



THE CHRISTIAN'S PENNY MAGAZINE,

AND

FRIEND OF THE PEOPLE.



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PROFITS DEVOTED TO AGED MINISTERS.

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"I am anxious that my Case should be published for the encouragement and benefit of my fellow-men."

Such are the words of

Mr. CHARLES SYKES, of Skirbeck, near Boston,

Writing me relative to his recovery, in a letter received October 14th, 1872.

"You will remember (he continues) that I called at your residence in a state of great weakness and distress of breathing—so weak that I could scarcely walk without assistance. I took about three large-sized bottles and then had recovered my usual strength.

"I feel bound to tell you my doctor pronounced me in a consumption, and my case a bad one; but now, through God's mercy, I am strong and healthy, and have attended to my business with comfort."

N.B.—This patient (a farmer in Lincolnshire) was recommended to me by a Baptist Minister at Boston. On referring to my book, I find the following Memoranda:—"Family tendency to chest disease; patient five months affected; present symptoms—severe hacking cough, expectoration, pain in the left lung, oppressed breathing, diarrhoea, wasting of flesh, and great debility." On examination by the Stethoscope—"Phtthisis clearly developed," &c.

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§ SUBJECTS FOR 1873 :

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CONTRIBUTORS :—REVS. DR. MELLOR, DR. FERGUSON, AVELING, ASHTON, CLEMANCE, CLARKSON, GOLDIE, GOODALL, MILLER, OLIARD, PATON, ROBJOHN, ETC., ETC.

THE DISPOSAL OF THE LOT.

THOUGHTS FOR A NEW YEAR.

BY THE REV. CLEMENT CLEMANCE, B.A.

ANCIENT as is the custom of casting lots, and though we find it practised among the Hebrews as well as among Pagan nations, yet we do not certainly know what were the precise methods adopted in order to decide by lot. The mode which gave rise to the words of Solomon—"The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposal thereof is of the Lord"—was evidently the throwing of paper, or pebbles, or dice, and then deciding a question according to rules beforehand agreed upon.

The chief point, however, which the wise man's words bring before us is this—there is no chance. God is over all. What is contingency with us is *certainty* with Him. There is nothing out of the range of the law, and no law out of the reach of God. Throw dice or pebbles at random; at every throw they move or turn up in most exact obedience to law, and according to the direction in which and the force with which they were thrown. Both direction and force were given by the arm that threw them. That arm was moved by will. That will was moved by motive. That motive was supplied by the objects to be secured, combined with a mental judgment as to the best means of securing them. Thus back and back we go, and find law over law, force at the back of force, wheel within wheel; nor can we stop until we reach the hand that set agoing the first wheel, even the hand of God. Thus our theme opens up before us. It is the providence of God. According to its etymology the word providence means a seeing beforehand, and connected with the notion of seeing is that of arranging in accordance with the seeing, so that the event of to-morrow is anticipated in the work of to day. The providence of God is absolutely universal.

Yet, wide as it is in extending over all, its action is suited to each case. Providence can be gentle as the sunbeam which falls on an infant's eyelid, still as the dewdrop on the blade, or mighty to smite down an army at a blow. This providence of God is holy in its action; it smiles on righteousness and frowns on sin; it is so powerful that it keeps evil itself in harness, so far-seeing that it can

order the work and life of to-day with a view to meet the need of millions on millions of years to come. There is nothing so high as to be above Divine providence, nothing so low as to be beneath it; nothing so vast as to overtax it, and nothing so minute as to be overlooked by it; nothing so ample and extensive as that it cannot be limited by it; nothing so free as to second causes but it is necessarily determined by it; nothing so natural and necessary but its operation may be suspended by it, and nothing so evil but that Divine providence can bring good out of it.* Man may plan, and in coming events it may seem to him there is as much uncertainty as in casting a lot into the lap; but over and beyond all there is God, and the *whole* disposal thereof is of the Lord.

This is a glorious faith to hold! and proof thereof is not awaiting. We might argue that the doctrine of the universal providence of God is one which fits in most exactly with the doctrine of true science as to the perfect law and order which we meet with everywhere.

"If there be order," asks an old philosopher, "in things that have no understanding, must not the ordering of them come from an understanding infinitely wise?" Is it easier to give particles of matter credit for having mutual sympathies and antipathies, than to give an Infinite Mind the glory of creating the laws of attraction and repulsion? In our view, the difficulties on the side of unbelief in providence are enormous compared with those on the side of faith. Nothing but a belief in a Divine Being, ever present, ever acting, can give us a satisfactory account of the law and order which meet us everywhere, *as if* intelligence governed all.

This view, moreover, accords with what we know to exist of will, purpose, and plan among men. We are not more certain of our own existence than we are of the existence of man's foresight, will, and arrangement in the conduct of his own affairs. And shall we stultify ourselves by supposing that the greater affairs to which we are hopelessly unequal are carried on by blind force, or that which is less than reason, rather than by an Infinite Reason?

Besides, our own sense of dependence on another points in the same direction. *We* are consciously dependent. And what are we? Men and women surrounded by those we love, for whom it is our joy to live. We, whose life-joy it is to care for our dearest ones, are dependent. But on what, on whom? Are we dependent on a Being

*See Gale's "Court of the Gentiles," Vol. IV. p. 453.

who knows not, or knowing does not care, or caring cannot aid, and must let the individual take his chance with the mass? Our whole nature rebels against any other supposition than this—that the Being on whom we may depend is one of whom e'en a little child may joyously sing—

“ God Almighty cares for me ! ”

Still it is the word of God which clears up all doubt. Such passages as these assure and sustain us—“ Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.” “ If God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith ? ” It is, however, from the standpoint of the Gospel that we get clearest light on Divine providence. “ He that spared not his own Son, but gave him up for us all, HOW SHALL HE NOT with him also freely give us all things ? ” “ He cannot deny Himself, He cannot put forth such a royal expenditure of bounty to bless and save, and then let His saved ones be neglected in the little things of life. I can trust the entire disposal of my lot in the hands of Him who loved me, and gave Himself for me ! ”

It is not to be wondered at, indeed, that such a doctrine should bring its own difficulties with it. These may be put down either to the limitation of our understanding, or to the weakness of our faith, or to both. Says one, “ It is not at a general providence that I stagger, but at a special one. I see, clearly enough, that we cannot consistently deny a general providence without denying also the being of a God ; but a *special* providence concerning itself about the small as the great, there is my difficulty.” Just so. There is the difficulty.

It assumes four forms. The first is that of “ perpetual interference.” This is the form in which Tyndall and others put it. However they may mean it, it has a touch of irreverence about it that is repulsive. For no action of God on any part of His universe at any moment can properly be called “ interference.” We ought to hear the great Householder say—“ Have I not a right to do what I will with mine own ? ” The second form of the difficulty is this—It seems too much to expect for the Most High to be concerned with the trivialities of events. But it may be replied that, even in human affairs, the nobler the intellect the greater is the mastery of *detail* in every affair that is undertaken. Ask any architect, or sculptor, or painter, “ What is the truest sign of a master mind ? ” and the reply

will be, "Perfection in details." He who could not attend to little things would soon find he had no great ones to look after. And shall we limit the Holy One of Israel? Yea, dishonour Him by supposing Him to have called into existence a world, with the details of which He is over-mastered?

A third form of the difficulty may be thus stated:—"It is not that we suppose the Divine Being unable to look after minute affairs, but they seem too trivial to be worthy the attention of the Infinite One." Trivial! Who can tell what is trivial, and what is not? No great event ever happened without millions of contributory circumstances, each one of which was minute in itself. There is a worm at the root of a gourd. Well, that's nothing. Ay, but it helps to educate a man. Paul has a thorn in the flesh; 'tis of no moment. Contrariwise, that very thorn helps to comfort thousands in all after time. And who does not know that incidents, which at the time of their occurrence are thought nothing of, are often, very often, the turning-points of life. "But," says a fourth, "it is not in the case of others that MY difficulty arises, it is in my own case I find it so hard to believe that MY concerns are thus graciously disposed." That is where the difficulty presses with most of us. Yet this is the very state of mind which is rebuked in Isaiah xl. 27, 28. As if the Prophet had said—*Wait till God is weary! then and not till then will you have a reason for your fears.*

And are not all these doubts rebuked by the experience of life? How often do we feel ashamed of our doubt as we look back through the vista of past years. Events unnoticed at the time have shaped our entire after-life. Trials that we thought have crushed us have trained. What seemed once isolated and unmeaning has proved to be a link in the chain of sequences, by which we are where we are and what we are to-day. The small and the great, the dark and the bright, have all placed their part in our life's story. The lot was cast into the cup; but the whole disposal thereof has been of the Lord.

Let us then give God the honour He claims, as the Absolute Disposer. In the faith of this doctrine let "the grace of God" fill our hearts. Specially if, as we begin a New Year, life is opening up afresh to us, and new responsibilities impend. Shall we take upon us the burden of to-morrow, or of next month, or of this year? Let us not thus wrong God. Our lot is cast into the lap, and we know not how it will turn up. But God does, for He has the disposal of

it, and He will never suffer one of His children to be the sport of any wind, to be ever out of a Father's care, or away from the guardianship of His watchful eye.

Then let us commit our way unto God. Let our prayer be—"Lord, dispose of my lot for me." Let husbands and wives, parents and children, blend their supplications together at this New Year, content to ask only that all may have grace to be and to go, to do and to hear, whatever and whenever God pleases, following the pillar of cloud by day, and of fire by night, which will be with us all our journey through.

This is the sum of the Christian life: to do the work of the day in the day, leaning on God for the strength to do it, and leaving all the rest in His gracious hands. This is to go on day by day, till the last day of life comes; and, if we know it to be the last, we may then spend it just like all the rest, and wait till we, who have been faithful in the least, shall serve Him also in much.

OLD ANTHONY.

BY MARY SHERWOOD.

CHAPTER I.

IF ever there was a man who deserved to be called one of "God Almighty's gentlemen," that man is Old Anthony Humberstone. Anthony has no patent of nobility except nature's own, and as for arms, I never heard of his having any except the two rheumatic old limbs which give him so much trouble sometimes in their joints when the wind is east, or the weather damp and cold. He is not rich, and it is not likely that he ever will be, seeing that he is now, and has been for the last ten years and more, one of the seven bedesmen or pensioners, belonging to what is known in the little town of King's Norton as Dame Mortimer's Charity. And he is no "scholar" either; for save the big, well-thumbed, leather-backed Bible which he knows by heart almost, from beginning to end, he hardly ever has a book in his hand.

And yet I say again, Old Anthony Humberstone is one of the most thorough gentlemen I know. He has that gentle mind which, in high and low, rich and poor alike, is sure to express itself in gentle

manners ; that genuine courtesy of heart which makes it impossible for him to say, or do, or even to feel an uncourteous thing ; that God-given instinct for all that is " pure, lovely, and of good report," which causes his outward life to be seemingly, what his inward life is in reality, as simple and chivalrous as that of any knight of the olden time.

It is as good as a sermon any day, better than many that I have heard, to look at Anthony's face ; the kindly, calm, old face, on which peace and love are written as plainly as if God's own finger had traced them there. As indeed it has ; for Anthony's face is one of those " living epistles, known and read of all men," which are just like a message from the Lord Himself, telling us what a Christian is, and bidding us walk so as we have them for examples.

Some people have an idea that religion is a dull and gloomy thing ; that it shuts them out of a great many pleasures, and shuts them up to a great many disagreeable duties. They think that it is all very well for sick folk, or for those who are in trouble, or who are about to die ; but they have a notion that somehow it is not at all a pleasant thing to go through life with. But one look at Old Anthony's face would quite dispel such an idea. They would see written on it as plainly as if the words were illuminated in letters of living light, the text—" Godliness with contentment is great gain." Indeed I have seen it written there myself, and have felt as if Old Anthony, though he little knew that he was doing so, was preaching me the best sermon I had ever heard on those beautiful words.

For there are many kinds of sermons besides those which are preached from pulpits, and many ways of preaching them besides that of giving out a text and saying something about it ; and as I have said, it is as good as a sermon to look at Old Anthony's face, for it is so shone through at all times by the light from within, that it seems as if there was always some text or other illuminated upon it, on which the old bedesman was unconsciously discoursing. But if Anthony's face speaks for its master, and seems to say by its gentle lines and kindly looks what a God of love he serves, his tongue is not silent either ; and just as you cannot look at the old man's face without feeling somehow the better for it, neither can you be for five minutes in his company without hearing from his lips some of those words of wisdom which are indeed but the utterance, in human speech, of that spirit of truth and love which has long had its abode in Old Anthony's heart,

It is not always easy in these days to tell whether it is really the spirit of truth and uprightness that is speaking to us through the voice of some of those who occupy the pulpits of our land. Too often, it is to be feared, the trumpet gives an uncertain sound, and those who hear it and answer to its summons find that it is not heavenwards at all that it is calling them, but manwards rather, with cunningly devised fables that lead astray the unthinking soul. But there is nothing to mislead in the sermons that Old Anthony's face preaches, or in the words of wisdom that fall from his lips. There is a very sure and simple test, which, if applied to them, would show where Anthony's wisdom comes from. It is just this, which the Apostle James has given us, and by which we may all of us try ourselves as well as others:—

“The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.”

Now there is not a single word of all this which would not apply to Old Anthony so exactly that you might almost think his portrait had been painted in it; and therefore, when I listen to the words of kindly wisdom which fall from the lips of the good old man, I feel sure that I may trust every one of them, just as much, ay! even more, than if I were listening to some great pulpit orator, whose fame for eloquence and originality gathers crowds around him to hear what new thing he has to say to them.

There is not much originality in anything that I have ever heard Old Anthony say. I mean by that there is not much which he has not found for himself in that thumbed, leather-backed Bible which he knows so well, and which is such a constant companion of his—nothing which any of us, if we studied it as diligently, might not find out also for ourselves. But then it is the way he sets one thing over against another, taking the text sometimes out of one book in the Bible, and another out of that, and striking the two together, and so fetching a light from both which could not have been seen in either separately. I have often known him do that, and indeed it is wonderful how without any help of either human teaching or man's commentaries, but only with the leather-backed Bible itself, he has made Scripture its own interpreter, until from words which were so familiar to the ear that it seemed as if all the meaning they held must be familiar too, he would bring out such treasures of wisdom that one wondered both how he found them there, and how it was

that we had never found for ourselves before what was so plainly to be seen when once the eye of the heart was directed to it.

I wish I could take my reader with me this afternoon; for I am going now, as I often do, to have a chat with the old bedesman, and to carry him a little packet of prime "birdseye." Anthony is very fond of his pipe, though he never takes it oftener than once a day, after dinner; or when his rheumatism is very bad, perhaps before supper too. It is the one luxury of life with him, and as I have heard him say, "It is one of the Lord's ways of being good to him. For now that the time of day has come to him, as it does to other old men who are far on their way to fourscore years, when the strong men bow themselves, and the keepers of the house tremble, and the grinders cease because they are few, and even the grasshopper is a burden, yet the Lord lets his pipe be a comfort to him, so that the aches in his old bones are a bit easier to bear."

I wish everybody took their pleasures and their comforts straight from the Lord's hands as gratefully as Anthony takes his; so that when the poor worn-out body is little more than a bundle of aching nerves, they can find something to enjoy and be thankful for, if it be only a pipe. But as I was saying at the beginning of this chapter, Anthony's face seems always to have some text or other illuminated upon it, and those words of his about his pipe, when I heard them, seemed to me just like a homely, practical sermon, full of wisdom and true devoutness, upon the text which I have so often seen there:—"Godliness with contentment is great gain."

But I have not time now to stay any longer chatting about my old friend. In another chapter, if you care to make further acquaintance with him, I may tell you more about his words and ways, and something too of the history of his life as I have heard it from himself.

(To be continued in our next.)

—◆—
JOHN KNOX.

HAST thou hope?" the bystanders asked of John Knox when he lay dying. He was unable to reply, but raised his finger, and pointed upwards, and so he died.—*Carlyle.*

THE CHILDREN AND THE CHURCH: AS THEY ARE.

BY REV. HENRY T. ROBJOHNS, B.A.

ATTENTION has of late been drawn to the position in which children stand both to the Lord Jesus and to the Christian Church. Mr. Mander, of Wolverhampton, has made it a serious business to obtain statistics and facts; and then to lay the results before the Churches in a series of letters to the *English Independent*. I purpose to have a talk here on this grave subject; nor shall I scruple to make wholesale use of the material furnished by our friend, feeling sure that no one will be more gratified than he, if the cause he has so much at heart be advanced.

I. *The facts* I will endeavour to give in a condensed form. Mr. Mander sent out circulars to a large number of Churches, asking—(1) The number of members in the Church; (2) how many between the ages of fourteen and eighteen; (3) how many under fourteen. After getting the information, sifting it thoroughly, and omitting twelve Churches, in which the number of young people was exceptionally great, he came upon the following lamentable revelation, that out of 1,716 members there were only thirty-four young people between fourteen and eighteen, and only *one* child under fourteen! Moreover, out of 404 Churches, which made returns, there were 379 which had not a single child member, and therefore of course only twenty-five which had; and 199 without a single young person under eighteen. There can be no mistake about the facts, and they are portentous enough. What do they mean? Whatever they do not mean, they mean this—that the young people do not join our Churches. It is to be hoped that there is much early consecration to God, but this consecration does not end, at least in life's morning, in fellowship with the visible Church of Christ.

II. Can we reach the *cause* of this deplorable state of things? It is not far to seek. The cause lies in the public opinion of the Churches, which is directly against the Church membership of children; and so is indirectly prejudicial to their early consecration. This public opinion plays around us all like an atmosphere, and affects even those who would be perhaps forward in words to repudiate it. We can analyse it, and resolve it into its elementary notions.

1. There is a *wrong notion of the Christian life*, in its commencement and continuance, which works prejudicially. The writers of the Puritan age delighted in logical and exhaustive delineations of the work of God on the soul of man. "They insisted on a process of conversion, and a course of experience," which were not possible to a little child, because the actual facts of the child's life were ignored. The child seems scarcely to have appeared above the horizon in the thought of these theologians; and if he did, the child was certainly not dealt with as the Saviour would have treated him. I have known parents, judging their children by an unreal standard, worry themselves about the salvation of the little ones, when it was clear to all intelligent beholders, estimating their position in the light of the New Testament, that they were leaning with the trust of a child on the great Redeemer.

2. A *wrong deduction from the idea of predestination*. All Christian people, apart from controverted questions, feel that individual salvation is of God; and therefore must lie within His purpose. This sentiment *may* lead to the neglect of means, and to forgetfulness on the part of parents that they themselves are the appointed instruments of blessing.

3. A *wrong reaction against the theory of Baptismal Regeneration*.

4. A *wrong distrust of the child, and of the child's Saviour*. People will doubt the reality and permanence of the work of grace in a child, when it never occurs to them to do so in the case of an adult; this is the more to be regretted, since all the presumptions are in favour of the stability of the child's piety, rather than that of an adult.

5. A *wise prudence taking a wrong direction*! Our Church government is in the hands of a democracy of spiritual men. The objection is, that it is not fit to entrust children with the ecclesiastical franchise; and so the conclusion is drawn, exclude them from the Church altogether. But surely a more excellent way would be to limit the suffrage to members above a certain age.

III. The *consequences* of this erroneous public opinion are very grave indeed. What is the position of the children of the Church? How, in consequence of these wrong notions, are they regarded?

1. They are regarded as *simply in a state of nature*, in the same sense as a poor hapless child born in St. Giles's, or in some far-off island of the Southern Sea, whither the sound of the Gospel has never come. Let no one imagine that in contending against this, we hold loosely the doctrine—"that the first man disobeyed the Divine

command, fell from his state of innocence and purity, and involved all his posterity in the consequences of that fall; and that, therefore, all mankind are born in sin, and that a fatal inclination to moral evil, utterly incurable by human means, is inherent in every descendant of Adam." The children of whom we speak are in many important respects standing within the kingdom of God's grace. There is first of all the bias towards the true and good, which is communicated by virtue of the law of mental and moral inheritance. There follows thereupon the unspeakable advantage of Christian culture. At the back of all are the promises of God, and the Divine intention to make the family constitution a means of building up the everlasting kingdom of the Son of God. So that, in the exaggerated sense, the children of the Church are not in a state of nature; they may reasonably be expected to "grow up into Christ;" and, though needing "the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost," will not require conversion attended by those phenomena which mark that of men who have been openly godless.

(2.) The *Christian child is regarded as a wonderful phenomenon* (whereas in these circumstances he should be no marvel at all), and so no arrangements are at present made within our Churches to meet the special needs of Christian children.

IV. The *wrong* of all this needs now to be explicitly pointed out. It is wrong:—

1. Because *childhood is the fit and favourable time for consecration to God*. The dawn of responsibility is then, and surely we may then look for special grace. Depravity can be checked then; we should not allow the incipient stage of fatal disease to pass without taking vigorous measures to counteract it. The facts of the Gospel move deeply then. The doctrines of the Gospel, certainly looked at on their brighter side—for the light of love must have its shadows ever resting on that which is evil—are adapted to the natural joyousness of a little child. Christian duty is possible then. Christian habits can be formed then; and much of the stable grandeur of Christian life in mature years is due to the fact that no mean part of its excellence is habitual, and so unconscious. The whole life can be given to God then. And lastly, millions of children die, and if ever the Lord's, these must be in childhood His.

2. Because *the interval of delay is so terribly dangerous*. Many are as fit to join the Church at ten or twelve years of age as at twenty; but not so fit at sixteen or seventeen as at the earlier period. At

that age thousands pass through a stage of backsliding, indifference, coldness, unbelief, from which only a remnant recover. Mr. Mander describes in graphic and earnest language the forces which come then to fight against the soul's salvation.

3. Because childhood is, as a matter of fact, *the time when the life choice is made*. The appeal here may safely be made, (1) To the *experience* of Christian people. Let any one ask himself, When did I come under the influence of the Gospel, accept Christ's salvation, and give myself to God? The answer will be, in thousands of cases, —In life's morning. (2) To their *observation* of others. "Most persons joining our fellowships tell of early impressions and convictions; of good seed buried long perhaps, but not lost, and are conscious of sin and shame that it was buried at all." (3) To the *testimony* of gifted and gracious men. With one or two examples we may well close. A New England writer, Dr. Witherspoon, says, "When the Gospel comes to a people that have long sitten in darkness, there may be numerous converts of all ages; but when the Gospel has long been preached in plenty and purity; and ordinances regularly administered, *few but those who are called in early life are called at all.*" Richard Baxter was of opinion "that in a regular state of the Church, and a tolerable measure of faithfulness and purity in its officers, family instruction and government are the usual means of *conversion*, public ordinances of *edification.*" And Jonathan Edwards remarks: "Every Christian family ought to be, as it were, a little Church, consecrated to Christ, and wholly influenced and governed by His rules. Family education and order are some of the chief means of grace; *if these fail, all other means are likely to prove ineffectual.*"

But my space is gone. I have dealt with "The Children and the Church *as they are* ; I hope shortly to speak of "The Children and the Church *as they should be.*"

AMELIA OPIE.

AMELIA OPIE mournfully described herself as "a lone woman through life, an only child, a childless widow." Yet with much that was sad there was much that was bright, and much in her to brighten the lot of others. The death, in 1847, of John Joseph Gurney deeply affected her; that of Dr. Chalmers soon followed;

and in 1849 Bishop Stanley, of Norwich, her friend, added to her burden of sorrow. Still at the age of eighty-four "the beauty of age" lingered on her countenance; and at the close of life, though suffering much, she was buoyant and happy. On the 2nd of December, 1853, at midnight, she breathed her last, murmuring "All is peace! All is mercy!" Her remains were laid in the Friends' burying-ground at the Gildenscroft.



THE GRAVE OF AMELIA OPIE.

Her friend, Mrs. S. C. Hall, thus writes: "Dear Amelia Opie! her nature was essentially feminine in its gifts, its graces, its goodness, its weakness, and its vanities; truthful, generous, and considerate ever. Pure of heart, and upright in thought and conversation, her memory is without a blot; her precepts are those of virtue; and her example was their illustration and their comment."

A NEGRO PREACHER.

I WAS to preach for Brother Anderson. He was a good pastor. Almost the last time I saw him he had just called upon a lamb of his flock to ask after her spiritual welfare, and for fifty cents towards his salary. He had left his tub and brushes at the foot of the hill, and he resumed them when he had made his call; for, like the great Apostle, he used to labour, working with his own hands.

Punctual to the hour, Brother Anderson came rolling across the street, and up to the door, and we went in together. After the usual songs and prayers, I took for my text Paul's counsel to the Corinthians as to their disorderly meetings and meaningless noises. The sermon was, in the main, a reading of the fourteenth chapter of Paul's first letter, with comments and applications interspersed. I spoke for half-an-hour, and, while showing consideration for the noisy ways of my audience, exhorted them to cultivate intelligence as well as passion.

"When you feel the glory of God in you, let it out, of course. Shout 'Glory,' clap your hands, and all that. But stop now and then, and let some wise elder stand up and tell what it all means. Men and boys hang round your windows, and laugh at you and religion, because they don't understand you. Some men have religion all in the head—clear, sharp, dry, and dead. Others, all in the hearts. They feel it in their bones. Now I want you to have religion in your heads and hearts. Let all things be done decently and in order."

I was very well satisfied with my effort; at the time it seemed a success. As I sat down, Brother Anderson got up and stood on the pulpit step to give out a hymn:

"Let saints below in concert sing."

