunt Janet's" death, when copies of the "Legacy" were still asked for, but none were left in her hands, a supply was sent to her by the publishers. She said she might not live to see them all sold, but her friends would get what was left. Then she added with a smile, which spoke contentment and satisfaction, "I 'll ha'e nae need o' siller where I've gane." It was not unusual for her to say, "I ken where I 'm goin'."

A fortnight before "Aunt Janet's" departure, two friends who were frequent visitors met in her room. She spoke to them on her then constant theme—God's great love and mercy—for nearly half-an-hour. She was very weak, and it was not without effort that she continued her address. The friends, while glad to listen, said she should not exert herself so much—they would read something; but her heart was full of her great subject, and she could not restrain the outpouring of her adoration and gratitude to God for His marvellous grace in the gift of His Son for the salvation of sinners, and for all He had done for herself in her long lifetime. The friends engaged in prayer and thanksgiving, and one of them read that fine hymn of Addison's, beginning

> When all thy mercies, O my God,
> My rising soul surveys,
> Transported with the view, I 'm lost
> In wonder, love, and praise.

The hymn was known to be a favourite of "Aunt Janet's." It touched so many points of her own experience, as detailed in the "Legacy;" it was so much in accord with her heart's feelings, and breathed so much of her spirit, that one might have supposed it to have been written by herself, or by some one who had fathomed her deeply religious nature and who wished to embody in verse the sentiments she often gave utterance to. As the reading proceeded, the old

pilgrim signified her assent to the statements and affirmations contained in the hymn, making some of them all the more emphatic by joining in repeating them. Especially was this so in the reciting of the concluding verses, in which the grateful remembrance of all past mercies is lost in the joyful anticipation of never-ending bliss:

Through every period of my life
Thy goodness I 'll proclaim;
And after death, in distant worlds,
Resume the glorious theme.

Through all eternity to Thee
A joyful song I 'll raise:
For O! eternity 's too short
To utter all Thy praise.

This season of fellowship was the last of its kind in "Aunt Janet's" house, but it was one to be remembered. As the friends rose and shook hands with her, she said, "It has been a sweet time."

For some time before her death, "Aunt Janet's" sight had almost entirely gone from her, and it was with great difficulty that she could make out a word on her large-type Bible. She felt it to be an unspeakable loss that she was no longer able to enjoy the reading of the Scriptures, which had been her daily employment and delight. She had, however, large portions of them laid up in her memory, and

these she was able to draw upon when sight failed her. It was a matter of great thankfulness to her that she had not neglected to store her mind with the truths and precepts and promises of God's Word, which were now unto her the joy and rejoicing of her heart. Then, she said, she had always prayer to fall back upon, adding in her homely and characteristic way, "The door is aye open, and God is never away frae hame."

"Only once," says a friend, "did I find 'Aunt Janet' indisposed for conversation. She was that night sitting by the fireside, very infirm and exhausted by coughing and difficulty of breathing. She motioned to me to come near to her; and then, in a faint whisper, she said, "I canna speak, and I canna lis'en to what 'e micht say." It was indeed a time when flesh and heart were failing, but God assuredly was the strength of her heart, and her sure portion, in that hour of her sore need.

CHAPTER XV.

DEPARTING IN PEACE.

ON the Thursday before "Aunt Janet's" death there was put into her hand a letter which gave her gladness of heart. The envelope bore the address—"Mrs Bathgate (Authoress of 'Aunt Janet's Legacy'), Selkirk;" and had the Dalkeith postmark on it. Saving the short notes coming from relatives, desiring to be informed of her condition, it was the last written communication she received. The writer of the letter, as will be seen, was not aware of Mrs Bathgate's serious illness; and this circumstance and the time of its being received invest the letter with a peculiar interest. We give it *in extenso*, reserving only the writer's name and address.

——, Dalkeith,
2nd February, 1898.

DEAR MRS BATHGATE,

You will wonder to get a letter from a comparative stranger, but I have been reading aloud your most interesting book, "Aunt Janet's Legacy to Her Nieces," to the girls who belong to our Young Women's Christian Association, and we have all been greatly delighted with it. And as we meet in a hall close to the Back Street, where you once lived, we thought it might be a joy to you to know what real pleasure you have given us; and many a pleasant hour we have spent sewing and listening to the story of your life in Dalkeith.