I am not certain that he could read, for he stood book in hand, and seemingly from memory gave the number of the hymn, and repeated the first two stanzas with deep and growing feeling. Of the third he read three lines:

"One army ob de livin' God,
To His comman' we bow;
Part of 'e hos (t) 'av cross 'er flood,
An' part"——

Here he stopped, and, after swallowing one or two chokes, went on to say: "I lub Brudder Beecher. I lub to hear him preach dis

afternoon. He's told us a good many things. He's our good fr'en. An' he sez, sez he, dat some folks goes up to glory noisy 'n shoutin', an' some goes still-like, 'z if they's 'shame of wat's in 'em. An' he sez we'd better be more like de still kind, an' de white folks will like us more. An' den I thinks 'taint much 'count no way, wedder we goes up still-like or shoutin', cause heaven's a mighty big place, brudders; an' when we all goes marchin' up to see de Lord, an' I's so full of de lub, and de joy, and de glory, dat I mus' clap my han's an' shout, de good Lord's got some place whar we wont 'sturb nobody, and we kan shout, Glory! Glory! Bless de Lord! I'm safe, I'm safe in de glory at las'! I tell you, brudders an' sisters, dat heaven's a mighty big place, an' dar's room for Brudder Beecher an' us, too."

"Dat's so! Bless de Lord! Amen! Glory!" (From the people.)

"An' Brudder Beecher sez dat 'tis'n de folks as makes mos' noise dat does de mos' work. He sez de ingins on de railroad only puff—puff—puff—reg'lar breathin' like, wen dey's at work a haulin' de big loads, and dat de bells and de whistles don' do no work; dey only make a noise. Guess dat's so. I don' know 'bout ingins much, and I don' know wedder I's a puff;puff ingin, or wedder I blow de whistle an' rings de bell. I feels like bofe (with a chuckle) sometimes! An' I tell you what, wen de fire is burnin', an' I gets de steam up, don't dribe no cattle on de track; de ingin's comin'! Cl'ar de track!" (This with a voice that shook the little house, and a "magnetism" that thrilled and fixed me. Of course, his hearers were by this time swaying, shouting, and amen-ing splendidly.)

"An de boys an' gals, an' de clarks an' young lawyers, dey come up yar watch-night, an' dey peep in de windows, an' stan' roun' de doors, an' dey laff an' make fun of 'lig'n! An' Brudder Beecher sez, Why don't we stop de noise now'n den, an' go out an' tell em' 'bout it—splain it to 'em. An' I 'members wot de Bible sez 'bout the outer darkness, an' de weepin' an' de wailin' an' de gnashin' ob de teeth. An' if dese boys an' gals stan' dar, outside a laffin', bimby dey'll come to de wailin' an' de weepin' 'fus dey know. An' den wen dey stan' roun' de great temple ob the Lord, an' see de glory shinin' out, and de harpers harpin', an' all de music, an' de elders bowin', an' all de shoutin' like many waters, an' all de saints a singin' ' Glory to de Lam'!' s'pose God'll say, ' Stop dat noise dar, Gabriel! You Gabriel, go out an' splain!'

"Yes, I see dem stan' las' winter 'roun de door an' under de windows an' laff; an' dey peek in an' laff. An' I 'member wot I saw last

summer 'mong de bees. Some ob de hives was nice, an' clean, an' still, like 'spectable meetin's, an' de odders was a bustin' wid honey! an' de bees kep' a goin' an' a comin' in de clover; an' dey jes kep' on a fillin' up de hive, till de honey was a flowin' like de lan' of Canaan. An' I saw all roun' de hives was de ants an' worms, an' de great drones' an' black bugs, an' dey kep' on de outside. Dey was'n bees. Dey could'n make de honey for darselves. Dey could'n fly to de clover an' de honeysuckle. Dey jess hung roun' de bustin' hive, an' live on de drippin's.

"An' de boys an' gals come up yar, an' hang roun'. Jess come in, an' we'll show you how de gospel bees do. Come in, an' we'll lead you to de clover! Come in—we'll make your wings grow. Come in! won't ye? Well, den, poor things, let 'em stan' roun' de outside, an' have de drippin's. We's got honey in dis hive!"

Raising the hymn-book, and with tender voice, he took up the stanza just where he had left it—

"Part of 'e hos' av cross 'er flood,
Au' part are crossin' now."

"Sing, brudders," said he; and to his "lining out" they sang the whole hymn only as they can sing.

All this was ten or twelve years ago. I remember that while he was speaking my sermon seemed to shrink and fade. And now, as I recall the scene and record his words but in part, I am feeling the power of his truth. Heaven's a mighty big place. The Father's house hath many homes, and places prepared for many.

Was he dreaming of these as he went about our streets with tubs and brushes to whiten and sweeten the homes of men? Did he wear his rags contentedly, mindful of his robes shining and exceeding white as snow? In that day when those that are last shall be first, few will look down to find Brother Anderson.—*Rev. T. K. Beecher.*

THE BLANK PULPIT.

BY A DEACON.

SOME time ago I called to transact a little business with a friend. When it was completed we sat chatting for half-an-hour or so, the conversation glancing rapidly from theme to theme. Among the topics I referred to was Mr. Spurgeon's recent utterance on the

subject of "a strike" amongst ministers; and my friend reminded me of the Yorkshireman who said when the Congregational Union met at Halifax that it looked as if all the parsons were on strike.

When I reached home in the evening I took down "The Eclipse of Faith," and, sitting by my fireside, read the well-known chapter on the "Blank Bible." Tired, I suppose, with my day's journey and work I became somewhat drowsy and at length fell asleep, and quietly dozing on I dreamed a dream, curiously compounded of my morning conversation and my evening reading.

And so dreaming, I fancied that it came to pass that the Congregational Union was solemnly convened by a circular written in cypher, invented by Mr. Binney, and held a solemn and secret session. How I, a deacon, happened to be present I could not tell, but these incongruities do occur in dreams. When we met together I found the object of the meeting was to discuss the subject of ministers' salaries; and, if possible, to form some organisation which should effect their immediate increase. I listened eagerly for an hour and more to an animated discussion, and as I did so I got the impression that I had heard much on such a subject before. I then remembered that this must have been some three years ago, when the Congregational Union talked itself dry on the subject of a Sustentation Fund, and when all their talk came to nothing.

At length I saw my own pastor on his feet. Now I knew exactly the amount of his stipend, for I had paid it myself for the last ten years, and had always supposed it was a pretty liberal one. But somehow that morning my heart smote me, and I hoped he would not catch my eye. He began by saying that ten years before he began his work in a small town, on a salary of £120 a-year. Since then he had married, and four children had been born in his house. Meanwhile, the price of all kinds of commodities had steadily increased, so that household expenses were nearly double what they were ten years ago. Still he had received the same stipend from the Church as at first. Ten years ago he had no children to clothe and educate, now he had four, yet his people had not even hinted that they feared he would find some difficulty in maintaining them. He knew he had been faithful to his calling (an inward "Hear, hear," from me.) He could call his people to witness (he did not know I was there) that he had fed them willingly, and taken the oversight not for filthy lucre's sake, but of a willing mind; and now, if it were not for the thoughts that troubled him when he looked at his wife's anxious face, and at

his children's uncertain future, he would not be present at that meeting. But the question had become a serious one. All other means had failed. Deacons had been standing by with indifference. Churches had been content to let their ministers suffer. The end had come. "And now," he exclaimed, raising his voice, "I propose that we take sword in hand, and cut the Gordian knot. I propose that we strike!"

The effect of his words was electrical. The whole assembly rose to its feet. The Congregational Trades' Union was formed, and, after some discussion of details, the assembly broke up.

I went home with thoughts strangely agitated; but I did not venture to observe to anyone what I had seen and heard. When Sunday morning came I went, as usual, to the vestry. My fellow-deacons were there already, and were eagerly discussing the meaning of a letter which had just come from our minister, and which they were requested to read from the pulpit. The letter contained an account of the ministers' meeting, and a justification of the step upon which they had resolved.

Accordingly the letter was read, and the effect produced would have satisfied any orator's heart. Some faces were blankly incredulous, others were indignant, a few sneered, and several looked ashamed and conscience-stricken. The deacon who read the letter only remarked that, in a crisis so serious and so unexpected as this, the soberer our thoughts and words the better. He would therefore ask one or two to pray. He afterwards dismissed the congregation, with a request that they would all meet in the school-room on Monday evening to discuss the matter.

But who shall describe that Sunday? At one place, a young man, who parted his hair down the middle, and had often declared that the ministry was behind the age, was asked to preach in the evening. He consented, and gave an address on "The four Gospels considered as an outgrowth of the God-consciousness of humanity." At another the senior deacon read one of Mr. Spurgeon's sermons; but not having previously studied it, unexpectedly found himself urgently entreating that all his hearers should be immersed. Some young people went to the Ritualistic Church, and said they should go again: "it was *so nice*." The Plymouth Brethren looked upon the affair as a conspicuous triumph of their principles. But others took different views from these. I met a poor hard-worked servant-girl, who burst into tears and sobs at seeing me, and cried, "Oh, sir!

whatever shall I do? My Sunday was the only day when I could hear anything good. Do you think our minister will ever preach again?" A little further on was a weary mother; a look of pain and wonder came over her face. But she said she did not blame the minister: she knew how hard it was on such means as his honestly to pay one's way.

How sadly did Christian families meet together that evening! Fathers and mothers, who had striven to cultivate in their children a love for God's house and worship, now looked round with pain on their restless, dissatisfied children, and heard, with a strange sorrow, their eager questionings as to the meaning of it all; while they confessed that they had never before spent such a Sabbath in their lives, and hoped never to again. Many a man, who for years looked upon his Sunday as a toiling sailor looks on the quiet waters of the harbour, felt an unrest he had never previously known. No thoughtful meditations; no song of lofty praise; no comfort from communion in prayer; no golden light of a better life had broken in upon his spirit. A sense of loss was felt on every hand, and men suddenly realised, as never before, the utter mournful void their lives would be on a "Blank Pulpit." I myself could bear it no longer, and hastened away to call upon my minister; but just as I was shaking hands with him I awoke, and lo!—to my delight—I found it was a dream.

* * * * *

A dream, and yet not all a dream. It seemed as if to me, in those strange moments through which I had passed, a voice, not human, had spoken. The worth of the minister's work appeared to me in a new light. I could not help feeling that I had been guilty of neglect. I seemed to fear a fulfilment of the ancient prediction—"Behold, the days come," saith the Lord God, "that I will send a famine in the land; not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the word of the Lord."

But I was not content with self-rebuke, or useless regrets, or new theories, or even with talking about the matter. There has been *talk* enough about the subject to last for a generation. I didn't cry long over spilt milk. I at once called together a meeting of my brethren the deacons. I told them of my dream, and of the impressions it had left, and of the convictions it had awakened in my own mind. They caught the spirit I had caught. We resolved to *act*. We devised fresh plans of Church finance. We set the example of

how to carry them out. The Church backed us up; and from that day and that dream we have dated a new era in our Church work and life. We resolved to "be just before we were generous:" honestly to pay our own debts before we undertake the liabilities of charity. And the results have been more than we expected. The benefit to the minister has been great; but I think the benefit to the Church has been greater. Our giving has now become a part of our Sabbath duty and of our Sabbath joy. We "bring an offering and come into His courts;" we "honour the Lord with our substance and the first fruits of all our increase"; and while we worship God with gifts as well as with song and with prayer and with holy thought, I hope we have learnt to say, with a nobler faith and a grander meaning, "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift."

HAVING HER OWN WAY.

WILL you be a good girl, Rubie?"

Rubie didn't answer a word, for in her naughty little heart she had firmly resolved not to be a good girl at all. She was a truthful child; moreover, she hated to hurt her mother's feelings—hence her silence.

So the horses started, and poor sick mamma was whirled out of sight, carrying with her the memory of a fat pouty face, with brown eyes fixed steadily on the ground. Mamma couldn't see the tears—no, indeed! Rubie took good care of that. But as soon as the carriage was really gone, she ran upstairs to her own little bed-room, bolted the door, and cried as if her heart would break.

Kind Aunt Sophy knocked twice, but received no answer. The little damsel refused to be comforted. She knew that poor mamma had been very ill, and that the doctor said change of air was better than medicine, but that, to gain strength, she must be entirely free from care. Consequently, Rubie had been left at home. "As if I was a care!" she said indignantly to herself; "I could hand her her medicine, and do lots of things"—and the tears flowed afresh.

Dinner-time came, and a woe-begone little figure crept slowly downstairs, and seated itself at the table. She didn't intend to eat anything—oh, no! but Aunt Sophy quietly helped her, and to her

own surprise she discovered that she was really hungry, having forgotten her usual lunch.

It was astonishing how much better she felt after dinner. To be sure, papa and mamma were gone, but Aunt Sophy's face looked very pleasant as she sat sewing in the low rocking-chair. At any rate, the baby thought so, for he reached out his little hands to her with an irresistible crow. And then Rubie began to think how much better the baby was bearing his trouble than she was, how good Aunt Sophy was to come to them, and how much pleasanter it would be if she *could* just make up her mind to be good. But she couldn't—not just yet. No! "Aunt Sophy needn't have come unless she wanted to; and as to the baby—no wonder he didn't make a fuss! he wasn't old enough; he didn't know enough; but she did;" and an ominous shake of the little curly head seemed to say, "I'm going to do it, too."

Aunt Sophy was wise enough to see that a storm was brewing, but with infinite tact succeeded in keeping it off until bed-time. Then she drew a long breath of relief, for surely a good night's rest must calm that little troubled spirit, and smooth the wrinkles from the scowling forehead!

"It's half-past eight, Rubie—long past your bed-time. Put dolly away now, and I'll go up with you."

"I'm going to sit up to-night," replied Rubie, resolutely.

"Are you? What for?"

"Miss Jackson is very sick. She needs mustard-poultices. I must watch with her."

Miss Jackson was an ancient dolly, with a wooden head, from which the paint had long since departed. Frequent warm water baths had obliterated all traces of her eyes but the holes; which was very convenient, for she could be blind or not, at her little mistress's pleasure. To night she rejoiced in a pair of jet-black orbs, which Rubie had made with pen and ink.

"What is the matter with Miss Jackson?"

"She's got the *neuralergy*. Her face aches."

"It looks like it, indeed," replied Aunt Sophy, who could hardly help laughing at the startled appearance of the fearfully black eyes.

"So you are going to sit up all night?"

"Yes," with a pucker of determination in the little set mouth.

"Very well; I must go up to baby now. I'll come in and see you before I go to bed."

Rubie stared. Could she have heard aright? She had expected violent opposition, and was prepared to battle with it valiantly. What could Aunt Sophy mean? Was she really going to let her sit up all night? She felt almost injured at the thought, and her project had already lost its principal charm.

But nothing of all this was visible in the little face that Aunt Sophy saw on her return. The brown eyes were gazing anxiously at Miss Jackson, on each of whose wan cheeks reposed a mustard-plaster (Rubie knew quite well how to make them, she had seen it done so often for poor mamma), and whose best dress, of green plaid silk, had been exchanged for a yellow flannel night-gown.

Aunt Sophy produced a candlestick, lighted a candle, and turned off the gas.

"I'm going to leave this for you, Rubie," said she. "I think it will last as long as you need it. The fire will keep until morning. Promise me that you will not go near the stove."

Rubie promised.

"Now, I must go, for baby is fussing. Kiss me, good night."

Rubie longed to throw her arms around Aunt Sophy's neck, and give her a good hug, but she didn't. The kiss was given very quietly, and then the door shut, and she and her charge were alone.

Dolly suffered acutely for half an hour, in the course of which time her plasters were changed an incredible number of times. Then her little mistress became tired of the performance. The stillness was oppressive. It really was very provoking that Miss Jackson was not gifted with the power of speech. "Stupid old thing!" Rubie said to herself, "I shouldn't care much if she did die. I believe I'll take off her plasters, and put her to bed. She must learn to bear her own pains. I have to when I have the tooth-ache. I must wash her eyes out first, so she'll go to sleep."

Miss Jackson meekly submitted to that painful operation, and was reposing tranquilly upon the sofa. Rubie had settled herself in the big rocking-chair, and was suspiciously quiet for some time, when the kitchen clock made her start. She counted the strokes. Could it be twelve o'clock? How strange it seemed down there all alone! Where was she when it struck "ten" and "eleven"? Twelve o'clock! Midnight! She had never been up so late but once in her life before, and that was when mamma was so very ill, and papa just took her to the bed and let her look. How good mamma was! Rubie remembered how often she had to lie down while making her

little piqué dress. "And I wouldn't even promise to be a good girl," she thought, with almost a sob. "What if mamma should die!" Here, in the midst of her sad reflections, she heard a faint rustling on the sofa, and all at once she thought of Miss Jackson. Alas! neuralgia and mustard-plasters were nothing in comparison to what she was now suffering, for two little mice were busy at work; yes, upon her very vitals, which were pouring out in a stream of saw-dust and bran!

Rubie was mortally afraid of mice. Moreover, notwithstanding her late impatience, she loved Miss Jackson. She gave one loud shriek, which effectually frightened the little animals, and brought Aunt Sophy to her side.

"Oh, auntie!" she sobbed, "the mice were eating Miss Jackson all up."

"Didn't you see them coming?"

"No; I wasn't looking. Oh, I don't want mamma to die, auntie!"

Aunt Sophy took the poor excited child upon her lap, and rocked her without a word, until the sobs had ceased. Then she told her that mamma was growing stronger every day now, and a month of quiet rest would probably make her quite well again; that it had troubled her very much to go away, and leave her children, but the doctor said it must be so.

Rubie had heard all this before, but, somehow, she realised it now for the first time.

"Mother will think a great deal about her little girl and boy at home," said Aunt Sophy. "It will grieve her if they are not happy."

Rubie couldn't speak.

"The baby behaved like a man to-night; and if you will help me, too, we shall get along nicely."

"I will—I will—oh! I'm so sorry."

Aunt Sophy kissed the quivering lips, then took Rubie upstairs to her room, where baby was sleeping quietly.

"Why, auntie," inquired the little girl, much surprised as she looked at the nice smooth coverlet, "haven't you gone to bed yet?"

"No," replied Aunt Sophy, quietly; "I was waiting for some one."

Rubie hid her face, and her only answer was a closer hug. The next day she dictated a letter to her mother. It was as follows:—

"MY DEAR MAMMA,—I want you to get well. I *will* be good. The baby was good last night, but I wasn't. Aunt Sophy didn't go to bed

early. The mice ate Miss Jackson all up. She can't stand up or sit down. Aunt Sophy says *p'raps* she can fill her up again.

' Good-by. Your little daughter, RUBIE.'

" P.S.—I will be good."

Christian Register.

THOUGHTS—GRAVE AND GAY.

No. I.

THE *Church Herald*, which plumes itself on its unusual sagacity, recently remarked that the Independents were holding a "Congress" down at Nottingham, "in servile imitation of the Church Congress." Our contemporary seems to be unaware of the fact that the Congregational Union had grown up to manhood years before the Church Congress was thought of. The writer might as well have said that when his grandmother was born it was in "servile imitation" of the birth of her grandson.

The best thing said *against* Nonconformists in reply to their complaints and protests at the conduct of the Government on the Education question was by Mr. Scourfield. "The case," he remarked, "reminded him of a story which he had met with. It was related by the late Tom Hood that a lady and her maid, having gone to Holland in a violent storm, experienced those effects which storms do produce on passengers generally, and on ladies' maids in particular. The lady's maid in subsequently describing her feelings said, 'Next to my religion, the greatest comfort I had was in giving Missis warning, which I did every time between the attacks.' He therefore hoped that hon. gentlemen opposite, having relieved their feelings by giving Government warning, would settle down, and keep quiet." But though we may enjoy the excellent joke of the hon. member as much as anyone, he will yet find our convictions are none the less deep, and our action, when the time comes, will be none the less decisive. We intend then to bite as surely and as sharply as we now bark, and if the Liberal party is in consequence broken up, the Government will have no reason to complain that it had not fair and frequent "warning."

Two eminent clergymen of Brooklyn—the one an Episcopalian and the other a Unitarian—met. After some conversation, the

Churchman said good-naturedly, "Brother So-and-so, if I were not an Episcopalian I would be a Unitarian." "Why so?" was the question. "Because I always had my mind made up to be either something or nothing!" was the answer.

It is said that it makes no difference what a man believes, if he is only *sincere*. But it does make a great difference. If a man mounts a wild steed, and makes full speed for a precipice, and means to slip off before he gets to it, his very insincerity will save him. But if he says, "I don't believe there is any chasm there," his sincerity will take him to the bottom.

The celebrated Nonconformist divine who flourished under the Commonwealth and Restoration, and wrote the "Saints' Everlasting Rest," the "Call to the Unconverted," and another awakening appeal addressed to Christian blacksliders, is said to have been accustomed, whenever he saw a criminal on his way to the gallows, to exclaim, "There, but for Divine grace, goes Richard Baxter." A distinguished naturalist, author of the recently-published work on the "Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals," a sequel to his famous treatise on the "Descent of Man," may be imagined occasionally giving utterance to a corresponding though different reflection. At the sight of a monkey scratching himself in the Zoological Gardens, that philosopher might with much propriety observe, "There, but for natural selection and the struggle for existence, sits Charles Darwin."—*Punch*.

CHURCH NEWS OF THE MONTH.

THE coming year will, probably, bring to our ears "Church News" of varied and increasing interest. The great word "Disestablishment" is now on every lip, and its great issues will press momentarily on public regard with growing importance. Every new election brings this question into fresh prominence; and a general election—which some assure us will come when autumn comes—will make that subject a touchstone that will test many a political destiny.

Meanwhile, among the minor forces which will hasten on the great event, we may reckon the indiscretion, to say the least, of certain

State Church defenders. Years ago Mr. Parkinson, of Rochdale, declared that the itinerant advocates of Establishments seemed to be gentlemen who "could say nothing, or could say anything." Nor are illustrations of this remark now wanting. One of the most active "defenders" of the Established Church is the Rev. Dr. Potter, of Sheffield. Among a multitude of equally authentic assertions, he has publicly declared that Mr. Gladstone is a Roman Catholic, or that he is fast tending towards that faith. A prominent Liberal sent a report of the circumstance to Mr. Gladstone, with a request for "such a word from yourself as will set this district at rest as to this report." Mr. Gladstone, through his secretary, replied "that the statement in Dr. Potter's lecture as to his religion has been publicly contradicted long ago, and that he regrets it is not in his power to save the credulous from the annoyance caused by *the impudent repetition of the falsehood.*"

Another great champion of the Established Church is the Rev. Dr. Massingham. As illustrative of the courtesy and dignity of his usual style, we may quote one of his most recent personal allusions: "There are," he said at Salford, "good and bad Dissenters. To the latter class belongs Mr. Miall, whom we should consider as nothing better than a walking vinegar cruet."

We hope that the public in general, and our readers in particular, will not be "bamboozled" by the flutter and fluster with which certain Church critics endeavour to disparage the remarkable results of the statistics which have been published in the *Nonconformist*. Not content with inaccurate criticism of the supposed inaccuracies of the enumerators, and with attributing all manner of evil motives to all concerned in the preparation of these data, some of the Church and Tory journals have had the courage to declare that Nonconformists first objected to a Government census of church and chapel accommodation, and then undertook to prepare one themselves. The *Standard*, for instance, says that it is "a significant fact that the Dissenters vehemently opposed the renewal of the religious census, while Churchmen insisted upon it strenuously as a matter of justice." The "significant fact" was, however, precisely the opposite. It was the Tory members, including the present Lord Salisbury, Mr. Henley, Sir John Pakington, and Mr. Whiteside, who resolutely opposed "the plan of ten years before." In the report of the debate in the House of Commons on July 11th, 1860, it is recorded that it was Mr. Edward Baines, as the mouthpiece of Nonconformists, who moved the follow-

ing clause in committee: "The Secretary of State shall, as far as is practicable, cause inquiry to be made and returns to be obtained of all places of worship, schools, and educational establishments, *similar to those obtained in the census of 1851.*" The only census to the proposal of which Nonconformists took exception was one by which it was intended that all the godless and criminal in the land should be included among members of the Church of England—people who, like Lord Eldon, are not pillars of the Church but buttresses—never found within the Church, but holding it up *from without.*

The Chairman of the Birmingham School Board courteously describes men like Mr. Dale and Mr. Vince—his own colleagues—as "a masterful and bitter faction with a nominal chief" of "moderate mind," with "self-willed allies," "friends to education, but more friends to popular agitation," "Liberals in politics, bigots in religion." With equal justice and truth he refers to the labours of our Sunday-school teachers, who, he declares, render "gratuitous services—that is, services rendered for nothing, and very dear at the price." Mr. Sargent, therefore, prefers religious teaching given in Board schools, "which must," he says, "from the restraint put upon the teachers, be moderate and reasonable and unsectarian." Such is the spirit which the Education Act of Mr. W. E. Forster has evoked elsewhere besides in Birmingham.

On a recent occasion the Rev. T. H. Pattison referred to the difficulties of certain Protestant Churchmen who declare that they rather like than otherwise the recent Bennett judgment. They did not, he said, resemble "the man who, when threatened with death, replied that he did not care, for his digestion had been so bad for some time. They had an admirable digestion. They had always required a little jam with their jalap, but now they took not only their jalap without the jam, but they were actually singing a doxology over the Bennett judgment, and declaring that they felt thankful for so very small a mercy. They reminded him of the sea anemones, who, if anyone was cruel enough to turn them inside out, went on digesting as heartily when their stomachs were outside as when they were in."

The Wesleyan Methodists are protesting against any extension of the denominational system of education, and are rapidly inclining in favour of a national system, with School Boards and board schools everywhere.

OLD ANTHONY.

BY MARY SHERWOOD.

CHAPTER II.

OLD ANTHONY has not always been the poor man he is now, alone in the world and dependent on charity for his daily bread. He had a wife once, and children of his own—a blooming girl and two handsome lads. His wife has been sleeping for these thirty years now under the shadow of the grey tower in King's Norton churchyard. His children, too, are sleeping the same quiet sleep; the girl by the mother's side, and his eldest lad in a soldier's grave, killed, with other gallant fellows, fighting under Indian skies. The other son had saved a little money and gone out to Australia, taking with him his wife and child, the only grandchild Anthony ever had. But the vessel in which they sailed was wrecked on its outward passage, and all on board had perished.

That was twenty years ago now. It was a heavy blow to Anthony when the news came that the vessel was lost, a heavy blow and hard to bear. It had been easy to say, "Blessed be the name of the Lord!" when the little golden-haired grandchild had been given him to twine its way into the old man's heart. It had gone hard with him to part with it, and with the son whom he had hoped would have staid by him to be a staff for his old age to lean upon; but it was harder still, when the terrible news came, to say, "The Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord!" Anthony bowed his head and laid hold in the dark of the Father's hand.

"It is but a little while," he said, "and I shall go to them, though they will not return to me. The Lord lent them to me, and shall not I lend them again to Him? It is but lending, not losing them, for He will give them back to me one day, wife and children too. Blessed be the name of the Lord!"

But Anthony's faith was to be tried yet further still. For ten years after the news reached him of the wreck of the *Hesperus*, and with it the loss of life's last hopes, he had lived on by himself in the cottage that had been once such a happy home, that was filled still for him with sweet and sacred memories of the past. As he sat, wearied and alone, by his fireside, after the day's hard toil, he could

see in fancy his children there again beside him, and the little grandchild playing on the hearth. He could see the quiet face of the wife who had gone from his side long years ago into the Better Land. The humble home was peopled for him with the forms of these his dear ones, and many a time as he sat smoking his evening pipe, or spelling his way through the familiar chapters of the Book that so often they had read together, he would feel as if wife and children were still there in the places that had known them long ago, and as though even now he were not quite alone.

But when the old man was travelling fast towards three-score years and ten, and when his strength had already long been failing, there came another wave of trouble and broke over his defenceless head. The bank failed in which he had laid up his little savings! Little enough indeed they were, for the forty years' assiduous hedging and ditching in which he had spent his manhood's strength had not done much more than provide himself, and his family while they needed it, with daily bread. Still, by dint of hard labour and hard living he had managed to lay by as much at least as would keep him from the workhouse when the time came that he could work no longer. For Anthony had the honest pride which made him, like many another poor hard-working man, dread the disgrace of "coming on the parish" in his old age; and though his fare was of the scantiest, and his clothing of the coarsest, and twelve hours' toil a day, often in wind and wet and cold, was a weariness to the flesh, and had fixed in his aching limbs the rheumatism that had crippled and disabled him before his time, still he was content in the prospect of being a burden to no one in his old age.

It was a sore trouble to him when that hope was struck away; so that just as his strength was failing him, and those grim rheumatic pains were cramping his working arm till, as he would say, he could not sometimes have lifted his hedging shears if you had given him a guinea, he found himself not only helpless, but penniless, with no door open to him save that of the parish poorhouse.

But even in these sore straits Anthony's faith failed him not, nor his cheerfulness either. "Surely," he said, "it is better with me now than it was with my Lord and Master, for He had not where to lay His head, and I have at least a roof to shelter under as long as I shall need one; and having food and raiment, though it be the charity of the law that gives them me, I may surely be content. Praise the Lord for His goodness!"

So Anthony offered praise, even in the midst of the furnace into which, in his old age, he had been put for the trial of his faith, and glorified God thereby. Many may give of their talents, their strength, their influence, their wealth, "to the glory of God;" and though He needs not anything that we can give, yet if the offering be made out of a loving and grateful heart, it is accepted by Him. Old Anthony had nothing now to give. Health and strength had been taken from him, and wealth had never been his; but, as the Psalmist says, "*Whoso offereth praise glorifieth God*;" and though he had nothing else to offer, still the old man, out of his poverty and affliction, could bring to the Lord this his sacrifice of praise.

And then the Lord, seeing the faith of His servant, and that he could find food for thanksgiving where many would have seen only cause for murmuring and discontent, stretched forth His hand again, this time not to take away, but to bestow, and put it into the heart of Squire Silverdale, who was one of the trustees of Dame Mortimer's Charity, to give the old man the place which happened to be vacant just at that time among the twelve bedesmen who were snugly settled for the remainder of their lives in the peaceful and comfortable harbour of retreat which the Dame's bounty had long ago provided for them.

Squire Silverdale was a rich man, a very rich man. Nearly the whole of the village of King's Norton belonged to him, and so did great part of the land that lay around it. There was not a finer place in the county than Norton Manor House. The hothouses, gardens, and stables were the envy and admiration of all the gentlefolk in the neighbourhood; and as for the old Elizabethan house itself, with its carved gables, and mullioned windows, and twisted chimneys, it was the very perfection of a comfortable, stately, and picturesque old English mansion. There was capital shooting over the estate, and trout and grayling in abundance to be had in the clear sparkling stream that wound along through meadow and park and cover. There were some of the finest hunters in the district in the Squire's stables; and as for the Manor House cellar, there were wines laid down there such as money could not buy. The veriest churl in existence would find some one to call him friend so long as he could bid him welcome to those stately entertainments which from time to time were held in the grand dining-hall there.

And yet, rich as Squire Silverdale was, Old Anthony was richer still; for with all his wealth the Squire lacked the "one thing

needful," that "pearl of great price" which alone a man can carry with him across that dark river on the banks of which he must one day strip and lay down everything which here he calls his own.

Ay! and the old bedesman, I will venture to say, was richer than the Squire even so far as this world is concerned. For as the wise man saith, "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." House and lands, friends and fortune, are good things, but there is something better still; something without which these are powerless to bring happiness to their possessor, and that is *content*.

"*Our content is our best having*;" and the man who, having food and raiment only, is therewith *content*, is more truly rich, even in the good things of the earthly life, than he whose heart is starving in the midst of plenty, and for whose thirst no drop of comfort is contained in the jewelled empty cup which he is striving ever, and striving still in vain, to fill.

And so I say again, that poor as Old Anthony is, so poor that even for his daily bread he is dependent on the dole of charity, yet Squire Silverdale, with his fine house and fine estate, in those days was poorer still. As well he might be, for he had two companions who would beggar of life's best joys the richest man in England; companions who had dogged his steps for many a year, who had been with him early and late, at his coming in and going out, at his down-sitting and his uprising. Wherever he went, there they were at his elbow; in the hunting field and at the dinner table; when he was alone and when he was in company; night and day the man was never rid of them.

These two companions were the Spirit of Discontent and the Spirit of Remorse. You might see the presence of the first plainly enough in the Squire's face, the dark, dissatisfied, clouded face, which looked as if it never felt a ray of heaven's own sunshine falling upon it to warm and brighten it into cheerfulness. And you might see the presence of the other just as plainly in those bowed shoulders, and the heavy mien which seemed to tell of some invisible burden not to be shaken off, weighing down the soul, and making the man's very life at times a weariness to himself.

Which in truth it was. With all his riches, Squire Silverdale was the poorest man in the parish of King's Norton; the poorest, because he was the most unsatisfied. For a man's garners may be filled with all manner of store, and yet if his *heart* be empty what

will all his wealth avail him? But the bitterest drop in the Squire's cup, that which gave its sting to all the rest, and made him in the midst of his riches a gloomy, morose, and discontented man, was that his own hand had rifled his heart and beggared his life of joy!

He was a childless old man, and when he died his fine estates, which were all entailed, would pass away to a distant cousin, one Sir Giles Gaveston, who in his youth had, by fair words and false speeches, won to himself the hand of the beautiful girl whom the Squire was wooing for his own wife. To have no heir of his own for all his broad lands was hard, but harder still it was to let them pass into the hands of the man who had done him this grievous wrong; and harder still, if possible, it was to reflect that he was but reaping the bitter harvest of seed which he himself had sown, and that but for his own evil deeds in years gone by there might have been now a young Squire Silverdale to tread in his father's steps, and a goodly troop of grandsons who would keep the old name from dying out when his own head was lying low in the family vault in King's Norton churchyard.

But how it came about that Squire Silverdale's trouble procured for Old Anthony his snug berth among the bedesmen of Dame Mortimer's Charity, must be left for another chapter of this history to tell.

(To be continued in our next.)

THE WORK OF THE MINISTRY.*

BY THE REV. B. O. BENDALL.

BEAR with me, if I for a few moments detain you by recurring to some most elementary truths—not as though you were ignorant of them, had forgotten, or were unmindful of them—but to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance. Let us together survey some aspects of our work as Christian men, and more particularly as Christian ministers. Let me be regarded as speaking to myself for the quickening, purifying, elevating my own ministerial life, and as taking you into my confidence; not as declaring

* Through the kindness of our esteemed friend we are permitted to quote the following passages from an address recently delivered by him to the Pastors and Delegates of the Congregational Union of Lincolnshire.

what I am or can always realise—not as exhibiting the standard to which I have attained, but as presenting something of an ideal of the sublime yet awful importance of our work as ministers of Christ.

That was a terrible moment for Israel when, on their murmuring against Moses and Aaron because the Lord had slain Korah, Dathan, and Abiram for their rebellion, God threatened to destroy them in a moment. Wrath was gone out from the Lord—the plague was begun. Then Moses said unto Aaron, “Take a censer, and put fire therein from off the altar, and put on incense, and go quickly unto the congregation, and make an atonement for them.” Aaron obeyed, he went forth, and stood between the dead and the living. Ghastly was the sight he gazed on—14,700 had been smitten down by the deadly scourge, and they lay in sight of all, monuments of God’s righteous displeasure against sin. How solemn and affecting was the position of Aaron. On the one hand to see the plague-stricken multitude, on the other hand masses of the living exposed to a like fate. No keenness of sensibility was required to be moved at the sight of a multitude lying in death, past all hope,—a yet greater multitude of the living perilously exposed. How impossible, one would think, for him to be inflated with vanity and pride on account of his office—to be heartless, cold, unimpassioned—to be merely perfunctory in the discharge of his duties—to be satisfied with routine—to be little concerned for the effect or success of his ministration. . .

My brethren, Christian workers for souls and Christian ministers specially, we stand in an analogous position of awfulness and solemnity. In many respects the scene before us differs from that which fixed the eye and flamed the heart of Aaron. It is not so strange and sudden, it is ordinary and commonplace; it has not so much to strike the senses, yet it has more to rouse reflection and to smite the soul. True, it is not so palpable, yet it is as real. It calls us to labour to deliver men from spiritual and eternal death—to rescue from sin to holiness, from woe to bliss, from Satan to God. . .

We stand between the dead and the living—between those literally dead, who have passed away from earth, and those yet living here—between those who have gone to their last account, with whom the die is cast, and all is over, and those whom we may help to deliver from the second death. We stand, too, between the saved and the unsaved—between those yet dead in trespasses and sins and those who by trust in Jesus are alive from the dead. . .

Before God we can testify that we have in some measure felt our

position—that the sight of the dead and the living has so moved and melted us that we have been constrained to devote the life of earth for the good of souls, to consecrate our saved existence in Christ to strive to bring men to receive reconciliation and live. Every Christian is called, is pledged to this, as a witness for Christ; every minister of Christ has been specially summoned to this, and has specially given himself to this work; it is *one* great end of our conversion—it is the chief purpose of the very existence of the ministry—it gives to it a meaning, stamps on it a character and a directive force—it guards it with a preservative influence, it inspires it as with a living breath, and it impels it with a motive energy.

But is there not danger of having such a familiarity with the sight as practically to deprive it of some of its reality or impressiveness—to exert a benumbing influence on our sensibilities, to lead us to get an official mode of looking at the scene—to deal with it until all becomes unreal, visionary, too familiar to be deeply regarded, too much a matter of course to stimulate or to affect us? Do we not all need to take ever fresh views of the sight—to gaze at it in the light of eternity—in view of its relation to the woe of hell and the bliss of heaven, of nearness and conformity to the blessed God, with enjoyment of His favour, and with some sense of the dreadfulness of alienation and condemnation from Him? Our families, friends, neighbours, fellow-worshippers without Christ are unsaved and in peril of eternal death; shall we, can we ever be oblivious of the fact; shall it ever cease to engage our prime regard; can we be true to our calling as imitators of Christ if we do not live and labour with the burden of souls upon us? . . .

Do we not need solemnly to charge our own souls on these high themes? Do we belong to the living? Is it not possible that we may break the bread of life to others and ourselves be perishing with hunger—be pointing to the way of life in Christ and be walking in the way of death—be proclaiming a salvation we have not received, a salvation we do not enjoy—be preaching of blessings and of bliss we practically neglect? Is it not possible that we may in warning others be proclaiming our own doom, and be descanting eloquently on the glories of heaven we may never see!

If it be otherwise, then how great the privilege, how blessed the portion of the saved who proclaim that which they have tasted, felt, and handled of the good word of life. How affecting does this reflection make our work to appear! Shall it ever be forgotten, shall

it ever be subordinated, shall it ever cease to stimulate and to energise? Sooner may our hand forget its cunning; sooner may our tongue cleave to the roof of our mouth!

Having referred to many indications of a new spirit and a revived piety in our Churches, Mr. Bendall concluded: May we not hope that these movements and aspirations are from above, that they point to better days at hand, that the time to favour Zion, yea the set time, is near. Shall we not arise and plead with God, and at the same time diligently employ all our instrumentalities? Shall we not enter into the glorious anticipations, and earnestly desire, pray, and labour for their fulfilment? Shall we not enter into the sublime extravagance or exaggeration of prophetic language, and "give God no rest" until He arise and bless us, until the Spirit be poured out from on high, until He make the wilderness like Eden, and the desert like the garden of the Lord.

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"JUST, BEFORE YOU ARE GENEROUS."

"WELL, Mr. Thornton, how did you like Mr. Barker yesterday?"

Mr. Thornton is a manufacturer in somewhat extensive business, who is in the habit of travelling occasionally on his own account. One of the places he visits is a pleasant town of about 13,000 inhabitants, which, as it is the centre of a large outlying district where he has business connections, he makes his headquarters for the greater part of a week. He always arranges, when he can, to spend a Sunday there, partly because the town is quiet and beautiful, but much more because he has a great respect for Mr. Barker, who is the pastor of the Congregational Church, and because he greatly enjoys his ministerial services. Going so regularly twice a year he has made the acquaintance of a small circle of friends, for the most part connected with the church and congregation, who always welcome him with great cordiality. On this occasion he had been asked to spend an evening at the house of one of them, and he had consented to do so. Mr. Barker had been invited to be of the party, but a standing engagement prevented his going till late in the evening. As matters turned out, it was just as well he could not go earlier.

The question reported above was addressed to Mr. Thornton by Mr. Grey, one of the deacons. Mr. Grey was a prosperous trades-

man, who, in addition to his own business, was a director of the District Bank, and of course a large shareholder. If the rest of the party were not equally prosperous, they were all in comfortable circumstances.

"Well," replied Mr. Thornton, "to say the truth, I hardly thought Mr. Barker quite up to his usual mark. The sermons were excellent. I can tell you this, that there are congregations four times as large as yours, and which think themselves on every account far more important, whose ministers give them nothing better. His prayers, too, were beautiful and devout. Still, to my feeling, there was a lack of the old buoyancy, and in the morning especially it seemed as though he were conscious of the want of life, and as though he were making an effort to rise above it. But after all, perhaps I was mistaken."

"No," said Mr. Grey, "I hardly think you were. The fact is we have all noticed it, more or less, for some time past."

"Yes," said Mr. Bolton, another of the deacons; "people are complaining about it, and if it continues I am afraid some of them will go elsewhere."

"There must be some reason for it," said Mr. Thornton. "Have you no idea what it is?"

"No, not at all," replied Mr. Grey. Several of the others chimed in, and one of the party hinted that if Mr. Barker were troubled about anything there was no need for him to take his trouble into the pulpit with him.

"That may be all very well," said Mr. Thornton, "but there are some sensitive minds which can scarcely help it. I have an idea, too, that if you had a minister who preached and prayed all the same, whatever his own state of mind, you would soon begin to think he was very unreal, which would be one of the worst things you could think of him. But, seriously, as my minister's friend—which every deacon ought to be—I should deem myself very remiss if, seeing there was anything on his mind, I did not try to find out what it was, that if possible it might be removed. Now I fancy I know what troubles Mr. Barker, and if I am right it is something you can remove. The fact is I had a hint of it from our minister, Mr. Norris, who, you know, is very friendly with Mr. Barker."

"What is it, Mr. Thornton?" asked Mr. Grey.

"I will answer your question, Mr. Grey," replied Mr. Thornton, "by putting another. What salary do you give your minister?"

"£130 a-year," said Mr. Grey.

"£130 a-year!" exclaimed Mr. Thornton, "for such a minister, with a family of four children, and from such a congregation; with the cost of living, too, at the rate it is! However do you think that house-rent, and servant's wages, and food, and clothing, and children's education and books, and medical attendance, are to be paid for out of that? I should like to know which of you gentlemen would be willing to keep house on such a sum."

"But," said Mr. Elliott, another of the deacons, "it is more by £10 than we ever paid before. Good old Mr. Gathorne brought up his family well on £120."

"And how long is it," asked Mr. Thornton, "since Mr. Gathorne died?"

"Well," replied Mr. Elliott, "it is nearly five and twenty years."

"And five and twenty years ago," said Mr. Thornton, "£120 would go nearly as far as £160 now. Besides, five and twenty years ago you were in a very different position from what you are now. There was, I have been told, hardly a single man of property in the church. Another thing I can tell you. One of Mr. Gathorne's sons is, as you know, deacon of our church, and he has told me many a time what a hard struggle it was for his father and mother to bring them all up."

"Well, but," said Mr. Bolton, "what we give Mr. Barker is not all he has to live upon."

"Indeed," replied Mr. Thornton. "He has private property, then, has he?"

"Not exactly that—not that I know of, at least," said Mr. Bolton; "but he has some pupils—in fact he is engaged with them now; and I should think they pay him pretty well. I believe he fills up every evening he has to spare in that way."

"Pupils! and 'every evening he has to spare!' and all because you don't give him salary enough to live upon!" said Mr. Thornton. "No wonder his preaching is not as lively and glowing as you would like it to be. To my mind the wonder is he preaches so well."

"But," said Mr. Ellis, a fourth deacon, "I think ministers ought to be willing to make sacrifices."

"So they should," replied Mr. Thornton, "and for that matter so should we all. But is there a single reason why ministers should make sacrifices more than deacons, or anybody else? Least of all, do you think they should be expected to make sacrifices in order to spare

the pockets of people who are well able to support them as they ought to be supported? I have an idea, however, that even though you were to give your minister twice as much as you do, he would still, considering what he might have done in business, be making a sacrifice to serve you. Would it be right to ask," he continued, after a short pause, turning to Mr. Grey, "what salaries you give your clerks in the bank?"

"Our junior," replied Mr. Grey, "gets £70 a-year, the cashier £150, the ledger-clerk £200, the accountant £250."

"And the manager?" asked Mr. Thornton.

"Oh!" replied Mr. Grey, "we give him £400, and his house, and rates and taxes, and gas and fire."

"And they advance yearly, or every two or three years at least, don't they?"

"All except the manager," said Mr. Grey.

"And you give your minister, whose work requires greater ability than any of them, and who must keep up as good an appearance, £130! But don't you know that there are actually working men who are getting even more than your minister?"

"Well," said Mr. Dixon, "there's no denying it is very little; but, then that is not all we give."

"I should hope not," said Mr. Thornton; "or you would have a poor account to render to God of the stewardship He has entrusted to you. But may I ask what you do give besides?"

"There are, of course, the incidental expenses of the chapel," replied Mr. Dixon, who was the treasurer, "and then we do well for the London Missionary Society. We sent above £50 last year, and we raised £20 for the County Union. Besides, we collected £15 for the Infirmary. There were some other things, too, which will amount to at least £100. Then our friends who have money are appealed to in other ways, and I don't think they are stingy. The people at Morton are building a new chapel, and we have been helping them. Mr. Grey put his name down for £20. None of us else gave so much as that, but we did what we could."

"Above £130 for outside objects," said Mr. Thornton. "Well, I can't deny that's pretty good. But now put those two things together: £130 for your minister, and rather more than that for other things. Now, don't you think you should be just before you are generous? I should be sorry to say a word to diminish by a single penny what you are doing for such good objects as you have named; but I say

plainly, that if you cannot do more for your minister without doing less for them, you should do less for them."

"Well, but," said Mr. Dixon, "I assure you I have often a good deal of difficulty in paying the salary when it is due. We give Mr. Barker everything the chapel produces."

"May I ask how you raise the salary?" asked Mr. Thornton.

"By pew-rents," replied Mr. Dixon.

"Pew-rents!" exclaimed Mr. Thornton. "I thought that way of giving was almost exploded. But perhaps I may inquire what is the highest pew-rent you get?"

"Three or four of the friends, who have the best pews," replied Mr. Dixon, "pay £5 a-year; others pay about £2, and so on."

"Now," said Mr. Thornton, "don't you think it is your first duty to relieve your minister's mind from anxiety by giving him a salary on which he can really live in comfort? I'll answer for it, if you do, you will yourselves be the gainers in the increased freshness and power of his ministry. You have lost several good ministers through no other reason than the smallness of their salary. Take care you don't lose Mr. Barker in the same way. You will have to seek a long time before you will get one like him, and I am quite certain you will never keep such a minister unless you deal more liberally."

Just then Mr. Barker entered the room, and his arrival, of course, put a stop to the conversation.

The deacons met about a week after.

"I tell you what, friends," said Mr. Grey, "I have been thinking ever since of that talk we had with Mr. Thornton the other night. I did not half like it at the time, but Mr. Thornton was right, and we ought to be ashamed of ourselves. Let us see what can be done."

Happily, with only one exception, the rest of the deacons were of the same mind. The single exception was Mr. Dixon, the treasurer, and he said he would be very glad indeed to give Mr. Barker twice as much as they did, provided it were only there to give.

"What we ought to do," replied Mr. Barker, "is to resolve that it shall be 'there.' I'll give twenty pounds a-year towards it."

Several of the other deacons said they would give much more than they had hitherto done; and when the treasurer added up the amounts thus promised, he found the total to be £80 over and above what they had previously given. It was then arranged that in the

following week they should lay the matter before a meeting of the church and congregation.

There were two or three dissentients in the meeting, as there generally are in such cases; but it was resolved by an overwhelming majority that the salary should be nearly doubled at once; and that when some liabilities the church was under should be discharged, it should be still further increased.

"I tell you what, Mr. Grey," said an outspoken and somewhat impulsive member of the church—Mr. Grey, it may be stated, was in the chair—"this ought to have been done three years ago, and it would have been done if you deacons had done your duty. I move that we have a special subscription to make the increase retrospective for at least the past year."

"You are quite right," said Mr. Grey, good-humouredly. "But it is never too late to mend; and besides, you never told us our duty till to-night."