I am also reading it to the Mothers' Meeting, and they too are greatly enjoying it. Perhaps you may remember that last September my sister, a friend, and I bicycled from Dalkeith to Selkirk to see you, and we look back with great pleasure to our visit to you. You were then suffering from an attack of bronchitis; I hope you are now feeling stronger. With kind regards and best wishes, and trusting that your book has not only been a pleasure to all who have read it in Dalkeith, but the means of great blessing. Believe me yours very sincerely,

——. ——. ——.

Coming from Dalkeith, where Mrs Bathgate had spent many of her youthful years, and where she had entered on what may be called her public career, the letter could not fail to awaken many recollections—some very blissful, some very sad; yet the predominant feelings produced by it were gratitude and thanksgiving that He who had blessed her humble efforts among the children in that Back Street so many years ago had been making her book a means

of instruction and blessing to a third and fourth generation in the place of great interest to her. "Aunt Janet" asked Elizabeth, her attendant, to give the letter to a friend who had called in the evening, that he might read it, and then come to her bedside and read it aloud to her again. Afterwards she asked the friend if he would reply for her to the kind lady who had written her. She then directed him, in broken sentences and in tones so feeble that only some of the words could be caught, to convey to the writer and the other friends her very loving regards, and to say how glad she had been made by the letter. It was another sign to her that God had not despised her poor effort to bring glory to His name by telling others what He had done for her. Then she said, "Tell her, as far as I can see, I 'm not to be long here now, but I know that it 's all well with me. I 'm in my Heavenly Father's gracious hands."

In the end of that first week in February, it was apparent to all who saw the state of extreme debility in which "Aunt Janet" lay, that the frail earthly tabernacle was on the eve of dissolution, that the hour of her departure was at hand. She had loving attendants to respond to her every wish and minister to all her wants. She had all her earthly affairs arranged. She had spoken with one of her most trusted friends about the funeral arrangements, ex-

pressing her wish that everything should be very simple and quiet; there were to be no flowers used. "You will be meeting here," she said, "for a little service at the 'chesting,' and before the funeral. You needna trouble ony o' the ministers to come. Some o' yoursel's can read the 90th Psalm and the 14th chapter o' John, and engage in prayer; and that 's a' that 's needed."

She only waited in patience for "the call to set out for the land afar off." Yet there was one earthly friend she would like to see before going. She understood that he had been made aware of her low condition; and on Saturday, the day before her death, she spoke of him, and thought he would be likely to come soon. It is unnecessary to say that the one she longed to see before departing was the one over whom she had exercised a wondrously loving care in his infant years—him, who in the Jerusalem letter we have quoted from expressed a wish that he might get his dear old nurse's blessing before she went home, and that one of the last things she could hear before going would be his thanks to God for the abundant answers to her prayers for his spiritual good. The wish, both of "Aunt Janet" and of Mr Scott Moncrieff, was graciously granted; and not many hours after that interview, full of affection and grateful expression, the spirit of the aged pilgrim was freed from its earthly clog, to be for ever with the

Lord. This was towards daybreak on the morning of Sabbath the 6th February, 1898. She was then in the 93rd year of her age.

History does not afford many examples of greater self-sacrificing devotion than that of "Nurse Jessie" to the welfare of the infant charge committed to her care, or of affection stronger and more enduring than hers. Nor does it furnish many instances in which faithful and loving service has received such grateful and tender acknowledgment as that of Mr Scott Moncrieff to his revered and dearly loved friend on the eve of her departure for "the better land."

No one could have depicted that tender last farewell scene but the surviving actor in it, and it is well that Mr Scott Moncrieff has saved so much of its affecting details from passing into oblivion. This he did in a little booklet (entitled "Aunt Janet's Latest Legacy") shortly after Mrs Bathgate's death, and it is from this source that the following particulars are transcribed.

"I had not seen Mrs Bathgate since autumn, when I paid her a most interesting visit, greatly pleased to find her mind and memory remarkably clear, her hearing good, and her voice strong for one of her great age, though her eyesight had failed greatly.

It was not until the end of January that I heard of her becoming so feeble as to require the constant presence of a nurse in the house with her; and on Saturday the 5th February I went to Selkirk to see

her. On my entering the room she seemed to be asleep, her most kind nurse Elizabeth Murray sitting by her bed. When the latter, knowing that she was awake, told her that I had come to see her, she opened her eyes, though she did not recognise me until she heard me speak to her. She was too feeble to raise her head without an effort, but her face beamed with pleasure as she grasped my hand, which she pressed to her lips, and held firmly throughout the interview.