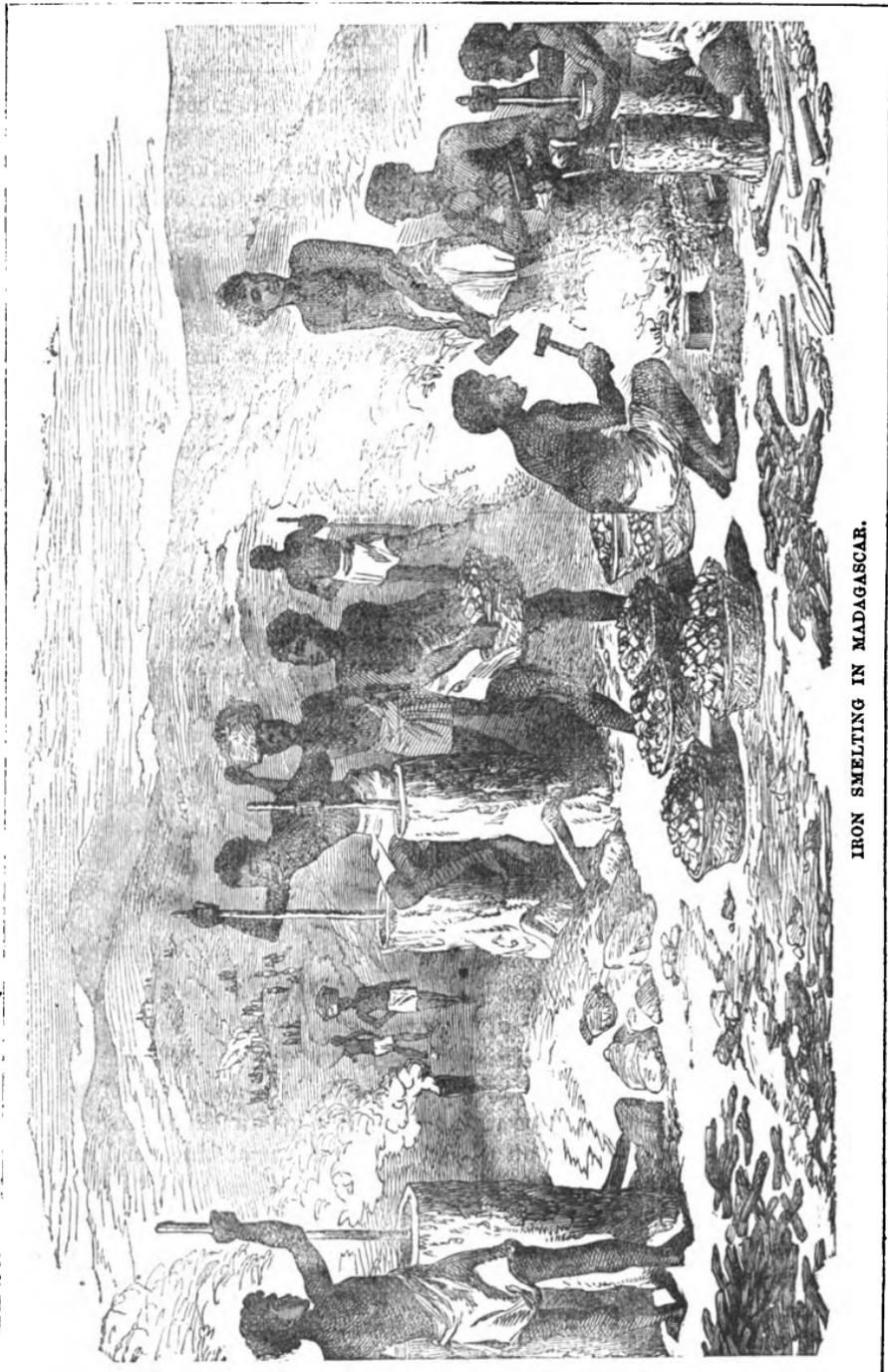
The motion was seconded and carried. Mr. Barker was just now from home on a short holiday. It will be readily believed how greatly he was gladdened and encouraged on his return by the news of what his people had done.

Let it be added that neither the missionary society nor anything else has suffered in consequence. Whilst the people have been "just" to their minister, they have been more "generous" than ever to everybody else.

LIFE IN MADAGASCAR.

THE people of Madagascar—scarcely known to Europeans half a century since—have of late years been watched with the deepest interest by all Christian nations. The wonderful change wrought in the national character by the faithful preaching of the Gospel furnishes us at once with a bright page in the history of missionary effort, and with an enduring monument of the social and political blessings flowing from Christianity. These results have been repeatedly indicated by various writers, and especially by the lamented Mr. Ellis, who has also described to us the habits and customs of that interesting and curious race.

Our engraving introduces us to a lively scene, in which the natives are engaged, after their simple fashion, in working in iron.



IRON SMELTING IN MADAGASCAR.

The iron ore, mixed with charcoal, is placed in covered pits, and by an ingenious contrivance a blast is obtained, the air being forced down the hollow trunks of trees. That this process is exceedingly laborious, and one which enables a man admirably to display the virtue of patience, will readily be conceived.

It is to be regretted that, notwithstanding the ingenuity displayed in these and other processes of manufacture, there reigns throughout



the island a strong dislike to labour. Nor is the cause of this antipathy difficult to be discovered. Wherever the curse of slavery has existed, there idleness will always be associated with dignity and work with degradation. So has it been in Madagascar. The punishments inflicted upon the slaves by some of the masters have associated the very thought of work with humiliation and loss of freedom. Labour must be counted honourable before it will be readily pursued. Where a slave population has existed dignity and labour must of

necessity be divorced. Our illustrations will convey to the reader an idea of the punishments that were inflicted upon the slaves of Madagascar. "Few free men, we are assured, except the very poor, ever engaged in any regular employment, or, except a small class of traders, sought to increase their means by their own exertions. The continuance of slavery will be one of the most formidable barriers to the civilisation and improvement of the people, as well as a source



of increasing weakness to the free portion of the nation, if its continued existence does not actually lead to their ultimate subjection, and the loss of their country to a more free and powerful race." Thus speaks the late Rev. W. Ellis in his last work, "The Martyr Church of Madagascar."

A MIDDLE course is often wise; but a medium place between two stools proverbially results in one's coming to the ground.

THE RELATION OF THE CHILDREN TO THE CHURCH:

WHAT IT SHOULD BE.

BY REV. HENRY T. ROBJOHN, B.A.

IN a former paper we pointed out something of the present relation of the children to the Church. In this we attempt a much more difficult task, to suggest at least what may come with advantage to be their relation in the future. Here are three questions to be considered,—1. That of Membership; 2. That of Partaking of the Lord's Supper; and 3. That of the Suffrage.

As to *Membership*. Supposing there to be membership for the children, it may be either membership from the very first, or membership very early. I should myself earnestly contend for the second, although the first is the practice of some Churches, and properly guarded, would not perhaps be productive of the amount of mischief which some might suppose. The Calvinistic Methodists of Wales, as mentioned by Mr. Mander, go on the principle of membership from the very first. Assuming perhaps that the belief of the parent carries with it the Church relation of the child (Acts xvi. 31), at least until the child's understanding and responsibility are mature, the names of the children of Church members are on the roll. According to them the Church consists of "those persons, and those only, who are described by their knowledge, grace, experience, and conduct in the rules and discipline of the body, together with their children." This is, however, guarded in actual practice, by not allowing the children to enter on the full possession of Church privileges "until a knowledge of divine things has been duly developed." At the same time measures, almost elaborate in their completeness, are taken to ground in Christian knowledge, and to quicken a real spiritual personal experience of Divine things.

In advocating the early admission of children into the fellowship of the Church, one is at once met by the question—How early? The answer is, as soon as ever we have evidence of the three following conditions:—1. An adequate knowledge of the things of the soul and of Christ; 2. Trust in the Lord Jesus as a personal Saviour from that sin of which the child has become painfully conscious;

3. Grateful love, leading to the avoidance of sin, a desire to please the Saviour, and to become like Him. In judging whether these conditions are present or not, close observers, who will be in most cases the parents, will have to be careful not to set up too high a standard. Adults forget that they themselves "have not already obtained," are not "already perfect;" that the life they live is often very unsatisfactory, "flesh" too often momentarily triumphant over "spirit," whilst all the time things are surely tending to their being brought off "more than conquerors, through Him that loved them." Who, then, can wonder at the frailty and spiritual immaturity of a little child? The probabilities are, in the case of a well-trained young person, that if we lean in judgment to the severe side, we are almost certain to err.

Then, as to the *Lord's Supper*. There can be no difficulty about this when the three conditions are present: but there should be also special instruction as to its real nature and design.

The suggestion, which has been made very often, that the possession of the ecclesiastical *suffrage*, and taking part in the administration of Church affairs, should be deferred to some mature age, seems to us to be simply the dictate of ordinary wisdom.

At the back of all this lies, however, a question of much greater difficulty, easy enough to answer in so many words, but by no means easy in the actual practical solution:—How may the child be best *prepared* for coming into living fellowship with a Christian Church?

Of late years much has been done to demonstrate that the parent is the divinely appointed instrument to lead the child to accept the Saviour, and to give itself away for ever to God. Without accepting all in the book, no open-minded Christian can rise from Horace Bushnell's "Christian Nurture" with a doubt upon this subject. If this be so, then with the parent lies the responsibility of leading first to Christ, and then into the fellowship of the Church. Into the organic relation between the parent and the child, the difficult and disputable question respecting what has been called "mental and moral heritage," we need not enter here: it is enough to emphasize the statement, that to every parent is committed immense education power. The parent is the first, always the most potent and abiding educator of the child. Who can tell how early parental influence begins to be felt? Who can measure its strength? What prophet dare tell us when it shall cease? By look, and air, and

manner, even more potently than by word or deed, he imparts lessons which from the memory will never fade. See the sometimes amusing imitations of "father" the tiniest will enact, showing that the eye is never off the ever present example. Only the other day I called to see a friend confined to the house with bronchitis, sitting by the fire, head wrapped up, feet in a rug. On the footstool, by the father's side, a comic repetition of the patient, is a handsome little child, with head and feet similarly enveloped, ill also with bronchitis—*very!* It made one laugh, but there were thoughts suggested "too deep for tears." What father is, for the most part is a child's ambition. Now, the Great Father lays this educational power of the parent and imitative faculty of the child under contribution for the child's immortal good. No minister, no friend, no Sabbath-school teacher, can do so much as a wise and earnest Christian parent. One of the sure signs of a Church being alien from the spirit of the Christianity of Christ, would be its systematic disparagement of parental influence and the exaltation of either minister or priest. On the contrary, the religion of the Son of God sanctifies and fortifies the power of the parent. The line of happy duty is then quite clear. The question of questions is:—Will the parent follow it? "Here are young immortals at the most pliant, ductile period they will ever know, placed in his sole charge, to receive from him the impress of character and the key of destiny. . . . Childhood, then, is the time for the parent to work with the Spirit of God in training the infant being for his endless future. . . . It is certain that He who has done so much for man's salvation, will anticipate and second every such effort; will preside over and bless the training of children for Him."

I hold class instruction to have a value peculiarly its own; there is a stimulus in numbers, and in the collision of unlike minds. This will come in to supplement the parent's influence, possibly to supply his deficiencies. No doubt many Sunday-schools do furnish opportunities of a very high character for this sort of thing; but there can also be no doubt that many fail. A normal Sunday-school should be of such a character that the most intelligent people might send their children to it, with the assurance that they would be greatly benefited. One of the effects of the new educational policy of this country will be to raise the tone and augment the efficiency of the Sabbath-school. Both scholars and teachers in ten years' time will start from a higher intellectual and literary level. Meanwhile I

think we might with advantage lean strongly in these directions :—

1. So to modify and improve the Sunday-school that all degrees of culture and classes of the people might be found in it.
2. To include within it all ages.
3. To get our very ablest and most experienced to teach in it.
4. To make the object more directly than ever that of training for the fellowship of the Church, through fellowship with the Son of God.

We can now do little more than record the conviction, that in this work of preparation the minister will be happy to take his part. When once solicitude is awakened, not only for the salvation of the children generally, but for their early introduction into the Church, every faculty will be quickened in the direction of devising and carrying through various methods contributory to the result. Not to the neglect of the mature and aged, the eye will nevertheless be constantly on the children; in the sermon for them will be a special word; a special sermon, with its accompaniment of fitting prayer and praise, will now and again be preached; classes will be formed, not merely for young men and maidens, but for the very lambs of the fold; and much may be done (our own experience teaches) at a very early age to interest in all the work and institutions of the Church. Certainly one of our own most delightful employments is the children's class on Saturday afternoon—a class numbering considerably more than a hundred, with an attendance of more than eighty. A while since a friend said to us, inadvertently, not quite knowing perhaps what he said: "But there! you make so much of your class." It is, however, by "making much" of it that good will be done. We *cannot* make *too* much of this department of our work. May God help us all to labour with increasing earnestness in the nursery of the Lord, among the saplings of His own right-hand planting, sure that we shall be enabled to prepare them for the life and work of the Church on earth, and for the crown of the faithful in the everlasting home!

This, then, is what the relation of the children should be, that of early membership with the Church of Christ, faithfully and lovingly prepared for it by the parent, helped mightily by all the resources and appliances of the ministry and the Church.

A BRETON mariner embarking on an ocean voyage prayed thus: "Keep me, my God! my boat is so small, and thine ocean is so wide."

POPULAR TOPICS OF THE HOUR.

I.—“RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.”

NO men have given stronger or more consistent evidence of the value they set upon a truly religious education than English Nonconformists. Their only demur on the subject has been, and has always been, against religious education given by the State. But it is a little startling now-a-days to listen to politicians who have never been characterised by any special religiousness, and who never in their lives spent an hour in a Sunday-school, urging the maintenance and enlargement of the present denominational system on the ground of the importance they attach to “religious education.”

“I have listened,” recently remarked Mr. Henry Richard, M.P., “both in the House of Commons and out of the House of Commons, to lectures on the value and importance of religion, from quarters that have filled me with feelings—well, let me say of pleasant surprise—feelings somewhat similar to those which led the Israelites of old to exclaim, ‘What is this that is come to the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?’ Nonconformists ought, perhaps, to be gratified that they have been the means, however incidentally, of developing so much dormant religious enthusiasm. There was a story told of Dr. Johnson, to the effect that when he sent the last sheet of his dictionary to Mr. Miller the publisher, the latter, whose patience was quite exhausted, wrote as follows:—‘Mr. Miller presents his compliments to Dr. Johnson, and acknowledges the receipt of the last sheet of his dictionary, and thanks God he has done with it.’ Dr. Johnson replied thus:—‘Dr. Johnson’s compliments to Mr. Miller, and he is glad to find that he has grace to thank God for anything.’ So,” said Mr. Richard, “he supposed Nonconformists ought to be gratified to find men thanking God for anything, thanking God even that they are ‘not as other men are, nor like those infidel Birmingham Leaguers, or those atheistical Manchester Nonconformists.’ There were others amongst their opponents whose religion principally consisted in their Churchmanship—persons who were something like a prisoner of whom they had heard. When he was committed to gaol for some offence, the chaplain said to him, ‘What religion are you of, my man?’ The

prisoner drew himself up and answered indignantly, 'Religion, sir! I am of no religion. I belong to the Church of England.' There were many men who considered that the effort to obtain a large, a liberal, and a truly national system of education could only be carried out in connection with some direct designs against that unfortunate Church which was always 'in danger.'

"But with all these deductions, it would be unjust not to acknowledge that amongst those who were against them there were many who were moved by genuine anxiety for the religious education of the people, and who felt a real alarm as to the result of the system advocated by the Birmingham League. He honoured those men, and he respected their feelings. But he believed they were utterly mistaken, and he should be astonished at the panic they displayed, were it not that in looking back at the history of the past, he saw how good men had often been moved by similar panics, and been driven to strange courses and to strange expedients. It was quite surprising to observe how little of inherent vitality the Christian religion seemed to possess in the estimation of many of its friends. They always were exclaiming that religion would perish out of the earth unless something was done that was not provided for in its own canons. So far as he knew, Christianity prescribed and allowed no other means for its own preservation and perpetuation save the faith and love and liberality of its own disciples. But many of its disciples had no faith in it, and they were, therefore, looking constantly for some support which was not only not allowed, but which was strictly forbidden by its spirit and principles.

"There was a time when it was thought that it was impossible that religion could be preserved in the world unless its friends had the power of torturing and mutilating and burning the bodies of men; then it was a long settled conviction in the mind of many that there was no safety for religion unless the sword of some royal or imperial Defender of the Faith was flourishing and flashing about it; then there were no means to preserve it save by civil penalties, depriving the men of the rights of citizenship, and imposing on them all kinds of disabilities. This was the kind of patronage under which it had been deemed necessary to place religion in order to save it from extinction, and now the great means of saving it was the schoolmaster. It was positively believed by many in the country that unless the schoolmasters were allowed to teach religion in schools supported by public rates, the people must grow up a nation

of infidels. It was true they had what was called a pious and learned and active clergy—one in every parish in the kingdom, supported by enormous public endowments, for the express purpose of teaching religion to the people; it was true there was a large body of voluntary religious teachers not less active and earnest; it was true they had institutions like the Bible and Tract Societies, to carry the Scriptures and sound religious literature to the homes and hearths of the people. But all these were of no avail: religion would go to the dogs without the schoolmaster. It was folly to accuse the Nonconformists of not desiring religion to be taught in the country; their efforts spoke for themselves, and the monuments of their efforts covered the kingdom. They had been as hard and earnest workers in the cause of the dispersion of God's Word as any; and all had been done without tithe, or tax, or rate, or fee, or any of those devices by which men tried to show regard to their religion by dipping their fingers into their neighbours' pockets.

“The only question was, when, and how, and by whom should the religious teaching be given to the nation? He, for one, had too much faith in the power of the voluntary Christianity of the country to believe that it would allow children to grow up without religious instruction. The Bishop of St. David's, one of the most able and accomplished men on the episcopal bench, had said it was playing with words to talk about casting the care of religious instruction on an abstraction called voluntary effort; and yet he had lived between thirty and forty years in a country where, if he had only looked around him, he would have found that this abstraction had covered the face of the country with the means of religious instruction out of the poverty of the people, built 3,000 chapels in a hundred years, and filled them with devout and worshipping congregations, and that after the concrete reality called a State Church had utterly failed to do the work.

“The Nonconformists objected to the religious education in rate-supported schools, because it contravened one of the fundamental principles they, as Nonconformists, held. It was a principle that was not political, but sprang from the deepest and most solemn religious conviction—that the Government could not lay its fingers upon religion without doing damage to religion itself. This was why so many of them felt very strongly in reference to Mr. Forster, because he, knowing the depth and sincerity of their feelings in the matter, had completely ignored them. Other ministers of state had

sinned through ignorance, and therefore their offences could be condoned; but Mr. Forster, reared in the very heart of Nonconformity, while admitting that he was aware of the existence of these scruples, expressed his intention of walking over them. He meant, by the measure of 1870, to make Nonconformists eat their words and swallow their principles. But they would not swallow them."

THOUGHTS—GRAVE AND GAY.

SOME Nonconformists are such ardent Liberals that they seem as they would rather receive reaction and indignity from the leaders of the Liberal party than run the risks incident to a brief Conservative *regime*. They forget that whatever Toryism is in opposition, it is obliged when in power to carry Liberal measures. The Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel came into office in 1828 to oppose Catholic emancipation. In 1829 they passed Catholic emancipation, being in office. They resisted reform until 1832, but when they came into office they carried on the course of reform themselves. In 1841 Sir Robert Peel and the Tories came into office to resist free trade, and as soon as they got into office they began a policy of free trade themselves, and never ceased until they had completed it. In 1852 the Tory party again came into office, and, having been returned on professions of protection, they again agreed to vote in favour of free trade. In 1859, the Tory party having passed the Emancipation of the Jews Bill, turned out Lord Russell on the Reform Bill, and passed a measure themselves. All this shows that the Tories have two policies—one when in office and another when out of it. Their policy is to take the measures of their predecessors, which they have opposed, and to pass them. They oppose every measure in every possible way while they are in opposition, and they pass those same measures while they are in office. They thus declare, in the most clear and significant manner, that whatever value they attach to their principles they attach a great deal more to office; and that, if it be a choice between office and principle, they are prepared to take office and throw principles to the wind. These facts may disarm Toryism-in-office of some of its terrors.

It is the ambition of France to be the world's guide; her destiny to be the world's warning.

Men who are exceedingly blind to their own faults are often exceedingly quick-sighted to the faults of others.

When I was a student at Princetown, says Dr. Cuyler, where I was sitting at the feet of Dr. Charles Hodge, he called on those of the students who had godly mothers to stand up. Every young man stood up, and there we were the witnesses to a mother's prayers and influence on her child. Teach your children Christ, and then teach them the hardest lesson in the world to learn—self-denial, the rarest grace of our day. Make your religion not austere and disagreeable, as too many do. Don't let it be a galling habit; let it be a winsome, gentle, beautiful leading Christward. Make your religion conscientious, and gentle, and attractive. Keep your heart's anchor fastened beneath the everlasting throne.

Young people refuse the advice of parents. They say: "Father is over-suspicious, and mother is getting old." But those parents have been on the sea of life. They know where the storms sleep, and during their voyage have seen a thousand battered hulks marking the place where beauty burned, and intellect foundered, and morality sank. They are old sailors, having answered many a signal of distress, and endured great stress of weather, and gone scudding under bare poles; and the old folks know what they are talking about.

The Bible is like a wide and beautiful landscape, seen afar off, dim and confused; but a good telescope will bring it near, and spread out all its rocks, and trees, and flowers, and verdant fields, and winding rivers at one's very feet. That telescope is the Spirit's teaching.

Seasons of spiritual rest are all the more precious because they come between the periods of conflict. A day of sunshine is all the more pleasant when the sky has been clouded for a month. We always feel the pleasure of spring the most when the winter has been very severe. And times of spiritual rest, with which God often favours us, are all the more precious because they follow and are followed by times of conflict and of trial.

If you would find some persons at prayer, you must stay till it thunders and lightens, and not go to them except it be in a storm: they are like some birds that are never heard to cry or make a noise but in foul weather.

CHURCH NEWS OF THE MONTH.

THE Nonconformists of this country are in an attitude of expectation. The advances they have made and are resolved to make have contrasted with the apathy and even retrogression of their Liberal leaders, until the cords that held all together have suffered tension to the very point of rupture. The events of the next few weeks will prove whether the Government will consent to retrace the steps so foolishly and culpably taken, or whether it will prepare to go to the country and be broken to pieces on the shores of reaction.

The past year has witnessed a marvellous development of public opinion in the direction of religious equality, both in the school and the Church. The views of our Wesleyan brethren are every day becoming clearer. Twelve months ago the *Daily Telegraph* declared that all the supporters of what are generally understood to be Nonconformist opinions on the education question could ride home together in a cab. Now, devoted as it still is to the Government, it writes thus: "Dissenting parents would naturally refuse to let their children be driven to a Church school. Even if no theological objection were to spring up spontaneously in their own minds, it would be forced on their attention by their ministers and wealthy laymen. Thus there would be a war waged over every Nonconformist child whom the Board should try to force into the Church schools, and each case of coercion would be taken into the law courts, to be fought there with all the appliances at the command of a powerful and zealous class. Do the Denominationalists imagine that one magistrate in fifty would fine or imprison a Dissenter for refusing to let his son or daughter be driven into a Church school; or that, if the magistrates were to act with such rigour, the Liberal party in the House of Commons would not summarily cancel the penalty? If they do, they are so sanguine as to be beyond the reach of argument."

Our readers will remember that last session the progress of Mr. Morgan's "Burial Bill" was arrested by a Conservative "dodge." A large number of Liberal members have since memorialised Mr. Gladstone that a Bill to the same effect should be brought before the House of Commons next session on ministerial responsibility. The Premier has replied to the effect that looking to the pressure of public business which the Government will have on hand, he is unable to accede to the request of the memorialists.

A new paper, to be called the *Methodist World*, is to be started by the advanced Methodist party, and will, we understand, advocate dis-establishment.

A vulgar and outrageous personal attack, in the *Saturday Review's* (or *Reviler's*) own especial style, has recently been made upon Mr. Samuel Morley. The Conservative Lord Shaftesbury thereupon remarked: "I should be grieved to omit an opportunity of saying how high is my estimate of Mr. Morley's wide and unceasing liberality, of his warm and genuine sentiments of religion, and of his desire to do good at all times and in all places. No man, I believe, feels more deeply, and no one, I equally believe, performs more conscientiously the duties attached to wealth and influence."

Among the remarkable discoveries recently made by Mr. George Smith with regard to Assyrian antiquities, we may notice "the great problems as to the chronology and history of the Book of Kings. Such questions have for many years been the subject of speculations and disputes among divines and historians." The whole of the history, and almost all the literature of the age of Nebuchadnezzar now lies buried at Babylon, and would form the most important prize of an expedition to these Mesopotamic countries. Here are the records of the captivity of the Jews, and from this storehouse they brought to the Persian monarch the copy of the famous decree of Cyrus for the rebuilding of the Temple.

The *Nonconformist* has issued a summary of its statistics of the accommodation in eighty-four cities and boroughs of England and Wales. The result is as follows:—

	1872.		
	Places of Worship.		Sittings.
Established Church.....	1,508	1,040,672
Non-Established Churches.....	3,335	1,603,851

in favour of Non-Established

Churches	1,827	563,179
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Reduced to percentages, the comparison may be thus stated:—

	1872.	
Established Church		39·4
Non-Established Churches		60·6

That is to say, in these eighty-four cities and boroughs, containing an aggregate population of nearly six millions, the Church of England divides *within two-fifths* of the means of public worship, and the

religious bodies outside the Establishment a little *over three-fifths*. It is further shown that the respective rate of progress of the Established Church and non-Established Churches during the last twenty-one years—so far as the provision for public worship may be taken as an indication—has been 34 per cent. and 59·1 per cent., showing that the Free Churches have done more by 25·1 per cent. to meet the spiritual needs of an increasing population than the Establishment. The following is the aggregate accommodation supplied in the eighty-four towns by the principal religious bodies :—

Church of England.....	1,040,672
Wesleyans	333,161
Congregationalists	311,061
Baptists	223,977
Roman Catholics	132,045
Primitive Methodists.....	131,788
United Methodists.....	103,844
Presbyterians	73,511
* New Connexion Methodists	71,330
Unitarians	37,865
Calvinistic Methodists	27,732
Society of Friends	26,451
Plymouth Brethren	16,448
Bible Christians.....	7,720

The School Board of Smeeth, in Kent, has, under the influence of the Rector, dismissed their principal teacher, because he has ventured to attend a Nonconformist place of worship more frequently than the Episcopal Church; and an advertisement has since appeared in the local journals stating that, in the appointment of another master and mistress, "*preference will be given to bonâ fide members of the Church of England.*" The Educational Department was applied to for redress; but being given up to sectarianism, it of course refused to interfere. The barest semblance of equity is no longer to be expected from Mr. Forster or his department.

Rev. Hugh Stowell Brown has recently celebrated his "silver wedding with his church."

The following pastorates have recently been accepted :—Mr. D. M. Eastman, of Hackney College, at Putney; Mr. Alexander Bell, of Lancashire College, at Cockermonth; Mr. S. Lambrick, of Lancashire College, at Oxford Street, Leicester; Mr. Noble, of Lancashire College, at Royton, near Oldham; and Rev. Charles Chandler, of Marden, Kent, at Pentonville Road Chapel, King's Cross.

OLD ANTHONY.

BY MARY SHERWOOD.

CHAPTER III.

IT is strange how in the web of human life the divers threads are intertwined, and gold and purple of richest dye mingle with the quiet greys and sober browns to form the pattern which Providence is ever weaving on the loom of Time. Poor Old Anthony, beggared of his savings, plying with his rheumatic limbs his hedging shears, and earning with a twinge of pain every morsel that he ate, might not seem to have much in common with the wealthy Squire, steeped in luxury to the lips, and with everything at his command that money could procure. Yet so it was. A common trouble had touched them both, and the Squire, gripped hard by his own misery, reached out his hand for fellowship and comfort to the man, poor though he was, who had suffered the same bitter loss which he himself had known.

Years ago Squire Silverdale, like Old Anthony, had had two fine sons just grown up to man's estate. The elder of the two had married, according to his father's wish, a wealthy heiress, and had settled down near the paternal mansion. The younger had chosen for himself a penniless young girl, the orphan daughter of the late curate of the parish. The Squire in a rage forbade the match, and threatened to disinherit his son if he refused obedience. But the young man's heart was fixed too firmly to be lightly changed from its purpose. He reasoned, he pleaded, he moved heaven and earth to induce his father to alter his resolution; and when he found it was all in vain he quietly went away, taking with him the orphan girl whose love he had won, and made her his wife.

He brought her back afterwards, trusting to her gentleness and beauty to soften his father's heart. But the Squire was obdurate. He drove them from him with bitter words, and forbade them ever to darken his doors again. They never did! The young man, with the little money he possessed, went out to Australia, intending to take a sheep-farm there; and it was in the *Hesperus*, the fated vessel in which Old Anthony's hopes had been wrecked, that he and his hapless bride had sailed.

As I have said, that was twenty years ago, and the Squire's eldest son was living then, and a little grandson too, so that there did not seem much likelihood of the King's Norton estate descending into alien hands. But the year before the bank failure which had swept away Old Anthony's hard-earned savings, had been a sickly season in King's Norton, and in the autumn a fever had crept up from the stagnant marshes near, and smitten with its poisonous breath first one and then another of the inhabitants of the pretty whitewashed cottages that clustered round the village church. At last, sated with humble blood, it quitted the cottages, and just when the people were thinking that the December frosts had driven it away it turned aside, as if the number of its victims were yet incomplete, and entering the Manor House, where Squire Silverdale was making merry with his guests, it struck down with one fell blow the stalwart son and the little grandson, who were keeping Christmas there. Then it passed out, leaving behind lamentation and mourning and woe, as the childless father looked on the faces of his dead, and thought, with a sudden pang of remorse and of bitter unavailing regret, that but for his own relentless deed he might still have had a living son to take the place of the one whom death had wrested from him.

It was at this crisis that Old Anthony was mentioned to him as a suitable candidate for the place then vacant in the Bedehouse; and recalling to mind what he had heard long ago of his having lost a son also in the *Hesperus*, he at once, and without further inquiry, gave him the nomination. Their fellowship of trouble was in itself recommendation enough. Indeed, it seemed to the stricken father's heart as though, in some vague far-off way, there was a kind of solace in thus linking himself, even remotely, with one who had drunk of the same bitter cup which he was being compelled himself now to drain even to the dregs.

But Squire Silverdale could not, as Old Anthony had done, take the cup as from a Father's hand, and drink it with submission to a will higher than his own. Bitter the draught of pain must always be, but there is strength and healing in it too for those who receive it aright. In Old Anthony's trial had but strengthened his faith in the Love that guides all the events of life, and had given him a deeper sympathy with those who, even like himself, had been called to give up what they held most dear, and to carry the burden of their Master's cross instead.

But if affliction does not soften the heart and open it to receive the sweet teachings of the Spirit, it will often harden it, and seal it up the more closely against the entrance of love, and light, and joy. So it was with the Squire, who took his trouble angrily, rebelling against the stroke which had not only smitten down the heir to his estate, but had taken the little grandson, the joy of his declining years, as well. He brooded with a gloom that was akin almost to despair over the ill-deeds of bygone years; but it was remorse and not repentance that bowed him beneath its invisible, yet well-nigh intolerable burden—the sorrow of the world that worketh death, not the godly sorrow which worketh repentance not to be repented of.

So the spring of the year following that troublesome Christmas-tide found Old Anthony settled down for life in his comfortable quarters at the Bedehouse, instead of making one among the crowd of lank and shivering paupers who dragged out their dreary days within the walls of the parish poorhouse. He had, like the other bedesmen, one snug room of his own, in which his various possessions were bestowed,—the household treasures from which he would have been so loth to part,—the big arm-chair, the old oak table, the chintz-covered settle, and the chest of walnut-wood drawers which had formed part of the simple cottage plenishing in the long ago days when wife and children had brightened his humble home, and life's sweetest joys were yet his own.

Besides the smaller single rooms, there was also in the Bedehouse a great common hall, with two big fires always roaring and sparkling up the wide-throated chimneys; and here, thrice a day, the sound of an ancient deep-toned bell summoned all the twelve bedesmen to as many good meals. In the winter time there was generally a group of old men round each of these fires, sitting with their handkerchiefs over their heads, some of them smoking a leisurely pipe, and recounting to one another between the whiffs the chequered story of their lives; and strange stories some of them had to tell, for there were veterans among them whose memories reached back even into the past century, and who could tell of things that happened as much as seventy years ago! In summer they generally congregated in the open quadrangle, where you might see them basking in the sun on the vine-shadowed benches under the south wall, or standing about in groups of twos or threes, talking over the news of the village, or settling the affairs of the nation with that fine decisiveness which is a distinguishing characteristic of amateur politicians.

Anthony had trudged up to the Manor House on an early day after the news of his nomination had reached him, to "make his obedience," as he expressed it, to the Squire, and to thank him for his favours. But the Squire was out when the old man, weary with his long walk in the cold, and aching through all his rheumatic limbs, knocked humbly at a side door, and asked permission, from the lazy varlet who by-and-by appeared, to see his master. He was fain to leave his message with the man, who took it, but never remembered to deliver it; and so it fell out that the Squire, who was of a stern and irascible disposition, and required a good deal of homage from every one about him, took it for granted that Anthony had failed in the respect due to his benefactor, and was nettled at his supposed neglect. He was a little disappointed, too, for he had intended to have had a talk with the old man whom he had noticed sitting on the oaken benches among the villagers in King's Norton church; and whose face,—full of that peace which the world can neither give nor take away, and telling more plainly than words could speak of the quiet of content within,—strangely haunted at times the wretched man whose life now was but one long unrest, one ceaseless, hopeless, unappeasable regret.

There is something healing to a sick soul in the mere contact with a healthy one. It is like food and wine to those who have fallen wounded and weary by the wayside in life's rough journey; and the Squire, in his remorse and misery, had dumbly felt that in Old Anthony he might have found a medicine for his grief. But, as we have seen, he was too proud to honour by his notice the man who had offended him by his supposed neglect. A week or two later the Manor House was closed, the establishment broken up, two or three servants being left behind on board wages, and the Squire, longing to escape from the scene of his troubles, and vainly hoping to elude by change of scene the bitter memories that oppressed him, left King's Norton, half resolved, as he crossed the threshold of the home which death had rendered desolate, that he would never return to it again until he was brought back for his last long rest in the family vault in King's Norton church.

(To be continued in our next.)

SPEAKING of the sloth, Sydney Smith says: "He moves suspended, rests suspended, sleeps suspended, and, in fact, passes his life in suspense, like a young clergyman distantly related to a bishop."

FAMILY WORSHIP AT MR. LYMAN'S.

WE gathered, after breakfast, in the parlour, or sitting-room they call it, for the Lymans have no "best room" that is too good for their own daily use. The September morning was just damp enough to warrant the flame of a few kindlings in the grate. Little Mary chose her seat on the floor, between Emily, the servant, and the fire. Seven-year-old Ned stood beside his father's chair, with his father's arm around him. The aspect of the circle was not specially solemn, but it was altogether pleasant. An air of anticipation, as if they expected to enjoy the exercises, was noticeable for its contrast to the uninterested resignation with which children so often go through the formality of family prayers.

"Well, mamma, said Mr. Lyman, after all were in place, "what did we read about yesterday morning?"

"How Christ cleansed the poor leper, and cured the centurion's servant," replied Mrs. Lyman.

"And somefin else," interposed little Mary.

"What was that?" said her father.

"About the woman—that was sick—and when Jesus come in—and took hold of her hand—He made her well—right off—and she got the dinner," was the reply, scanned off with deliberate earnestness.

"Well, Bessie," said her father, "you may tell us about the leper." And Bessie, a little hesitant because of the company, briefly told, in her own words, what a dreadful disease it was, and how the poor man was healed by the Saviour. Then Ned, in his turn, gave the story of the centurion, an officer "who told his soldiers to go just where he was a mind to."

The reading of the last half of the chapter, the eighth of Matthew, followed. The children were as attentive as if it were the bed-time story. As he went along, Mr. Lyman explained the harder words and obscurer expressions, bringing out here and there, with little touches of comment, the lesson of the incidents narrated. Mrs. Lyman dropped now and then a suggestion as to meaning or application. Emily and the children interposed whatever questions occurred to them—Mary's sometimes being slightly irrelevant; and Mr. Lyman closed with a little incident of army experience illustrative of faith in God in times of peril. This was followed by three

stanzas of "Sweet Hour of Prayer," Mrs. Lyman leading at the organ, and the children joining heartily in the singing. Then came Mr. Lyman's prayer—brief, and free from much-worn phrases, reverent and fervent in adoration, but almost conversational in expression; thankful for home mercies, and especially for the Saviour, of whose works of love they had just been reading, not forgetting the needy world, but chiefly concerned with family wants. That Emily escaped with such slight injury in her fall the day before; that Johnny might not for a moment forget to be true to the right amid the temptations of school that day; that they were having such a pleasant visit with the friends who had come to see them; that the Blakes over the way, who had just lost their baby, might find comfort in looking to the Lord, and that this sorrow might win the father from his intemperate life; that the Sunday-school meeting passed off so pleasantly the night before,—each formed the subject of petition or thanksgiving. All joined in the Lord's Prayer in closing.

The whole service charmed me by its naturalness, its heartiness, and its freshness. I told Mr. Lyman as much, as we leisurely walked down to the bank that morning, and that it had given me some hints that I should try to work up at home. "But I shall not expect to make it as interesting as you do," I added, "for you evidently have a special knack for it."

"Thank you," he replied, with a smile. "But you are mistaken, I think, if you suppose that I have any more talent in this line than most people. The secret of the 'knack' in this case—as in many matters, I suspect, where knack gets the credit—is *preparation*. When we began housekeeping we fell into the routine style of family worship—a chapter each day, in inexorable course, with a book-mark to keep the place, lest we should forget which chapter we read the previous morning, and a prayer which went the usual round of stereotyped petition. We were not heartless in it by any means, though it seems almost heartless now, as I look back on it and think how much *more* heart we might have put in it. But as the children grew up to an age when they ought to take some interest in it, I woke with a sort of start, one day, to the fact of what a listless, innutritious exercise it was to them. I saw that Johnny's thoughts were generally somewhere else, and that my *amen* brought a welcome release to the body that had not been able to wander with them.

"One night we talked it over, my wife and I. It seemed to us that

family worship ought to be made more interesting to little folk than it was to us when we were children—than it had been to our children. And, little by little, we have felt our way into our present method.

“First, I determined to see what I could do to make our Scripture reading more interesting. I decided that it was just as well worth while to ‘prepare’ for the chapter I read at family prayers as for the lesson I taught at Sunday-school. So I find snatches of leisure to familiarise myself with the portion to be read the next morning. If there are points that I am not clear upon, I take down my commentary for a few moments and post myself. I keep an eye open during the day for any incident that may illustrate any part of it for the children, or try to recall some fact from my reading or past experience that may serve the same purpose. I am busier than most men, but I watch my opportunities in finding time for this. It helps, too, to keep me in the spiritual atmosphere that I need; and time and again has it happened that the truth in the chapter for the day has come to me in some exigency of temptation, or some opportunity for Christian service, as if God had spoken it for that very hour. I feel as if I could not afford to get along in the old way at all.”

“Do you read the Bible right through in course?” I asked.

“Oh, no! I should almost as soon think of taking a hotel bill of fare in course at dinner, day by day, until I had finished it. We are reading the gospels in course now; but I shall hardly think it worth while, on the children’s account, to go through the epistles in that way. I have thought of taking up the Old Testament history by-and-by, reading the portions they could grasp, and threading together what I skip in a few words of my own as we go along. I find it quickens their interest greatly to question them briefly on what we read the day before, especially to let them put the story into their own words. It is twice as much their own then as it was before. But I guard specially against tiring them with *long* exercises. We never sing more than two or three stanzas, and never read a whole chapter. Indeed, we pay very little attention to those arbitrary divisions any way,—as if one could expect to find the natural stopping-places in a story by measuring it off by the yard!”

“Nevertheless,” I protested, “all this preparation must take a good deal of time, and more than some busy men could find for it, I think.”

"It pays to make the time, and it is easier to find it than any one supposes till he tries. I often say to myself, as I kneel down, 'Now do not let me utter a word that I do not *feel*.' I dread to get into a rut of phrases, where a prayer may run smoothly with so little heart in it."

Just then we reached the bank, and the conversation closed. But the more I think about it the more it seems to me that Mr. Lyman is nearer right in this matter than most of us.—*Christian Union*.

GREAT REDUCTION IN MINISTERS' INCOMES.

IT was the first week in the year, and as my business did not urgently require my presence, I decided to pay a long-promised visit to my brother Fred, who had been settled about six years as the pastor of a small church in one of the Midland Counties. I had often seen him during that time, but never at his own home, and I looked forward to my visit with great pleasure, for there had always been between us a deep brotherly affection.

I reached his home in the evening, and after the excitement of our first greeting we sat down to talk over old times, he on one side of the fire, his wife on the other, and I between them, catching pleasure from both. Their two little children had gone to bed, though sorely against their will, for Uncle Edward was as much a favourite with them as they were favourites with me.

The next morning, after the children and I had renewed our friendship, my brother and I went for a long walk in the country, and got back filled with that healthy weariness which makes a quiet book or a cheerful conversation so agreeable. When we were comfortably seated, Fred asked what I thought of an article which recently appeared in the pages of this Magazine, entitled, "The Blank Pulpit."

"Well," I replied, "I have read it, and I don't think much of it. The writer seems to be trying to make out that many of our ministers are rather badly off; but I can't quite see it. They live in tolerably good houses, and wear tolerably good broadcloth; their wives use kid gloves like other ladies, and their children look somewhat better than many other people's."

My brother's wife broke into a merry laugh, and said, "Now that's just what I told Fred the other day, when he said we seemed to get poorer every year. I suggested that he should dress in corduroy, and I would wear a cotton dress on Sunday, and put the children into linsey-woolsey and wooden clogs. Then I think we might set the church wondering how their minister made both ends meet."

We all laughed at this, and Fred said, "My dear fellow, you remind me of what a friend of mine told me the other day. He went down into Wiltshire, and one of the things that struck him first was the bright chubby faces of the village children, and he could not help exclaiming, 'What! is this the country where farm labourers get only nine shillings a week? Why the children look as if they were brought up on the best cuts of legs of mutton.'"

"But really," I said, "you don't mean me to understand that there is anything in this stir about ministers' salaries more than a little pleasantry and good-natured banter. Take yourselves, for instance, *you* suffer no serious want."

"Well, to be sure," he replied, "thanks to my wife's economy, we have never yet been pinched with hunger; but I daresay she could, if she would, rather enlighten you on some points. I think she could a tale unfold which would convince you it is no easy matter for some of our ministers to live, as they are expected to live, on such means as our churches supply."

I glanced at Mary, and saw she looked grave and earnest; but, unwilling to give up my point, I said; "But, surely, ministers have not been excluded from a share in the great prosperity of the country during the last two years. Have not the churches given them some of the benefit?"

"Certainly," said Fred, "they have not, or if they have done it generally, it is unknown to me. Here and there, perhaps, a church has spontaneously increased its minister's income, but there has been no movement among our churches. Now I'll tell you a fact I've discovered lately,—that *all* our ministers are suffering from a great reduction of their incomes!"

I suppose I looked incredulous, for Fred went on to say. "You wonder how I make that out. Well, first of all, you, as a business man, are well aware that money has decreased in value lately; and Mary here, as a business woman, is well aware that every marketable commodity has increased in price. The plain consequence is that money will not go so far as it once went; that a pound to-day

is not worth more than seventeen shillings was twelve or eighteen months ago; and, practically, our yearly income has diminished about fifteen per cent."

I said, "There is certainly something in that, for the other day I was talking with a mechanic about wages, and he told me that he was getting thirty-five shillings where once he got only twenty-five, and yet was worse off than he was a few years ago: he could not save so much nor spend so much."

"Quite so," replied Fred. "I've heard the same thing a score of times. And where do you think our working men would be if wages had not risen? Why in 'Queer Street.' And that's just where many a hard-working, high-minded minister is just now. Everything has gone up—except his salary."

"You see, the great difficulty is that ministers have a fixed income. They have no windfalls, no flood tides of business, when money comes in fast. They cannot speculate when markets are going up, and then, after clearing a bouncing profit, lay up something substantial against a rainy day. Whatever extra expenses come on them they have no extra income to meet them; and for the last twelve months, I assure you, many a one has been sorely perplexed. Of course there are some of our ministers who get £500 a year, and a reduction of fifteen per cent. would not make them feel poor, though it would reduce the value of their stipend by nearly £50; but it does make me feel poor. I receive £100 a year from my people, and I know several better men than myself who receive less than that. Now take fifteen per cent. from my £100, and you leave me £85—less than the wages of an artisan. Indeed, I heard a manufacturer say the other day that out of eight hundred hands in his employ, there was not one who would not turn up his nose at such an income as mine."

He stopped, and I admitted I had not looked at the matter in that light. He continued: "Of course, Edward, I'm talking to you more freely than I would to any one else; and believe me, there is a great deal more in this matter than our people seem aware of. Just take this simple circumstance. The other day I had half-a-sovereign which I thought I could spare for a book, and I get very few new books. But when I told Mary about it she gave me a look so full of meaning, that without another word I gave her the half-sovereign; and I found out afterwards that it had gone to buy some shoes for our little people."

I saw his eyes fill with tears at this, and I felt my own overflow. He went on to say, "I believe, with all my heart, in the blessing of God on our life; but a heavenly Father's favour does not mean that we can buy more with a pound than other people can. I try to be faithful and contented, but I am a long way from feeling like Goldsmith's often-cited country parson, who was 'Passing rich on forty pounds a-year.' Mary, here, is more patient than I am, and she has more than once had to remind me that God called me to this work, and that His rewards are laid up against a time appointed."

He paused, and I felt as if I could say nothing. Then, with a merry look on his face, he said, "Do you know there's a verse in the Proverbs that I never saw the full meaning of until the last few years. When we get to the end of the week, and Mary feels she ought not to buy more meat, I kiss her and say, 'Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.'"

Hereupon Mary pretended to reprove him, but he broke into a cheerful laugh, in which I could not help joining.

I looked at Mary and saw her smiling, so I said, "Fred has filled me with new thoughts about a minister's difficulties, but you have as yet said nothing. What do you think of this *great reduction*?"

There was a slight quiver in her voice as she answered, "I know nothing about fifteen per cents. and discounts, but I do know that for a long time past I have had a constant struggle with expenses. The subject comes to me in a very practical form. I have to manage with two ounces of tea less every week, and to give up fresh butter, and to mend an old garment which once I should have given to some poor person, and to study to do without a doctor, for the children's ailments, and to teach them at home to save school expenses. Then, last summer I wanted Fred to have a fortnight at the sea-side, but he absolutely refused to go, and insisted on my buying a new dress for myself instead." The quiver in her voice seemed deeper, and she turned to her husband with a look of love.

Just then the children came in, and nothing would content them but a romp; so we had a noisy half-hour and then sat down to tea, after which Fred went out to pay a pastoral call. Our afternoon conversation had so interested and impressed me that I could not forbear renewing the subject when alone with Mary. I asked her to give me some particulars of their expenditure, as compared with previous years. So she brought out her housekeeping books, and revealed her womanly secrets. Her books were balanced monthly,

and this was something like an average result: Rent, £1 3s. 4d.; Coal and wood, 10s.; Bread and flour, 15s.; Groceries, &c., £1 10s.; Meat, £1; Vegetables, 4s.; Milk, 2s.; Lighting, 2s. 6d.; Servant and washing, 12s.; Total, £5 18s. 10d.

I looked back in the book and saw that some of these items (coal, meat, and bread) were now about double what they once were. Thus, for invariable and unavoidable expenses there was an outlay of £5 18s. 10d. per month. To meet this there was an income of £8 6s. 8d., leaving £2 7s. 10d. to provide clothing for a family, the claims of charity, education for two children, books for a minister's use, and provision against sickness and old age. Mary said that often, at the end of a quarter, they had not so much as a pound to put in the Savings Bank, and only by the most careful economy could her husband manage to pay the yearly premium of £2 5s. on his Life Assurance policy. They had been trying for some time to secure the benefits of the Pastors' Retiring Fund, but they seemed further off than ever. I could bear no more, and hastily caught up one of the children to hide my emotion.

And this, then, I said to myself, was the sad meaning of what I had thought was an unimportant subject, kept before our churches in a spirit of pleasantry. I thought very little of the imaginary loss by a "Blank Pulpit," for here was a real loss, unfelt by the churches, but keenly felt by those whom the churches should honour. I had never realised till then how much of earthly comfort my brother had sacrificed on entering the ministry, nor how steadfast was the patience, and how vigorous the faith, which kept him unweariedly at his work; and that night on bended knees I resolved to do what one man could to wipe away from our churches the reproach of a ministry oft-times saddened and embarrassed by pecuniary difficulties. The first thing I did was to send ten guineas to Dr. Ferguson, so that Fred might be made a life member of the Retiring Fund. But I shall not stop at that. I intend, if God spare my life, not to rest until I have done something to awaken my brethren in the churches generally to some more adequate sense of their duty to the ministers of our Lord Jesus Christ.

No man in the world less knows a fool than himself; nay, he is more than ignorant, for he constantly errs in the point, taking himself for, and demeaning himself as towards another, a better, a wiser, and abler man than he is.

 WILLIAM  WORDSWORTH.

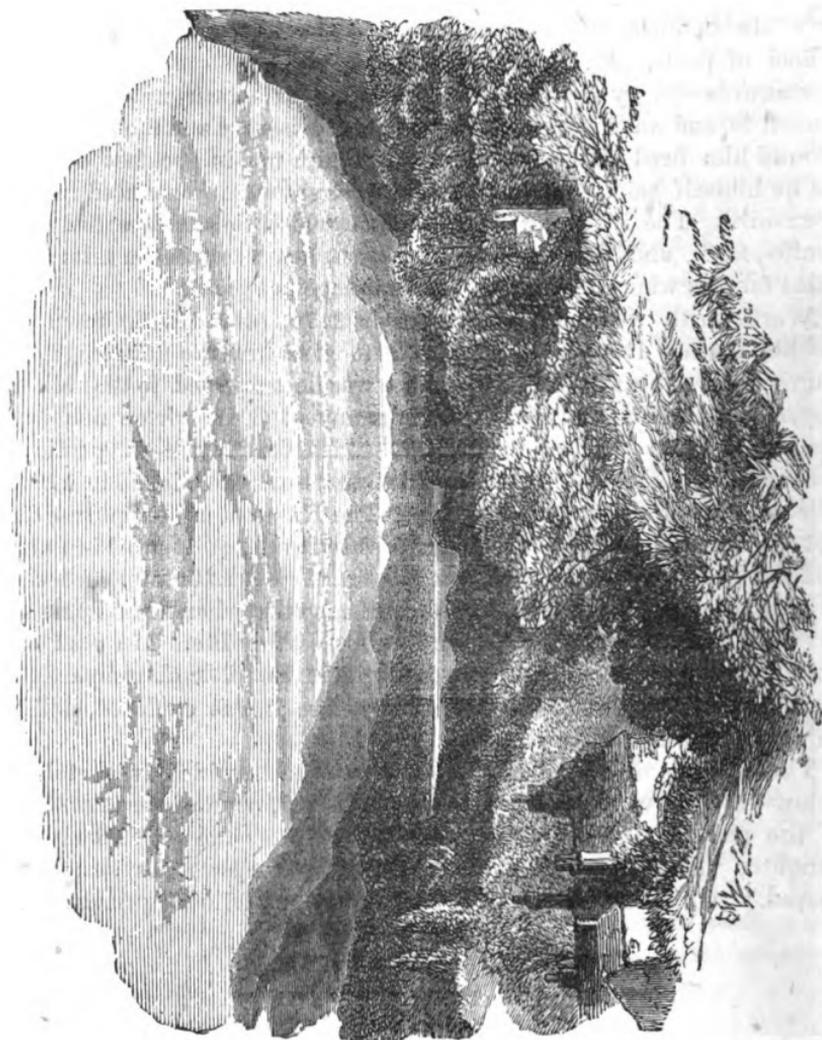
AMONGST the beautiful mountains and lakes of Cumberland dwelt, during the greater part of his life, the founder of the Lake school of poets. Every mountain peak, from "mighty Helvellyn" downwards—every rippling lake, from the little tarn upwards, was known to, and was dearly loved by, him. The beauty and the grandeur around him fired his genius, and incited him to his greatest efforts. As he himself said, "nine-tenths of his verses were murmured in the open air." The hills and dales amidst which he dwelt called his genius forth, and that genius, in return, has made those hills and dales famous wherever the English language is spoken.