Mrs Bathgate was not only the very oldest but the very earliest of my friends; as from my very infancy, and through years of suffering as a sickly child in a large family, I had been her special charge; and I have often heard my parents say that I owed to her unwearied care of me more than they could express.

Owing to many years of absence from this country, in India and elsewhere, it was not until towards the close of her life that I found opportunities of seeing her occasionally, when she used to receive me as a mother would receive her son; and she has more than once assured me that she never allowed a day to pass without remembering me in prayer, which I can well believe. It was with deep feeling, therefore, that I sat beside her, conscious, as soon as I saw her, that this must be my last interview with one to whose love and prayers I owed so much.

At first, in asking about my family, her voice was very feeble, but it became clear and strong as she said, unexpectedly, "The joy of the Lord is your strength."

"Yes, for those who have the secret of it," I replied, "it is a precious treasure."

"Ah, but," she said, "not our joy in Him, but His joy in us is our strength. Our joy in Him may fail, but His joy in us abides and keeps us. It is the

joy of the father who saw his prodigal son returning to him penitent, and when he was yet a great way off the father ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. So our Heavenly Father has great joy in beholding in the sinner, reconciled through the Son, and created anew by the Holy Spirit, His own character becoming formed in the believer's soul. That is the joy of the Lord over us, which keeps us!"

I listened in silence, desiring to treasure in my memory every word of this aged saint, dying and yet living. Her voice failed for a little; but, with closed eyes, she resumed in a lower tone, and yet very distinctly, "Oh, how awful for those to whom he will say 'Depart from me.'"

Her mind seemed to dwell upon this thought for a time, and she uttered the same words more than once, in a tone as of earnest entreaty, as if to some of whom she was thinking, and on whose account she was much distressed. After a pause, she again quoted the words in which she seemed to find such special comfort, "The joy of the Lord is our strength," adding, with much earnestness, "*Tell all of them that.*"

After speaking a little, with some difficulty, she suddenly, with a strong voice, repeated throughout the following verses:

No resting place we seek on earth,
No loveliness we see;
Our eye is on the royal crown
Prepared for us and Thee.

But, dearest Lord, however bright
That crown of joy above,
What is it to the brighter hope
Of dwelling in Thy love!

What is the joy, the deeper joy,
Unmingled, pure, and free,

Of union with our living Head;
  Of fellowship with Thee!

This joy e'en now on earth is ours;
  But only, Lord, above,
Our hearts without a pang shall know
  The fulness of Thy love.

There near Thy heart, upon the throne
  Thy ransomed church shall see
What grace was in the bleeding Lamb
  Who died to make us free!

The last two verses she quoted with special emphasis and joy, as one in perfect health might have uttered the words.

"That is a beautiful hymn, Jessie," I said; "where did you get it?"

"It is Saphir's," she replied, "in his book on the Lord's Prayer." Then she asked if I had read it, and told me how her kind friend Mrs B—— had at first lent it to her, and then on finding how greatly she had enjoyed reading it, had given it to her. I have since been told by the lady referred to that some years have passed since she lent the book to "Aunt Janet;" it was no ordinary feat of memory therefore, on the latter's part, to have learned the hymn at her advanced age.

After rather a long pause of breathlessness in the attempt to speak, she found her voice and said—"Ten thousand rays come from the sun; we open the shutters and they fill the room with light, and we are glad; but we cannot see the sun except in its own light. But what are these to the rays from the Sun of Righteousness! But, O, Robert, we cannot see Christ but in His own light."

She had been exceedingly attached to my mother, of whom she had loved to speak to me, and most warmly had my mother returned her attachment. So

I said to her, "Do you remember my mother's last words, Jessie, as she was dying?" "No, I do not," she whispered. I then quoted the verses—"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens:" "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord;" "to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better."

I said, "You will see her soon, and so many others whom you have loved, and who have gone before. What a meeting that will be, and with all the holy ones who are with Christ—with all the martyrs of past ages, with the prophets, the apostles!"

"Yes, and with Christ," she said, and added with a strong voice—"I cannot form any idea of the personal appearance of any one of these, but I have the clearest idea of the personal appearance of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who is coming again—this same Jesus who was taken up into heaven, and I shall know Him when He comes, by the marks on His hands and His feet."