Wordsworth was born in the year 1770, at the little town of Cockermouth. His friends were able to give him the advantages of a university education, and at no time was he subjected to that bitter poverty which has weighed down so many of those whose memory the world now delights to honour. His first work—a poetical account of a walking tour on the continent—was published in 1793. The greatest of all his productions—"The Excursion"—appeared in 1814, being the year after he took up his residence at world-famed "Rydal Mount." In 1843 he was appointed Poet Laureate, succeeding his friend Southey. Seven years afterwards, when he had passed his 80th year, he reached the end of his earthly life. He died on the 23rd of April, 1850, and was interred in the little churchyard at Grasmere. The grave, as it appeared before it was enclosed, is the subject of one of our illustrations.

The grounds of Rydal Mount—the view from which is sketched below—are, or were until a few months since, open on certain days to the public. Hard by, in a field named after the poet's beloved daughter "Dora," is the stone which "at Wordsworth's suit was spared." On a tablet, let into the stone, are the following lines:—

"In these fair vales hath many a tree,
 At Wordsworth's suit, been spared;
 And from the builder's hand, this stone,
 For some rude beauty of its own,
 Was rescued by the bard.
 So let it rest; and time will come
 When here the tender-hearted
 May heave a gentle sigh for him
 As one of the departed."

To define the position which Wordsworth holds amongst our poets is not easy. From the time when he first began to publish, his poems have met, on the one hand, with enthusiastic praise, and on the other with keenest deprecation. Undoubtedly the cause of this is to be



RYDAL MOUNT.

found, to some extent, in the fact that the simplest and the commonest objects in nature were made by him the subjects of his poems, and occasionally, it may be urged, his language seems as common-

place as his subject. It is this truth which gives all the point to the biting lines in the well-known "English Bards" of Lord Byron. This granted, however, it must still be owned that there is no poet who enables us, as Wordsworth does, to rise, in contemplation, from



the beauties of nature to the benevolence of nature's God. The simplest flower he saw was wont to lead his thoughts from earth to heaven, and in his poems this spirit of devotion is ever clearly reflected.

This should surely help to maintain—and we believe it will maintain, as his genius has already placed,—the name of Wordsworth in the foremost rank of those who have inscribed their names amongst those of England's gifted sons.



WORDSWORTH'S GRAVE.

MR. SCHEBOLD, a Bohemian, residing in Ohio, has a Bible printed one hundred and fifty years ago. It was the property of his grandfather, who was a Protestant. During one of the persecutions in Bohemia, the peasants were required by law to deliver up every Bible, to be burnt. Mrs. Schebold placed hers in the centre of some dough which was ready for the oven, and *baked* it. The house was carefully searched, but the Bible was not found. When the danger was passed, the Bible was taken uninjured from the loaf, where it had been safely concealed.

GLORIFY a lie, legalise a lie, arm and equip a lie, consecrate a lie with solemn forms and awful penalties, and after all it is nothing but a lie. It rots a land and corrupts a people like any other lie, and by-and-by the white light of God's truth shines clear through it, and *shows* it to be a lie.

THE RESCUE.

A VISION.

THE night was dark
And heavy, gloomy clouds o'erspread the sky,
As, with a sense of utter loneliness,
I found myself a helpless wanderer
Upon an unknown and most dismal waste.
A deathly stillness reigned around, above,
As if all nature waited some surprise
Of horror.

A lurid flash
Revealed my peril ; for, alone, I stood
Upon a jutting crag which overhung
A precipice whose depth seemed fathomless.
And then the darkness darker yet appeared—
But for an instant,—for a horrid form,
Compared with which the darkness of the night
Seemed almost light, came on me noiselessly.
Of size gigantic ! On his awful face
There seemed to dance a grim and fiendish smile,
As with his giant hand he grasped me firm,
And in an instant, swift as lightning, rushed
Down the abyss. Each moment seemed an age !
Yet down and down we sank with awful speed.
And now the air with noisome vapours fumed,
And dismal sounds came up, that made me long
To shrink within myself away to nothing.

In blank despair I upwards turned my gaze,
When to my startled vision there appeared
Far up, as if at distance infinite,
A form of dazzling brightness, sword in hand,
Cleaving the air at speed most marvellous.
Wonder and hope and terror filled my mind ;
Deliverance seemed at hand ! And then the fiend
Grasped me with clutch more hellish !

Suddenly a light
Of brilliance indescribable flashed down !

And then a Sword-thrust, swift and sharp, as if
Dealt by a hand omnipotent!

That thrust!—methinks I hear it even now
And oftentimes, in quiet of the night,
When mortal sounds are hushed, I hear it still;
Nor from my memory can that sound depart
Till memory fail.

Then instantly

The fiendish clutch was loosed. The Evil One
O'ermastered quite, in rage and terror fled.
I glanced below, and saw his horrid form,
As rushing madly down he fled, despoiled
By Him—"the stronger than the strong."

And then—oh blest exchange!—I felt a grasp
As firm, yea firmer than before; but now
'Twas from an arm of gentleness and love;
And glancing up, I saw His lovely face,
With tenderness and love ineffable
Beaming upon me.

Ah! Never from my soul
That blessed look can fade! Let my right hand
Forget her cunning! Let all human friends
Pass for awhile into forgetfulness!—
Let earth's fair scenes into oblivion sink!—
Yea, let me e'en forget to anticipate
Celestial bliss!—But ne'er may I forget
That blessed look of love, and tenderness,
And peace!

Thus, safe in my Deliverer's arms I rose
With swift and easy flight, reaching ere long
The jutting crag, from which, snatched by the fiend,
I fell. And there we seemed to pause awhile,
As if that I might raise an Ebenezer
To Him who rescued me. And then I heard,
Loud as the thunder,—sweet as thousand harps,—
"Neither shall any pluck from out My hand!"
And when His voice of majesty had ceased,
The echoing crags reverberated loud,—
"My hand!" And down the fathomless abyss
The echo rolled along—"My hand!"—My hand!"

Now Nature seemed in reverent stillness hushed,
 As upwards still we sped. The light became
 More clear and radiant. Most melodious sounds
 Began to fall upon my raptured ear,
 As if from angel-songs, and harps of gold,
 And silvery trumpets' blast. And then a burst
 Of glorious harmony:—

“ Now unto Him

That washed us from our sins in His own blood,
 And to His Father made us priests and kings,
 Be glory evermore !”

Salisbury.

E. J. O.

SYMPATHY WITH MISSIONARIES.

THE appeals to be remembered in prayer so often made by missionaries, do not have exclusive reference to their labours. They desire to be remembered in every relation of life which they fill, and in view of all the circumstances in which they may be placed. What is needed, in order that their desire should be fulfilled, is, that we should come into a more intimate sympathy with them. They are men and women of like passions with ourselves; from their high culture, tenderly alive to all that affects human happiness; accustomed to be surrounded by affectionate friends, who comforted them when in sorrow, and encouraged them when desponding, and found pleasure in ministering to their wants; and they do not become changed in the demands of their social nature, by going from where all their wants are so happily met to where they find almost nothing to meet them. Home-sickness will sometimes knock loudly at their doors, and, if it obtrudes itself upon them, they will find all the sinews cut by which the man stands erect, while the heart will pine in its longings for the scenes and the forms in the midst of which it grew up from childhood. Disease, not too easy to bear when there are enough to take their turn at the bedside, and the frequent interested inquiry is made for our welfare by a wide circle of friends, is of a heavier pressure when the circle of loved ones, whose speech is familiar, is briefly numbered, and none beyond it can be trusted for any important service; when those loved ones, on whose unwearied affection so much depends, are seen to be sinking under their burden;

and there is, besides, the realization that if death comes, the survivors will be left in a strange land, far from those to whom they would naturally look for sympathy and protection. The breach made by death, which often makes us feel that all is lost, even when every hour of the day the sight of our eyes might remind us how rich we still are in our friends, is another thing when one of the two who are all the world to each other is taken, and there is no father, mother, brother, or sister near to speak a word of comfort.

And there is another trial which we will not venture to pronounce lighter than this. It is when children, at the stern demands of duty, are torn, at a tender period of life, from the paternal household, and sent away for years, perhaps not to be seen again, to buffet often with rude storms, and where the influences which reach them from those whose hearts are bound up in them, instead of being constant as the hours, and tender and subduing as the seasons of daily prayer, must be mainly the slow and infrequent one by writing. This is not a trial which others can easily understand. To be appreciated it must be experienced in its own bitterness. We know that sometimes as parents are writing in reference to the preliminary arrangements for their separation, their tears fall like rain. It requires a faith akin to that which Abraham possessed when he laid his child upon the altar to perform sacrifice.

These are some of the circumstances in connection with which missionaries need our prayers. There is that which can make up to them all that they have forsaken, and sustain them under all that is laid upon them. This is the special presence of Christ. It is imparted in answer to prayer. We need not inquire how it should be so; the fact is certain. In this, others can help. Paul sought the help of others; missionaries ask it. But it is not alone the presence of Christ in general that is needed; it is the adaptation of His grace to the wants of those for whom we pray. Paul made specific requests. He wanted the prayers of others to blend with and strengthen his own, as he sought for particular things. In like manner, our prayers for missionaries, if we would have them of the greatest service to them, must unite with their own petitions. It is this which renders it so important that we should be familiar with their circumstances. Thus we shall sympathise with them, and be constrained to pray for them daily, as Paul prayed daily for all the churches. They would value this above all price. Could they know that they were thus remembered, it would cheer and encourage them in their work

beyond measure, besides the blessings it would bring down upon them. It is scarcely less important that prayer should be offered that their health may be continued, their lives prolonged, and their usefulness increased. What a spring would such knowledge, and sympathy, and prayer give to missionary endeavour! How the faith and the hope of the labourers would be strengthened, and what numbers would be reduced to join them!—*Journal of Missions.*

THE THREE APPLES.

LITTLE MINNIE was very fond of going with her mamma into the kitchen when she went to make the pies and puddings. Minnie liked to watch her as she put the flour into the bowl, and beat up the eggs, and washed the currants, and stoned the raisins. Sometimes Minnie had a bit of paste given to her, and then she used to roll it out just in the way she saw her mamma do, and cut it into little squares, which had plums put on the top, and were baked on a tin in the oven. They made funny looking little cakes, but Minnie was very proud of them, and thought they tasted very good indeed.

One day her mamma was going to pare apples for dinner, so the little girl stood beside her and picked out the bright brown pippins which fell among the parings. She said she was going to take care of them to make a pie of. When her mamma had finished there were three little apples left on the tray, no bigger than nuts.

"Mamma," asked Minnie, "are you not going to pare those baby apples?"

"No, Minnie," said her mamma; "they are too small to pare."

Minnie looked at the three little apples and then said, "May I have them, mamma?"

"You may have them to play with, if you like; but they are hard and sour; they are not fit to eat. They would make you ill."

Minnie promised not to eat the apples, so her mamma gave them to her, and then her mamma put away the things and went into the parlour to mend a frock of Minnie's, and Minnie went too, carrying the three little apples with her.

The little girl was very busy for a while with her apples. She was rolling them about on the floor, and watching the kitten run after them. She made believe that they were railway carriages, and that

her stool was London. But by-and-by she got tired of this, and sat down with the apples in her hand, looking very hard at them.

"Mamma," she said at last, "I don't think these apples look as if they would make me poorly."

"Minnie dear," said her mamma, "If the apples had been fit to eat I should not have told you they would make you ill."

Minnie did not wish to lose the little round apples, so she began to play with them again, and her mamma went on mending the frock. Now in the parlour there was a large closet in which a great many things used to be kept, and, among the rest, Minnie's cradle for her doll, and the wooden box that she kept her doll's clothes in. After a while her mamma looked up from her work and could not see the little girl anywhere. She called, "Minnie, Minnie!" and then the cupboard door was pushed open, and Minnie came out.

"What were you doing in the cupboard?" asked her mamma.

Minnie did not speak directly, but at last she said—"I was getting my doll, mamma," and she went back to the cupboard and brought out her doll. Presently her mamma saw that Minnie was rolling her apples about again. She had only two instead of three.

She looked very grave when she saw this, and said, "Minnie, what have you done with the other apple?"

Then Minnie began to cry, but did not say anything, so that her mamma was afraid that she had been eating it when she went into the cupboard.

She was very sorry her little girl should have been so disobedient, so she called her to her side and waited till she had done sobbing. Then she said, "Minnie, did you eat the apple when you went into the cupboard?"

"I did just taste, mamma. I did not eat it all."

"Bring it here, Minnie," said her mamma, and Minnie went into the cupboard and brought the apple out of the doll's box. It had many marks of little teeth upon the green rind, and one piece was bitten quite out. Her mamma looked very grieved when she saw this. She said, "Minnie, why did you go into the dark cupboard to eat the apple? Was it because you thought I could not see you there?"

Then Minnie hid her face against the chair and said, "I am very sorry, mamma. I don't want to eat the apple now." And she began to cry again.

Her mamma put her work down and took the little girl upon her lap, and waited till she had quite ceased crying. Then she said,

"Minnie, who saw you when you were eating the apple in the dark cupboard?"

Minnie knew what her mamma meant. She held down her head and said very softly, "God did."

"Yes, Minnie; God could see you just as well in the dark cupboard as if you had stood in the window to eat the apple. It is no use trying to hide anything from Him. I am afraid my little girl forgot this."

Minnie did not say anything, but her little face looked very sorrowful, and the tears were standing on her rosy cheeks and falling on her white pinafore.

Then her mamma said, "Minnie, do you remember the little text that you learnt on Sunday morning?"

Minnie thought a moment. Then the long lashes drooped over her blue eyes, and her voice sank to a very low whisper as she hid her face on her mamma's shoulder, and said, "*Thou God seest me.*"

"And does my little Minnie know that God is sorry when He sees even such a little girl as she is do wrong?"

"Mamma," said Minnie, "must I go and tell God that I am very sorry I went into the cupboard to eat the apple? Will He forgive me, do you think, and make me feel happy again?"

Minnie's mamma was very glad that her little girl had learnt to think about God, and to pray to Him. So she went with her to her own room, and then they knelt down, and Minnie, in her own simple way, told God all she had done, and asked Him to forgive her, and make her happy and good again.

I do not think Minnie ever went into the dark cupboard again, to do anything that her mamma had told her not to do; but whenever she felt as if she were going to do wrong, she would think of the three apples and say to herself, "*Thou God seest me.*"

M. C. T.

A GENUINE loyalty to truth, that dares to speak it and to live it, is one of the grandest features of manhood.

If you would be pungent be brief; for it is with words as with sunbeams—the more they are condensed the deeper they burn.

SOME one has said that we never go to meet, of set purpose, the important things of life. We turn suddenly round a corner, and come upon them all at once.

POPULAR TOPICS OF THE HOUR.

II.—THE DUTY OF NONCONFORMISTS.

BY REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

I VERY largely attribute the partial decline of religious prosperity in some of our churches to the interest which has been taken in the questions which naturally arise out of the unscriptural and adulterous connection at present existing between the Church and the State in this land. We have each of us a certain amount of mental power, of time, and of energy, and no more; and if it be a necessity, as it is a necessity, that every Nonconformist should contend for his rights and liberties, and should never rest till perfect religious equality is established in the land, then so much of our strength is taken away from higher and better matters to attend to that which nevertheless it is unavoidable that we should consider. It is not possible for us to cease from our efforts to obtain deliverance from the degrading yoke which now burdens us.

We are told that we enjoy *toleration*: the very word is insult. What would the members of the dominant sect think if we talked of tolerating them? We shall never be satisfied until all religious communities stand upon an equal footing before the law. Cæsar has no right to demand of us that we shall support the religion or the superstition which he chooses to select. An Established Church is a spiritual tyranny. We wear no chains upon our wrists, but on our spirits our oppressors have thrust fetters which gall us worse than bands of steel. We are compelled as a part of the nation to support a church whose business it is to pull down that which with prayers and tears we live to build up, and would even die to maintain.

As Protestant Dissenters we see the truths we preach assailed by an army of Anglican Papists whom we are compelled to support that they may oppose our most cherished designs. Popery is this day installed and endowed among us, and we are compelled to acknowledge its myrmidons as the clergy of our own national church. That which our fathers died to overthrow we are compelled to support. We cannot help being indignant; we should be less than men if our blood did not boil within us at such injustice. If men want Popery, or any other form of error, let them pay for it themselves, and call it their own; but to foist their superstition on us as part of the nation.

is an oppression against which we appeal to the Judge of all the earth. Men cannot long bear to be saddled with the maintenance of a superstition which they abhor; least of all can the descendants of the Ironsides endure it, who, though they have laid aside all carnal weapons, cannot quite forget the fields on which their fathers made the Cavaliers feel the weight of their right arms. The insult to our consciences which is embodied in the present Church and State is a daily provocation to us as men and Christians. Of the present unrighteous domination I would say, Down with it, down with it, all ye who have a spark of justice left in your souls. As for us we will never rest till we are free from this excuseless injustice, and free we will be, as sure as God, the God of righteousness, yet lives.

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THOUGHTS—GRAVE AND GAY.

NO language can express the power, and beauty, and heroism, and majesty of a mother's love. It shrinks not where man cowers, and grows stronger where man faints, and over the wastes of worldly fortune sends the radiance of its quenchless fidelity like a star in heaven.

I remember once in the studio of Hiram Powers, in Florence, he introduced me to his mature daughter, a matronly woman. "Oh, how they do grow," said he. Then he beckoned me to a desk in the corner, and took out from enveloping wool in a box one of the most exquisitely sculptured hands I ever saw—a mere hand up to the wrist, cut in purest marble—an infant's hand, with dimpled fingers—matchlessly beautiful. "There," said he, "they get away so fast that I stopped that one," nodding his head towards her, "when she was three years old."

A beautiful incident is mentioned of Martin Luther. He had been summoned to attend the Pope's nuncio. He left Wurtemberg early in the morning, and it is said his old students had gathered together to bid him farewell, and when he approached with his old threadbare coat on his back and his cap on his head, the students immediately they saw him took off their hats and cried aloud, "Luther for ever, Luther for ever!" Luther became thoughtful and filled with emotion, and taking off his cap, shouted, "No! Christ for ever. The Gospel for ever!" And so, if we would not have that Protestantism which was cradled in the tempest stranded in the calm, we must

cry out in these times with the voice of a thousand thunders, "Christ for ever! The Gospel for ever!" Christ is all in all.

"As I write," says a French correspondent, "all Paris has returned to the consideration of the question which has for eighty years been the subject of special anxiety—What form of Government should be adopted in France?" He cynically but truly adds: "It is absolutely necessary to create a Government, in order to know against whom the next revolution is to be attempted."

Slight cases of rheumatism may, it is said, be cured in a few days by feeding on asparagus; and more chronic cases are much relieved, especially if the patient carefully avoids all acids, whether in food or beverage. The Jerusalem artichoke has also a similar effect in relieving rheumatism. The heads may be eaten in the usual way, but tea made from the leaves of the stalks, and drunk three or four times a day, is, it is declared, a certain remedy, though not equally agreeable.

That sex which almost alone was friendly to the Saviour,—which anointed His feet with ointment, and followed Him with tears to His cross,—which prepared sweet spices for His burial, and was the first to hail His resurrection, has, in turn, been especially befriended by His Gospel. It has raised her from the degrading condition of a slave, or a still more degrading condition as a mere instrument of passion, to be a refined and purifying influence in society, and to lend to home the dignity and the grace of the mother, wife, sister, and daughter.

CHURCH NEWS OF THE MONTH.

AS the end of the great controversy—between the champions and the foes of church establishments—draws on, the conflict grows hotter. The Bishop of Manchester, ordinarily so calm and fair, appears to be becoming as excitable and as unguarded as his Irish brother at Peterborough, who, instead of reasoning with those who differ from him, contents himself with the easier weapons of vituperation, and calls them "fools." But the time has passed when epithet or invective can save church establishments—they must be saved by arguments, or they must inevitably and swiftly fall.

Meanwhile, the Church Defence Association and its friends have adopted the plan of half filling many of the meetings of the friends of

religious equality with noisy and half-drunken ruffians, whose sole intention is to prevent argument, create confusion, and alarm the timid. Notable instances of this kind have occurred at Northampton, Ardwick, near Manchester, and Wigan. After the meeting the local Conservative journal at Northampton—the *Herald*—joined the London church papers in exultation over the affair; but the editor had the fairness to admit a letter of a correspondent who said: "I narrowly watched the turbulent individuals who so successfully interrupted the proceedings (they were but a small minority), and I declare unhesitatingly, without fear of contradiction, that nine-tenths of them never attend a place of worship of any kind, and that they care no more for the church than a tom-cat." While vituperation and riot, beer and roughs have thus been enlisted for the defence of the Establishment, the *Church Times* quotes with delight the words of the *Temple Bar*, that, "whether for good or evil, sacerdotalism is the key-note of the Church of England. She is conforming herself daily more and more to the church from which she seceded. We do not alone blame the priesthood for this. The change is called for by a people who have got tired of simple ways, and who loudly demand pomp and ceremony, and show and flowers, and processions and a great noise of music. We take leave of the past as of a bit of English life and history, henceforth belonging to the antiquarian." To how contemptible a form of idolatry Ritualism is capable of sinking, we see in an account of a miniature stable, with manger, and a wax model of a baby, that has been erected at St. Raphael's Church, Bristol.

Meanwhile, if we turn away from the sight of Popery flourishing in the heart of the so-called "bulwark of Protestantism," we gather what comfort we can from the assurance of Mr. Brand, M.P., that he approves of the connection of Church and State, on the express ground that he regards the Established Church as "*the home of free thought.*"

The highest honours in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge have this year been awarded to Nonconformists.

Assertions having been made that the religious accommodation provided for Nonconformists in the crowded metropolitan parishes has of late diminished, the Rev. W. H. S. Aubrey, Secretary of the Surrey Congregational Union, has in a letter to the *Nonconformist* rebutted these statements. We can cite only one instance in which he deals with the matter. It was said in the *Manchester Courier* that

in Newington Butts, "since 1851, Dissenting chapels accommodating two hundred and thirty-two persons have disappeared." Mr. Aubrey shows that the fact is that, within the last twenty years, new accommodation has been provided by Nonconformist bodies for upwards of ten thousand persons.

It is announced that the Corporation of London have voted three hundred guineas towards the expense of a pulpit for a chapel to be called the City Temple, of which Dr. Jos. Parker is to be the minister. We have no doubt that the Corporation has made the offer in perfect good faith, but it has been whispered that the suggestion originally emanated from an astute member of a Church Defence Association, who wished to see whether Nonconformists could be allured from their principles by a bait sufficiently dainty. We entirely agree with the *Nonconformist*, that "if the managers of the 'City Temple' choose to degrade themselves by accepting a public grant" towards the erection of a place for which they have ample funds of their own, they should take care that they alone are involved in complicity with such a departure from the principles which they have so loudly proclaimed.

The true solution of the Education problem has already been stated in these pages, but additional light has been thrown upon it. The Rev. Canon Cromwell recently stated to Mr. Gladstone that he had ascertained that the total amount spent in school buildings during the last thirty years was £5,000,000, of which £1,500,000 had been contributed by the government. Allowing, say, ten per cent. for deterioration, the whole property could therefore be equitably purchased for the use of the nation for a little over three millions. Surely, if we could spend ten millions on abolishing purchase in the army, we could afford three millions for the establishment of a system of national education under national control.

There are, says the *Church Herald*, eighteen retired colonial bishops "returned to, and starring it in, England," and a nineteenth is coming. So says that sound church paper the *Church Herald*, and it gracefully adds: "These idle, incompetent, and insincere colonials ought to be well and efficiently snubbed."

Mr. Crofts, of Rotherham College, has accepted the pastorate of the church at Dacre, near Pateley Bridge, Yorkshire. The Revs. George Shaw, at Warwick, and J. T. Barker, at Harwich, have intimated their intention to resign their charges.

OLD ANTHONY.

BY MARY SHERWOOD.

CHAPTER IV.

SQUIRE SILVERDALE wearied, however, of his self-imposed exile. He staid away for two summers or more, and then he came back home, a haggard-looking man, with trenched grey face and restless eyes that seemed to be always seeking something which they could not find. He took up his former habits again now, filled the Manor House with guests, hunted, feasted, and sought in society distraction from himself and from the gloom and remorse that had long been his constant companions. He resumed his seat too on the magistrates' bench, and people noticed how much more lenient were his sentences than they had formerly been, on the delinquents who were brought before him for poaching, begging, and the like. He was even known at times to let a man off altogether when the evidence had been quite strong enough to commit him, especially if the prisoner's wife and children put in a plea on his behalf.

But then, as a set-off against this, he grew more close-fisted than ever where there was any question of spending money on his estate. The farmers could not extract a farthing from him for repairing their gates and fences, and as to the labourers' cottages, some of them were little better than hovels, for want of a few pounds laying out upon them. He knew better, he said to himself, than to bury his money in the land, and let his successor—the hated cousin—reap the advantage. No; while he lived he would keep his own, and the next heir might spend, if he pleased. It would have been a different thing if he had been improving the estate for a son of his own, instead of for his enemy.

Of course this mode of proceeding made the Squire unpopular in King's Norton, but he did not trouble himself about that, not being the man to care much for the good-will of others, or to be at much pains to cultivate it.

Meanwhile, the year wore onward to its close. Christmas had come and gone, and New Year's Day arrived. That was a high day at the Bedehouse. There was a dinner, quite as festive in its way as that on Christmas day itself; after which the Will of Dame

Mortimer was read aloud in the great hall by one of the trustees of the Charity, who came for the purpose, and who, having concluded it, proceeded forthwith to distribute among the twelve bedesmen the yearly "dole," or gift of money, which was apportioned to each individual. This year Squire Silverdale, as principal trustee, was expected to perform the office, and preparations were made for his reception.

It may be very well for prosperous and well-fed Christians, who are clad in broadcloth and fine linen, and fare sumptuously every day, to talk of despising "the perishing things of time and sense," as though they were unworthy of a thought; but for all that, most people, rich or poor, are so constituted as to have a natural relish for a little innocent enjoyment, and our twelve bedesmen, Old Anthony among the rest, were by no means exceptions to the general rule. The feast on New Year's Day, the decoration of the hall, the arrival of the great man who was to read the Will, the distribution of the doles, and the special glass of wine which supplemented the usual modicum of small beer, and in which, on this important occasion, each pensioner drank to the memory of Dame Mortimer, the foundress of the Charity, with tea and plum cake to follow, and a cup of spiced cordial to wind up the whole, altogether constituted the grand event of the year, to which the inmates of the Bedehouse looked forward from afar with a zest of expectation unknown to those whose lives are spent in a constant round of pleasure or excitement.

Old Anthony, however, was destined this year to be no sharer in the annual festivity. What he had to do this New Year's Day was to sit still by his own bit of fire, and bear, as patiently as he might, the sharp rheumatic pains which just now, night and day, were racking his limbs; until, as he said, it seemed at times as if every joint were set in a red-hot vice.

He had plenty to condole with him in his affliction, for Anthony was a general favourite in the Bedehouse, and he took sympathy gratefully, and always had a look of welcome and a cheery word to give to any one who stepped in to inquire after him. Mrs. Burton, too, the gatekeeper's wife, took care that he should not want for anything that she could do for him; and though she had a pretty sharp tongue at times, yet she was in the main a capable and kind-hearted woman, and did not grudge a little extra trouble to those who were in need of her services.

On New Year's Day morning, when in view of what was to take place, it might naturally be expected that Anthony would feel his pain and privation more than usual, he held quite a levée, as he sat by his solitary fireside, nursing his rheumatic limbs, with his big leather-backed Bible open on a little table at his elbow. First one and then another looked in to condole and sympathise, and to recommend some special panacea of their own; for rheumatism was a common trouble among the ancient inhabitants of the Bedehouse, most of whom, at one time or another, had had sharp experience of its power to wring sighs and groans from the stoutest hearts.

Among the rest came Zachary Croker, a wiry, lean-visaged, argumentative old man, who had an uncomfortable gift for always taking things by their rough handles, and who loved nothing better than an opportunity of convincing himself and his comrades that if he had had the arrangement of things in general, they would have been very much better managed than they were.

"Why, this is a poor look-out, Master Anthony," he began, in his high piping voice; "tied by the heels in this way, and New Year's Day, of all days in the year! If you *was* to have rheumatics, they might as well have picked another day to plague you, when it wouldn't have mattered so much whether you had them or not."

"Nay," replied Anthony, shaking his white locks, "they come when the Lord sends them, and not of themselves. He has a needs-be for all He does, though I don't deny but what I should have liked to have been on my legs to-day, if it had been His will."

"Ay, ay; that's just like you," returned Zachary, with a touch of compassionate contempt in his tone. "Things are always right, to hear you talk. But to my way of thinking, it is a poor way of showing His love, for the Lord to give you these here rheumatics to bear, instead of giving you a good dinner to eat and enjoy, same as all the rest of us is looking to."

"It may seem so to you, Master Croker," said Anthony, quietly. "I thank the Lord it doesn't seem so to me. Not that the pain isn't a bit hard to bide pretty often just now; but I have it in the Book here," and Anthony laid his withered hand upon the Bible at his side, "I have it in the Book here, that *He does not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men*; and I can take Him at His word. There's a deal of things in His dealings with us that we can't see to the end of just now; but I am sure of this, Master Croker, it will all come out right at last."

"Well," said Zachary, who never willingly allowed himself to be convinced in argument, "if you can see as far as that, you can see a good bit further than I can. It passes me to tell what better either you or anybody else will be to-morrow at this time, because you have been set here by yourself all to-day with them rheumatics gripping at you, instead of taking your pleasure along with the rest of us. I put it to you now, What good is to come out of it, that you should talk of a *needs-be* for it all?"

"I can't tell, Master Zachary," answered the old man; "but the Lord knows all about it, and that's enough for me. He puts some of His servants to one kind of work, and some to another; and what He is putting me to just now is to sit still and suffer. It is harder work by a good bit than the toughest day of hedging and ditching that ever I did, and there don't seem much to show for it either, as you say, when it is over. But it is work of the Lord's choosing, not of mine, and He will pay me my wages."

"And what wage might you expect to get," inquired Zachary, "since you are so sure of having it?"

But Anthony only smiled, a quiet smile that told of the patience and peace within. It lit up his weather-beaten face as sunshine lights up a winter landscape, overspreading it with an expression of ineffable repose and joy. Even Zachary felt that the old man was in possession of some secret source of happiness that was all unknown to him. But as Anthony made no answer, beyond that quiet smile, he repeated his question somewhat impatiently—

"What wage is it now, Master Anthony, that you expect to get?"

(To be continued in our next.)

THINGS NOT BURNED UP.*

THESE words came to Isaiah after Jerusalem had been wasted with fire and famine and war; and I wish from these leaves of the tree of life, to compound a salve for a very sore burn.

Standing to-day in this brilliant Academy, by its trustees so kindly afforded us, our first feeling is one of gratitude to God and

* In the great fire that recently took place in Boston, United States, the Brooklyn Tabernacle was destroyed. On the following Sabbath the minister, the Rev. T. De Witt Talmage, preached upon the subject in words of singular eloquence and power—words which we reluctantly abridge. His text was: "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people." (Isaiah xl. 1.)

to them for so grand a refuge; but notwithstanding it is so much costlier a place than we are used to, we feel homesick. The wanderer in a strange land, amid palaces and temples and cathedrals, sits down and says to himself: "I would give the whole world for one hour under the thatched roof of my humble home." "Home, sweet home; there is no place like home." It was nothing but home sickness that made the inspired writer say: "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down; yea, we wept when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof."

The Brooklyn Tabernacle is gone! The bell that hung in its tower last Sabbath morning rang its own funeral knell. On that day we gathered from our homes with our families, to hear what Christ had of comfort and inspiration for His people. We expected to meet cheerful smiles, and warm hand-shakings, and the triumphant song, and the large brotherhood, that characterised that blessed place; but coming to the doors, we found nothing but an excited populace and a blazing church. People who had given until they deeply felt it, saw all the results of their benevolence going down into ashes; and, on that cold morning, the tears froze on the cheek of God's people as they saw they were being burned out.

Brooklyn Tabernacle is gone! The platform on which it was my joy to stand with messages of salvation; the pews in which you listened and prayed, and wept and rejoiced; the altars around which you and your children were consecrated in baptism; the communion-table where we celebrated the Saviour's love—all that scene which to us was the shining gate of heaven, is gone! I will not hide the loss. If I ever forget the glorious Sabbaths we spent there, and the sweet reunions, and the mighty demonstrations of God's Spirit among the people, may my right hand forget her cunning, and my soul be left desolate.

I am here to-night not to preach a formal sermon, but to tell you of some things that last Sabbath were not burned up.

First, the spirit of Christian brotherhood was not consumed. You never greeted the members of our church with such cordiality as this week on the street, in cars, and on the ferries. You stood on no cold formalities. The people who, during the last two years sat on the other side of the aisle, whose faces were familiar to you, but to whom you had never spoken, you greeted them this week with smiles and tears, as you said: "Well, the old place is gone." . . . If you put gold and iron, and lead and zinc in sufficient heat, they

will melt into a conglomerate mass; and I really feel that last Sabbath's fire has fused us all, grosser and finer natures, into one. It seems as if we all had our hands on a wire connected with an electric battery, and when this church sorrow started, it thrilled through the whole circle, and we all felt the shock. The oldest man and the youngest child could join hands in this misfortune.

Another thing that did not burn up is the cross of Christ. That is used to the fire. On the dark day when Jesus died the lightning struck it from above, and the flames of hell dashed up against it from beneath. That tearful, painful, tender, blessed cross still stands. On it we hang all our hopes; beneath it we put down all our sins; in the light of it we expect to make the rest of our pilgrimage. Within sight of such a sacrifice, who can feel that his lot is hard? In the sight of such a symbol, who can be discouraged, however great the darkness that may come down upon him? Jesus lives! The loving, patient, sympathising, mighty Jesus! O Lord Jesus! shall we take out of Thy hand the flowers and the fruits, and the brightness and the joys, and then turn away because Thou dost give us one cup of bitterness to drink? Oh, no, we will drink it dry! But how it is changed! Blessed Jesus, what hast Thou put into the cup to sweeten it? Why, it has become the wine of heaven, and our souls grow strong.

I remark, again, that the catholicity of the Christian churches has not been burned up. We are in the Academy to-day, not because we have no other place to go to. Last Sabbath morning, at nine o'clock, we had but one church; now we have twenty-five at our disposal. Their pastors and their trustees say: "You may take our main audience-rooms, you may take our lecture-rooms, you may take our church parlours, you may baptise in our baptisteries, and sit on our anxious seats." Oh, if there be any larger-hearted ministers or larger-hearted churches anywhere than in Brooklyn, tell me where they are, that I may go and see them before I die!

I can never say a word against any other denomination of Christians. I thank God I never have been tempted to do it. I cannot be a sectarian. I have been told I ought to be, and I have tried to be, but I have not enough material in me to make such a structure. Every time I get the thing most done, there comes a fire, or something else, and all is gone. The angels of God shake out on the air, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men."

I have to announce, also, among the things not burned up is Heaven. Fires may sweep through other cities—we heard the tolling of the bell as we came in to-night; but I am glad to know that the New Jerusalem is fire-proof. There will be no engines rushing through those streets; there will be no temples consumed in that city. Coming to the doors of that church, we will find them open, resonant with songs, and not cries of fire. O my dear brother and sister, if this short lane of life comes up so soon to that blessed place, what is the use of our worrying? I have felt a good many times this last week like Father Taylor, the sailor-preacher. He got in a long sentence while he was preaching one day and lost himself, and could not find his way out of the sentence. He stopped and said: "Brethren, I have lost the nominative of this sentence, and things are generally mixed up, but I am bound for the kingdom anyhow." And during this last week, when I saw the rushing to and fro, and the excitement, I said to myself: "I do not know just where we shall start again, but I am bound for the kingdom anyhow."

Ah! that is a good land. Why they tell me that in that land they never have a heart-ache. They tell me that a man might walk five hundred years in that land and never see a tear, or hear a sigh. They tell me of our friends who have left us and gone there, that their feet are radiant as the sun, and that they take hold of the hand of Jesus familiarly, and that they open that hand and see in the palm of it a healed wound that must have been very cruel before it was healed. And they tell me that there is no winter there, and that they never get hungry or cold, and that the sewing-girl never wades through the December snow to her daily toil, and that the clock never strikes twelve for the night, but only twelve for the day. . . .

Oh, when my sight gets dark in death, put on my eyelids that sweet ointment! When in the last weariness I cannot take another step, just help me put my-foot on that door-sill. When my ear catches no more the voices of wife and child, let me go right in to have my deafness cured by the stroke of the harpers, whose fingers fly over the strings with the anthems of the free. Heaven never burns down! . . .

Meanwhile, in the strength and help of God, we will go forward. You say: "Where are you going to get the means?" Don't know. The building of the Tabernacle within two years, and then an

enlargement at great expense, within that same time, and the establishment and the maintenance of the Lay College, have taken most of our funds. Did I say just now that I did not know where the funds are to come from? I take that back. I do! I do! From the hearts of the Christian people, and the lovers of the cause of morality all over this land. I am sure they will help us, and we shall go on, and the new structure shall rise. Why, on the dedication-day of our Tabernacle I was not more confident and was not so happy as I am now. That building did its work. We wanted to support a free Christian church; we did it, and got along pleasantly and successfully, and demonstrated the fact. The building is gone. The ninety-five souls received at the first communion in that building more than paid us for all the expenditure. We only put up the Tabernacle for two years. But having put it up, we liked it so well, we concluded to stay there permanently. But God decided otherwise; and now we have to build a larger church, and to ask all the people to come in and be saved. You know how we were crowded, and pushed, and jammed in that building; and last summer some of us talked about an enlargement, but we found it impossible without changing the structure of the building. The difficulty now is gone.

There are four things that God has demonstrated within a short time are not fire-proof. One is corrugated iron; witness the Brooklyn Tabernacle. Another is brick; witness the fire last week in Centre Street, New York. Another is stone; witness Chicago. Another is granite; witness Boston. Why, when God rises up to burn anything; a stone wall is shavings. Hear that, O you men who are building on nothing but earthly foundations! . . .

Good-bye, Old Tabernacle! your career was short but blessed, your ashes precious in our sight. In the last day may we be able to meet the songs there sung, and the prayers there offered, and the sermons there preached. Good-bye, old place, where some of us first felt the gospel peace, and others heard the last message ere they fled away into the skies! Good-bye, Brooklyn Tabernacle of 1870.

But welcome our new church (I see it as plainly as though it were already built). Your walls firmer; your gates wider; your songs more triumphant; your gatherings more glorious. Rise out of the ashes, and greet our waiting vision! Burst on our souls, O day of our church's resurrection! By your altars may we be prepared for the hour when the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. Welcome, Brooklyn Tabernacle of 1873!

THE GIFT OF GOD.

PERHAPS no cry is more striking, after all, than the short and simple cry of the water-carrier. "The gift of God!" he says, as he goes along with his water-skin on his shoulder. It is impossible to hear this cry without thinking of the Lord's word to the woman of Samaria: "If thou knewest the gift of God and who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." It is very likely that water, so invaluable and so often scarce in hot countries, was in those days spoken of as now, as the "gift of God," to denote its preciousness; if so, the expression would be exceedingly forcible to the woman, and full of meaning.

The water-carrier's cry in Egypt must always rouse a thoughtful mind to a recollection of the deep necessities of the people, of the thirst which they as yet know not of, and of the living water, which few, if any, have yet offered to the poor Moslems in that great city, and make him wish and pray for the time when the sonorous cry of "*Ya akee Allah!*" shall be the type of the cry of one bringing the living water of the gospel, and saying, "Behold the gift of God!"

MAKING A NIZE.

"YOU are a Methodist?" inquired a friend of mine—a sound Churchman and Churchwarden—of a respectable woman at whose house he happened to be lodging some years ago at Scarborough.

"Yes, sir, we are Primitives," she replied.

"Well, now tell me," he said, "what I have never been able to make out; what is the difference between Primitives and Methodists?"

"I don't know, sir," she answered, with a smile, "except it is—you see, sir, we makes the most nize!"

"But what," he continued, "do you make a noise for? And why do you make more noise than they?"

"Well, sir, I don't know why we make a nize, except because we are pleased. You see, sir, years ago, when I first 'got religion,' my

husband used to say—' Well, missus, whatever do you make such a nize for?' ' Nize, John!' says I. ' I tell you what it is—when you gets your soul convarted you'll make as much nize as any of 'em.' And sure enough he did. And I knowed he would, sir. I knowed it, because he allus made a nize when he was pleased. And that's the reason, I suppose, sir, why Primitives make more noise than Methodies—because they're most pleased."

The early days of Primitive Methodism were days, indeed, or noise. Their preachers lifted up their voices in the land; and the rabble—instigated often by the clergy, and sometimes by the magistrates—rudely and noisily, often with violence and even bloodshed, opposed the preachers' work. It seems hardly to be believed—were it not for such scenes as that witnessed the other day at Staleybridge and Ashton-under-Lyne—that less than forty years ago turbulent mobs would scatter the peaceful congregations in our market-places, like chaff before the wind, and would tear the clothes from the backs of the preachers.

Yet we have only to take up the annals of Primitive Methodism to find abundant illustration of the tyranny and violence of the ignorant, aided and abetted by those who should have known better; and who, at least, as paid servants of the State, ought to have had the decency to discountenance the flagrant breaking of public law.

Mr. Thomas Russell, for instance, was for forty years one of the itinerant preachers of the Primitive Methodist Connexion, and during that time he travelled over the whole of England and part of Ireland. On the third Sabbath in April, 1832, he was approaching Wantage, in Berkshire, where he intended to preach. When he arrived at the summit of a hill about two miles from Wantage, and saw the town lying before him, he met two men who advised him to return on account of the severe persecution which they expected he would have to encounter. He thanked them for their sympathy, but went forward on his journey. At nine o'clock he stood up in the market-place, and began to sing a hymn. He next knelt down and prayed, and concluded without molestation. But ere he commenced preaching a number of ruffians surrounded him, and he had not spoken long when a more violent company arrived, and pushed him from his standing-place, driving him before them like a beast. He heard some of them cry, " Have him down Mill-street;" and suspecting, perhaps properly, that they intended to throw him into the river, which flows at the bottom of that street, he determined, if

possible, to prevent being driven down it, and managed to keep in the market-place.

After being driven to and fro an hour or more his inhuman persecutors paused. A respectable looking person, who Mr. Russell afterwards learned was the chief constable, came to him and said, "If you will leave, all will then be quiet." Mr. Russell replied, "If I have broken the law punish me according to the law, and not in this manner." The constable then withdrew, without ever attempting to quell the lawless mob, who again assailed the solitary missionary with ruthless violence.

At length the beadle came in his church livery, and seized Mr. Russell by the collar, led him to the end of the town, and with a thrust pushed him along, and bade him "Begone!" Mr. Russell's strength was almost exhausted with the violent usage he had suffered in the market-place, but determined, if possible, to address those who had followed him thither, he stood on the side of a hedge bank, and preached as well as he was able. But his persecutors were not yet satisfied; they pelted him with stones, eggs, mud, and everything they could render available for the purpose. Even women, unmindful of the tenderness of their sex, joined in this cruel treatment; some of them knocked the dirt out of their patten rings to cast at the preacher. When Mr. Russell concluded the service he was covered from head to foot with slime, mud, rotten eggs, and other kinds of filth; and his clothes were torn and his flesh bruised.

At Farringdon similar treatment befel him, and at Shrevenham another violent reception awaited him; and when subsequently a member of the Society of Friends asked for the Methodist preacher the protection of a clerical magistrate, that worthy replied, "The people have as much right to take the course they do as the preacher has to preach in the streets." With such gentlemen as he for magistrates, it was no wonder that an uneducated and irreligious populace should assail the humble messenger of Christ with maddened fury.

Thus humble and painful were the beginnings of that work which now includes eight score thousand members, which has more than 150,000 scholars in its Sabbath-schools, and above 3,000 places of worship, besides above three thousand other places of worship, such as rented chapels, rooms, barns, and cottages. And to keep alive this mighty move, now there are over 900 regular ministers, 14,000 local preachers, and 43,000 gratuitous Sunday-school teachers. No wonder that our Primitive Methodist friends still make a "noise" in

the land; and no wonder that the memories of a past—not very remote—make the probabilities of their “absorption” into the Established Church somewhat remote.

LAZINESS IN BIBLE READING.

LORD, I discover an arrant laziness in my soul. For when I am to read a chapter in the Bible, before I begin it, I look where it endeth; and if it endeth not on the same side, I cannot keep my hand from turning over the leaf, to measure the length thereof on the other side; if it swell to many verses, I begin to grudge.

Surely my heart is not rightly affected. Were I truly hungry after heavenly food, I would not complain of meat. Scourge, Lord, this laziness of soul. Make the reading of Thy Word not a penance, but a pleasure unto me. Teach me, that as, among many heaps of gold, all being equally pure, that is the best which is the biggest, so that I may esteem that chapter in Thy Word the best which is the longest.—*Dr. Thomas Fuller.*

MRS. HEMANS.

AMID the wild scenery of the Welsh mountains the genius of Mrs. Hemans was developed. The daughter of a merchant—a Mr. G. Browne—she was born, in 1793, in the prosaic region of Liverpool; but, happily, from the uncongenial bustle of a large town she was soon removed to the romantic solitude of the Welsh hills. Her mother, a lady of Italian descent, early observed the poetical bent of the daughter's mind, and with great judgment encouraged it. Before Miss Browne reached her twelfth year a volume of her poems was published, and the success they met with encouraged her to persevere. In her case, the proverb which declares that clever children become dull men and women did not hold good. The growth of the mind kept pace with the growth of the body, and the promising spring brought forth a plenteous harvest.

Before she reached her nineteenth birthday, and when her fame was fully established, she was wedded to Captain Alfred Hemans, of the 4th Regiment. To the fact that the marriage proved an unhappy one, much of that melancholy which tinges her writings is doubtlessly due. Older than his wife, with health impaired by foreign

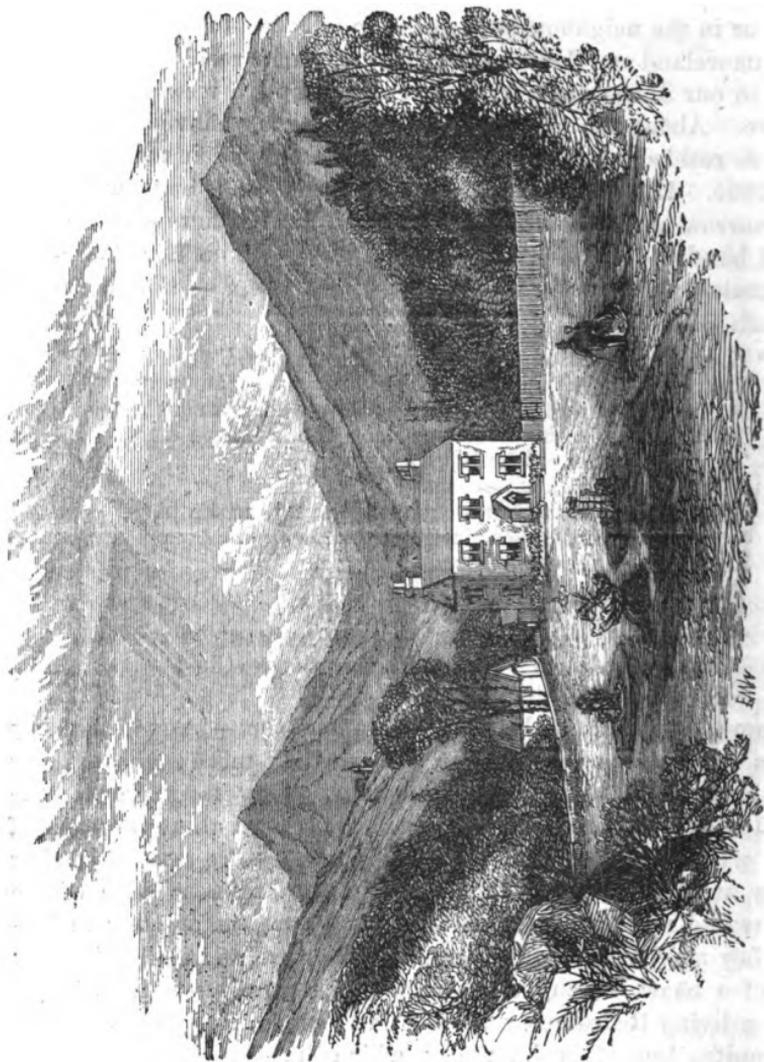
service, Captain Hemans found it needful, six years after marriage, to seek the mild climate of Italy. Mrs. Hemans, with her family, remained in England, and she never saw her husband again. The greater part of her life was spent amid the beautiful scenery of Wales, or in the neighbourhood of the equally beautiful "Lakeland" of Westmoreland and Cumberland. Her favourite residence, Rhyllon, is seen in our illustration; hand-by is St. Asaph, a view of which we also give. About the year 1831 Mrs. Hemans removed to Dublin, and there resided until the time of her death, which took place in May, 1835. Her constitution, never strong, had been weakened by the sorrow she so continually bore, and her life here closed when she had barely passed her forty-second year. From her death-bed she dictated what proved to be her last poem — the beautiful "Sabbath Sonnet."

"How many blessed ~~groves~~ ^{groves} this hour are bending
Through England's primrose meadow-paths, the way
Toward spire and tower, 'mid shadowy elms ascending,
Whence the sweet chimcs proclaim the hallowed day!
The halls, from old heroic ages gray,
Pour their fair children forth; and hamlets low,
With whose thick orchard blooms the soft winds play,
Send out their inmates in a happy flow,
Like a freed vernal stream. I may not tread
With them those pathways—to the feverish bed
Of sickness bound; yet, O my God! I bless
Thy mercy, that with Sabbath peace hath filled
My chastened heart, and all its throbbings stilled
To one deep calm of lowliest thankfulness."