She seemed as if waiting at an open door, looking at those inside, and longing to go in, whilst yet speaking to us on this side of it.

Seeing how much exhausted she was I thought it better to leave her, and after offering a brief prayer, I kissed her cheek, and quietly said, "I must go now, Jessie."

She pressed my hand to her lips, and murmured, "Not a cloud, not a cloud. All is peace."

I came softly away, praising God in my heart that I had seen death, the conqueror, conquered, in the readiness with which this very aged and very frail pilgrim was prepared to meet him and enter into the joy of her Lord!

There is little to add to the account of "Aunt Janet's" last hours on earth. The exertion entailed by the interview with her old friend could not fail to expend her little remaining strength, and she spoke but few words after Mr Scott Moncrieff's departure. Her niece, Mrs Dunse, who arrived from Galashiels at a late hour in the evening, says she found her quite conscious, but scarcely able to speak. She remembered how, a good while before this, her aunt, in anticipation of the hour of her departing, which had now come, had enjoined that there should be as little noise and ado in the death chamber as possible. On a previous occasion, she said if it were God's will she had a desire that she might die consciously; and now her further wish was that she might pass away quietly. The few who were in waiting saw to it that nothing should distract the thoughts of the dying or disturb the stillness of the solemn hour. "The turn of the night," says Mrs Dunse, "seemed to bring a great change. About an hour before she fell asleep I said, 'Jesus is loosing the cords very gently, Aunt; you will soon be with Him.' She replied, in a low voice, 'Quiet, quiet, quiet.' These were her last words."

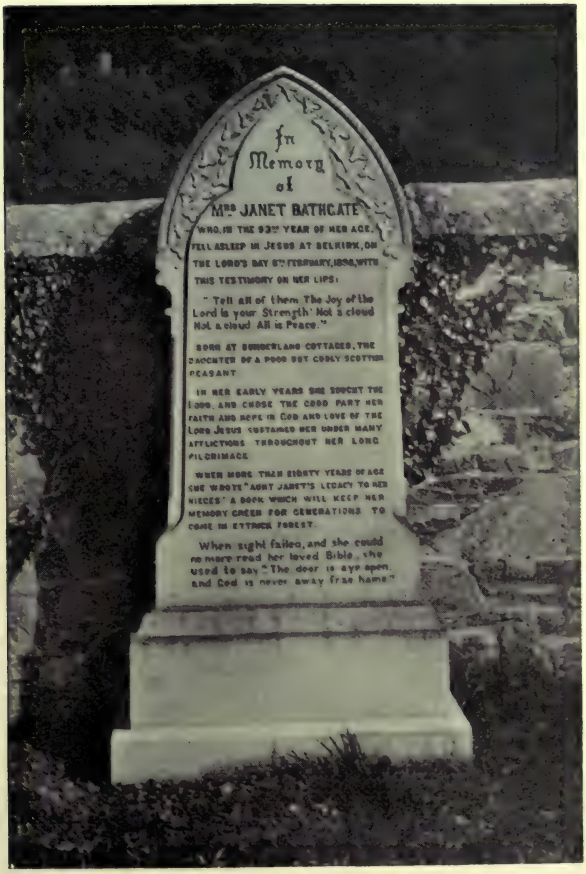
In keeping with Mrs Bathgate's wish, the funeral obsequies were simple and unostentatious. There was no public intimation given regarding the time and place of burial, and comparatively few beyond the

circle of relatives and intimate friends were aware of the precise arrangements. Nevertheless, a goodly number of those who knew her and esteemed her worth joined the funeral cortege to Brierylaw Cemetery, in the outskirts of the town, where the mortal remains were committed to kindred dust, in hope of a glorious resurrection.

The coffin having been lowered into the grave, Mr Scott Moncrieff craved the privilege of saying a few words on an occasion very deeply interesting to him. "Brethren," he said, "as we now commit to dust that which was the earthly tabernacle of our late beloved and revered friend, truly a mother in Israel, it is not for us to weep, but to praise the Lord that her long pilgrimage has ended at last, that she has now entered into the rest that remaineth for the people of God. 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.'"

A memorial tablet, placed against the east wall of the cemetery, marks the spot where Mrs Bathgate's remains were deposited on the 8th of February 1898. The tablet has been photographed for the Life Story, and a reproduction of it appears on a following page.

THE END.



MEMORIAL STONE.

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