At home Mrs. Hemans has had many imitators—a proof that her writings have a deep hold upon the English mind; abroad, her poems have been translated into almost every language of the civilised world—a proof that they abound with those touches of Nature which "make the whole world kin." Pre-eminently, her writings are "~~sentimental~~" Grandeur, in the ordinary sense of the term, they do not possess; monotonous, by reason of their melancholy, they may occasionally seem; but their sad and simple beauty, telling of a heart which, in the midst of sorrow, has still a living faith in a living Redeemer, seldom fails to win. Her poems are full of humanity, but it is humanity which has been chastened by suffering, and which is trusting in God through Jesus Christ: they are fitted, therefore, first to win the heart, and then to point it to its highest duties.

In the "New Congregational Hymn Book" there is one hymn—

No. 721—from the pen of Mrs. Hemans. The Rev. Josiah Miller, M.A., in "Our Hymns: their authors and origin," calls it "a touching piece in an unusual and difficult metre. It forms," he



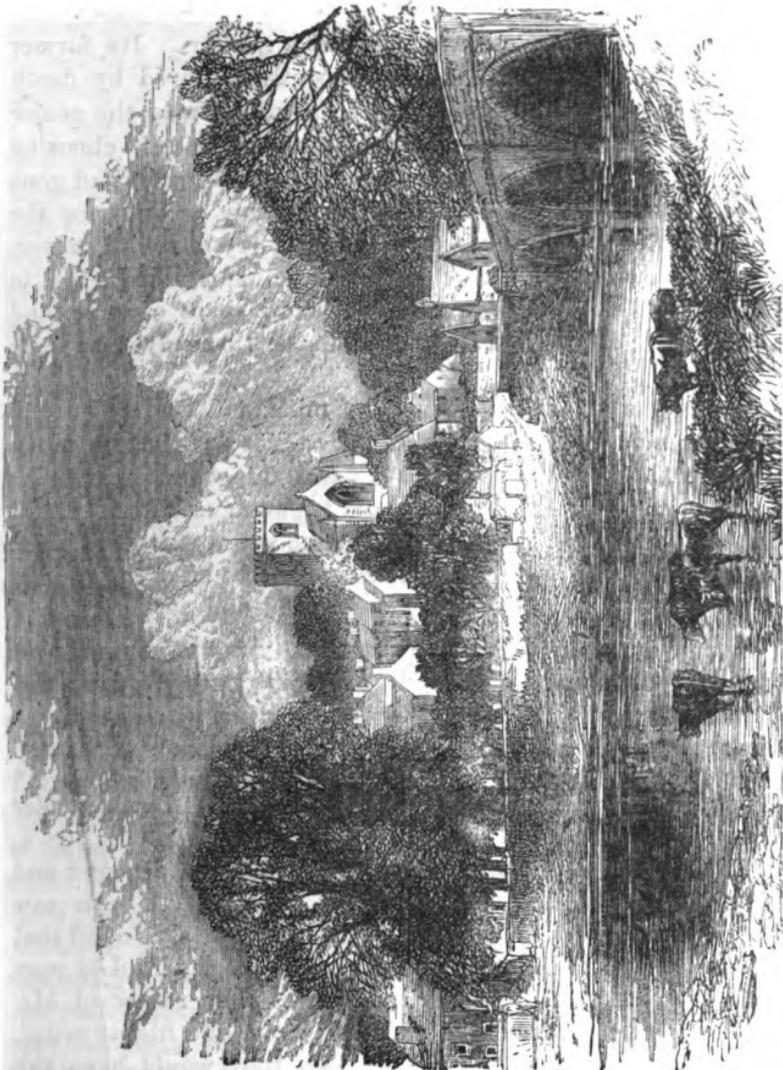
RHYLLON.

adds, "part of a funeral dirge, given at the close of a poem in blank verse, and headed, 'The Funeral-day of Sir Walter Scott.' (He died on the 21st September, 1832.) The poem begins—

'A glorious voice hath ceased!'

The funeral song consists of nine stanzas, of which four are given in the 'New Congregational' without alteration."

Mrs. Hemans contributed largely to "annuals" and to magazines.



ST. ASAPH.

Some few years after her death her works were collected and edited by her sister; and the fame of the poetess, growing during her life, has been widening on to the present hour.

HOW THE CHURCH LOST ITS WAY IN FINDING A MINISTER.

THE Church at Elverton was without a pastor. Its former minister, Mr. Lawson, had been recently removed by death after a pastorate of five and twenty years. Only a few of the senior members of the Church had therefore had any experience in choosing a minister; unless, indeed, we except a small number who had gone to Elverton from other places. This may partly account for the mistakes into which the people fell. I am sorry to say, however, that I have known some Churches which unhappily have had to choose nearly half-a-dozen pastors in the same space of time, and who have no more cause than we have to flatter themselves on their sagacity.

Mr. Lawson was an intimate friend of mine, and I never knew a better man or a more faithful pastor. I cannot say that he was a great preacher, but his ministry was a painstaking and instructive one. He studied his Bible diligently, and his sermons as well as his conversation showed that in other respects he was a well-read man. I dare say the sermons were constructed somewhat after the models of a former day, but for all that they were good and earnest. As a Christian and a minister he was held in the highest esteem; and his removal was deeply regretted, not by his own people only, but throughout the whole town and neighbourhood.

The funeral over, and the funeral sermon preached, as was quite natural, the people began to talk about a new pastor, and some six weeks after Mr. Lawson's death a meeting was called to consider what steps should now be taken.

I had beforehand some conversation with both the deacons and other members of the Church and congregation, and I soon saw reason to fear that troubles would arise. For instance, I found that many of the people had the most exalted notions of the kind of man they would require for their pastor. Much as they respected Mr. Lawson, they must now, they said, seek a preacher of a higher order, and they evidently flattered themselves that they would have the choice of numbers of first-rate men, any one of whom would be delighted to accept their invitation. They were quite capable, they thought, of appreciating and enjoying the best preaching, and Elver-

ton was an important and rising town, in which it was indispensable that the denomination should be well represented.

Elverton, at the time of which I speak, had a population of about ten thousand, and the Church had never given Mr. Lawson above £130 a-year. But they would give more than that, they said—£20 or £30 more; and, besides, if they got the right man, there was no telling how the Church might prosper, or how large a salary they might be able to give him.

It was in vain I hinted that men such as they talked about were by no means so numerous as they fancied. I really believe they thought they were almost as plentiful as blackberries. It was equally in vain that I suggested that, even though they could offer double the salary they were at all likely to give, other considerations than pecuniary ones were not without their influence upon men in the choice of their spheres of labour; and that other things being equal, a man of real power would choose the sphere in which he saw the largest scope for his energies. They did not see that, and at any rate they would try to get a first-rate man.

It is only right to say that several of the deacons and some of the most judicious members of the Church were much more moderate in their expectations. They did not want a minister in every respect the exact counterpart of their former pastor, and they felt it to be indispensable that they should secure, if it were possible, an able and well-educated man; but they had the good sense to see that Elverton must be content with something short of the ideal minister which some were picturing in their imaginations. Above all, they said, "Let us have a good man."

A Church-meeting was called, and there was a large attendance. The first thing done, after an expression of kindly sympathy with Mrs. Lawson and her family, was the appointment of a "Committee of Supply," including the deacons *ex officio*, but adding a number of other members of the Church. I do not think the deacons quite liked the arrangement, but they offered no opposition.

The deacons had already received several letters recommending ministers to the vacant pastorate: these they laid before the meeting. After considerable discussion, it was resolved that two of the gentlemen recommended in these communications should be heard; but, besides, that the Committee should be requested to write to the heads of our principal Colleges and elsewhere, asking for the names of others likely to meet the wishes of the Church. From the gentlemen

who might be mentioned in reply to such inquiries they were to select other two. The four were then to be heard in succession, for two Sundays each, and then a meeting was to be called to decide whether any one of them should be heard again or at once invited to the pastorate.

Will it be believed that it never occurred to anybody that this was anything but an excellent arrangement? Yet such was the fact. I am glad to be able to say, however, that one of the ministers first-named having heard what they were about, declined to supply the pulpit. He refused, he said, to be put in "competition" with anybody, as he believed that whilst such a plan was lowering to the ministry, it was in a still greater degree the source of contention in Churches; nor can there be a doubt that he was right. No Church should dream of having before it two candidates at the same time. And the pity is that all ministers desirous of change do not absolutely refuse, in all cases, to allow themselves to be pitted as rival candidates against each other.

The four ministers were, however, eventually invited, and accepted the invitation. Each of the four aroused interest in himself, and had his friends, I might almost say his partisans, in the Church, who thought him decidedly the most suitable. At the Church-meeting—however, rather a stormy one—there was a clear majority for Mr. Bolton, a student from one of the Colleges, and it was resolved to hear him two Sundays more. In compliance with the request of the Church he visited them again, and I had good hopes that they would invite him to be their minister. To my thinking it would have been well if they had done so. He was an excellent young man, and he is labouring in his present sphere with acceptance and usefulness.

At the close of his second visit a Church-meeting was summoned, and it was proposed that an invitation should be forwarded to him; but it was found that he had failed to secure the requisite majority. Some did not like a young man; but the chief reason of his rejection was that the friends of the other three candidates, each party clinging to the hope of ultimately securing the election of the man of their choice, although they agreed in nothing else, agreed in this, that they would not have Mr. Bolton.

There followed a long season of heartburning and disunion, in the course of which some left the Church, never to return to it. Several other candidates were heard, but the Church had fallen into a state of chronic division, and the people agreed about none, and, I might

almost add, about nothing. Others threatened to leave, and everybody was weary.

Just when they were in this condition, a minister was named to them by a friend of one of the Committee, and they decided to hear him. It turned out afterwards that the party by whom he was recommended really knew very little about him, but that he had acceded to the minister's request to name him to the people at Elverton, more because of his importunity than for any other reason. The minister thus introduced was not without a certain kind of talent, but I think I never met a man with more superficiality and pretension. The greater part of the people were taken by storm. This was just the man they wanted, and if they could only get him the chapel would be filled in three months. There were those who did not believe either in the man or his preaching. There was every likelihood that he would be invited.

Meanwhile the Committee had been guilty of a serious oversight: they had neglected to make proper inquiries as to the previous character and work of the man whom they invited to preach with a view to the pastorate. I am afraid that some of them, at least, were at that time a good deal more solicitous about talent than worth. I don't mean to say that they would knowingly have asked a man of dubious reputation, but I mean that they did not deem inquiry on that point of paramount importance. Before the invitation was actually given a neighbouring minister wrote to one of the deacons, urging him and his brethren to make further inquiry. The tone of his letter was such as to indicate that he knew something about the candidate which was not quite satisfactory. The deacons laid the letter before the Committee, but the greater part of them treated it lightly. If Mr. Benson knew anything, they said, why did he not come out with it at once? Some even insinuated that perhaps he was afraid of being outshone by a brighter light. Others, thinking that in the existing state of the Church an immediate settlement was the only thing that could save it from destruction, closed their eyes with something like wilfulness, and agreed that they should proceed without further delay. The man was accordingly invited. For a little time after his settlement there was much of sensational stir, but that soon wore itself out, and there came a collapse. Eventually they were glad to pay a round sum to get rid of him.

It was a great relief to nearly everybody when the pulpit was once more vacant, but for a little time things were sadly disjointed. Some

of the members of the Church, who ought to have known better, declared that they would have nothing to do with the election of another minister; but, for the most part, they had good sense enough, after a little reflection, to give up their hasty resolve. It was wisely decided that a little breathing-time should be taken before proceeding to another election. At length, after an interval of between two and three months, the Church met to consider what steps should be taken to choose another minister. It is gratifying to be able to state that the meeting was one of the most pleasant kind that could be expected under all the circumstances. It is evident that the people had learnt wisdom by the troubles through which they had passed. First of all, they now resolved to implore the Divine blessing and direction, both in their closets and in prayer-meetings, to be specially called for that purpose. A series of resolutions were also passed, to the effect that no minister was to be heard concerning whose antecedents the fullest inquiry had not previously been made, and in whose moral and religious worth there was not just reason for the utmost confidence. It was especially resolved that there should be no rival candidates. And, further, without coming to a formal resolution on the subject, there was a hearty concurrence in the suggestion, that whoever might be chosen by the requisite legal majority, which was two-thirds of the Church, the minority should hold themselves bound in honour loyally to accept the decision. Thus the Church was, at the outset, in a fair way for an amicable settlement.

Counsels so prudent met with their reward. In a few weeks the pulpit was occupied with ministers who it was known were "ineligible" for the pastorate. Meanwhile inquiries were diligently made, and a gentleman was recommended who was believed, by the concurrent testimony of several competent advisers, to be well suited to the vacant pastorate. A deputation first went to hear him. The report was most favourable, and when he came to preach he united the suffrages of the people, and I am happy to say he accepted their invitation. He has already been very useful, and is much beloved. Long may they keep him! And if at a future time it should devolve upon the Church to select a minister, I think they will not need any fresh caution to avoid the evils that befel them when they lost their way in finding a minister.

No man ever did a designed injury to another, without doing a greater to himself.

POPULAR TOPICS OF THE HOUR.

III.—THE NATIONAL CHURCH.

BY REV. J. RADFORD THOMSON, M.A.

THE present condition of the National Church cannot be regarded without concern and anxiety. There is one good sign: religious life is active, as it has not been for generations. Whilst there are still hundreds, perhaps thousands of parishes, where clergy and people are alike asleep, and content to be so, there is no doubt that, on the other hand, in a vast number of cases, the adherents of the Establishment have awoken from their slumber, and are manifesting the fact in unmistakable ways.

What has been the result? Differences, before latent, have come to light. Errors, long neglected, have challenged attention. The discrepancy between the religion of a very large section of the clergy and that of the bulk of the population has emerged into conspicuousness. When its members were asleep, the household passed for one united. Now that they are awake it is seen that they are at variance. Our National Church is, in the sight of all men, a house divided against itself; and it is beginning to be seen by all men that, as such, it cannot stand.

But there are some to whom these diversities in belief and practice, so obvious and even obtrusive in our national clergy, are regarded with satisfaction. Are they not proofs of the activity and independence of the clerical mind? Would it not be a contradiction to the enlightened and free spirit of modern times to put any check upon the development and utterance of religious thought? Should we not be more than tolerant of the liberty of the clergy? We answer: The liberty of the clergy is the bondage of the laity. Is the teacher to be free, in order that the taught may be enslaved? For this, and nothing less, is what it comes to!

The Evangelical clergyman may be sincere in inculcating his views of the doctrine of predestination. The Anglo-Catholic may mean what he says when he claims power upon confession to remit my sins. The Broad-churchman may have his own reasons for making the improvement of drains and cesspools the theme of his pulpit discourse. But whilst these all, in their adjoining parishes, are exercising their liberty and delivering their souls, what is to become of the parish-

ioner? Perhaps, to him, predestination is as dry husks, sacerdotalism worse than the pestilence, and he has a soul above drains. Poor parishioner! "still from one sorrow to another thrown." But what does that matter, whilst the clergy are left to enjoy their liberty, and to work out their rival theories under the sanction of the State?

The fact is, the appointed formularies of our Establishment are such as to afford a fair standing ground for both parties. Let the Ritualist shut his eyes to the articles, and what does he see but what is confirmatory of his position? Let the Evangelical forget his ordination service, and some offices beside, and he will wonder how any one can question the Protestantism of the church of his reforming fathers. Let any one examine for himself the works of Mr. Blunt and of Dr. Blakeney upon the Book of Common Prayer, and he will see what a very good case each party can make out for itself. Indeed, each is right in what it affirms, and both are wrong in what they deny.

These divergences have always existed in the bosom of the National Church. I will venture to say that never, since the passing of the Act of Uniformity, has it been possible for a man to be a *consistent* member of the Church of England. The Establishment is a Janus, facing both ways. From the time of the Stuarts until now there have been two great parties of religious thinkers in her communion—to say nothing of the very large party whom it would be wrong to describe as thinkers at all. If Conformists are angry with us for saying so, they do not scruple to use similar language themselves. The Anglo-Catholic is scandalised beyond measure at persons calling themselves Protestants presuming to take orders which bind them to the discharge of functions from which they shrink. The Evangelical is shocked beyond expression at the horrible notion that his church is one of the three branches of the Catholic stem. "You're a traitor," says the Catholic to the Evangelical. "No," says the Protestant, "the ship sails under my colours, and I'll stick to her as long as she will float." Yet neither can shut his eyes to the fact that his opponent stands by his side with the same legal footing as himself.

However, a fact is one thing, and the recognition of that fact is another. And recent events have made it clear, that for the preservation of England from popery we must look elsewhere than to the Anglo-Catholic communion. In truth, when long ago our forefathers in this land burnt the tree of popery, they *saved the seed*. The seed

was deposited in the Prayer-Book, and it has lately grown with amazing swiftness and borne fruit after its kind.

Now, whilst there have always been opposing parties in the Establishment, and always justification for the existence of those parties in the authorised formularies, events which have occurred of late years have certainly opened the eyes of many who have hitherto been blind to the facts of the case. First, the rise of the Tractarian controversy, literature, and party; secondly, the more recent development of ceremonialism; and thirdly, the Bennett judgment. These in succession have concurred in shaking the confidence of Englishmen in the alleged and boasted Protestantism of our National Church. It may be safely predicted that no further efforts will be made to oust the Romanisers from their position. A generation back it was the custom to proclaim aloud that the Church of England was the one great bulwark against popery; and even now some few old ladies of both sexes are to be found who devoutly believe in that ancient cry. But among intelligent men, this dogma, this delusion, is exploded into shivers and shivereens.

It is impossible here to pass over the recent contention in the Establishment regarding the Athanasian Creed. We do not attempt to express any opinion as to whether the doctrine and language of that Creed are scriptural or reasonable. But surely it must be admitted to be a very significant fact that a memorial with ten thousand signatures has been prepared, urging the expediency of relief from what the memorialists feel a burden; and that a counter petition in support of the Creed, as a bulwark of the Anglican Church, has been signed by twelve thousand persons. No one can deny that intellect, learning, thought, and influence, are to be found on both sides. How is the dispute to be decided? The ultimate decision must probably rest with parliament. And how is parliament to deal with the question, in view of such a vast schism in the ranks of those who may be termed *bonâ fide* members of the Episcopal Church? Questions of this nature must arise, and the nation must see how utterly unsuitable a tribunal for their discussion and decision is furnished by our national legislature.

The southern counties especially contain dioceses in which every episcopal encouragement has for years past been given to the practical realisation of the sacerdotal theory. Evangelical clergymen have told me of districts in which a silent and gradual, but certain transformation is taking place; the so-called Catholic doctrine is flooding the rural

parishes ; and before long the population of thousands of parishes appears likely to be divided into conforming Catholics and non-conforming Protestants. That is to say, an effort is to be supported and sanctioned by all the authority and all the resources of this great nation to bring England back under the yoke of mediæval bondage. Do the dilettanti classes and certain supercilious, but too often ill-informed writers in our metropolitan press, imagine that we, whose ecclesiastical forefathers, Puritan and Nonconforming, suffered and died as a witness to the spirituality of the religion of Christ, are going tamely to stand by and to look coldly on, whilst the political authority, the social prestige, and the material wealth of our country are employed to rivet the fetters of superstition upon the links of ignorance ? Is it to be supposed that we will allow the finger of the State to point the people's gaze of reverence and of faith to priests and altars and sacraments ; and the voice of the State to proclaim, "These be thy gods, O Israel" ? It shall never be ! So surely as our watchword is freedom, and our element is light,—so surely will we demand that no priesthood shall be commissioned by our rulers to outrage the purest beliefs and to violate the noblest traditions of our country. The battle between truth and error, between superstition and liberty, shall be fought on fair and open ground ; and if we ask from our governors no favour for the one cause, yet it must be understood we will suffer no favour for the other.

We cannot too clearly understand, we cannot too profoundly feel the lofty nature and the far-reaching issues of this movement to which we have committed ourselves. It is one of those movements which mark an era in the development of a country and in the history of mankind. It is one of those great liberal and liberalising movements which, under God, are contributing to render this great nation, so peerless in its race, so glorious in its annals, and so imperial in its power, the eternal home of liberty and the inspiration and the hope of man.

"Do you not see a difficulty with regard to the miracle of the dividing of the Red Sea?" said a sceptic not long ago to the Rev. Newman Hall. "A difficulty?" he replied. "Oh, yes, I quite see a difficulty about the Red Sea altogether. But my difficulty is not how it was divided, but how it was made. But surely He who could make it could divide it."

THOUGHTS—GRAVE AND GAY.

"THE heart of man," writes a homilist, "is a small matter. It is not enough for a kite's dinner, yet the whole world will not content it."

Massillon was once asked to preach in aid of an orphanage. The day appointed the church overflowed, so that even standing room was not to be found. In the gallery above the pulpit were the children who so sorely needed help. At length the preacher stood up, and all waited breathlessly for the bursts of eloquence they anticipated. Massillon paused a moment, looking down on the sea of upturned faces; then silently he turned and pointed to the poor children. It was enough.

To make the ideas seem better than the words is all but the highest triumph in the use of words.

Mental pleasures never cloy; unlike those of the body, they are increased by repetition, approved of by reflection, and strengthened by enjoyment.

By means of the confessional, and the fear of absolution being withheld, the priest gets possession, through the mother, daughters, and servants, of all the secrets of every Romish family, and even of Protestant families where there are Romish servants. He compares the statements of each, communicates them to his superior, and thus an organised body acts as a network over the entire kingdom.

Death is one thing to the living and another to the dying. God Himself has lived and died, and knows all about it.

A bitter jest is the poison of friendship; and he who restrains not his tongue shall live in trouble.

Prayer without watching is hypocrisy; and watching without prayer is presumption.

Troubles are like babies, they grow bigger by nursing. But babies are not, therefore, always troubles.

Christianity is Christ.

The blossom cannot tell what becomes of its odour, and no man can tell what becomes of his influence and example that roll away from him and go beyond his ken on their mission.

ADMIRATION.

NEVER force yourself to admire anything when you are not in the humour, but never force yourself away from what you feel to be lovely in search of anything better; and gradually the deeper scenes of the natural world will unfold themselves to you in still increasing fulness of passionate power; and your difficulty will be no more to seek or to compose subjects, but only to choose one from among the multitude of melodious thoughts with which you will be haunted, thoughts which will of course be noble or original in proportion to your own depth of character and general power of mind; for it is not, so much by the consideration you give to any single drawing, as by the previous discipline of your powers of thought, that the character of your composition will be determined. Simplicity of life will make you sensitive to the refinement and modesty of scenery, just as inordinate excitement and pomp of daily life will make you enjoy coarse colours and affected forms. Habits of patient comparison and accurate judgment will make your art precious, as they will make your actions wise; and every increase of noble enthusiasm in your living spirit will be measured by the reflection of its light upon the works of your hands.—*Ruskin.*

MOTHERLINESS.

SUCH true and tender motherliness is the greatest power, it seems to me, that can invest a woman. All mothers do not possess it. On some, on the contrary, the motherly love which passionately enfolds those within, is too like a bustling fortification of jealousy and exclusiveness to those without. Or rather (that I dishonour not the most sacred thing in our nature), I should say, the mother's love which is from above, is lowered and narrowed into a passion by the selfishness which is not from above. And some unmarried women possess it; some little maidens even, who from infancy draw the little ones to them by a soft irresistible attraction, and seem to fold them under soft, dovelike plumage. Without something of it, women are not women, but only weaker, shriller, and smaller men.—*The Draytons and the Davenants.*

WHEN we come to the throne of grace, we must plead Christ, and not ourselves, if we hope to be heard and answered.

CHURCH NEWS OF THE MONTH.

MR. GLADSTONE has sown the wind and reaped the whirlwind. Three years ago he thrust an offensive and reactionary Education Bill down the throats of his protesting friends, and his self-satisfied lieutenant, Mr. Forster, has since been gaily "cantering" over religious difficulties in general, and over the convictions of Non-conformists in particular. The Education problem, however, will yet receive a satisfactory solution.

It seems as though it would be scarcely possible to conduct the controversy on the disestablishment question to its inevitable conclusion in a manner consistent with the habits and tastes of English gentlemen and Christians. When clergymen prefer to associate themselves and their cause with every form of vulgarity and violence, when, ceasing to rely on argument, they enter into alliance with the votaries of beer, fisticuffs, and rowdiness generally, we can only remind them that they may find that they that take the sword will perish by the sword.

Surprise has been expressed at the sectarianism of spirit and apparent ignorance of the law that characterises the administration of the Education Department. It transpires that the subordinates are chiefly if not wholly Tories as well as Churchmen. Such persons, with Mr. Forster at their head, will of course account for anything, and especially for anything likely to separate Mr. Gladstone from those who formerly were his followers and friends.

How deeply the spirit of arrogance is laid in the bosom of men who have been born in a State Church is shown in the sister isle. There a small sect, containing but a fraction of the population—who have recently undergone the humiliation of being publicly disestablished—insists on giving to itself the title of "*the Church of Ireland.*"

The Bishop Suffragan of Nottingham has recently urged the use of liturgical forms by the clergy of the Establishment on a ground that is certainly not complimentary to his clerical brethren. Non-conformists, said the bishop, expressed their belief that "the presence of the Holy Ghost was vouchsafed in far richer abundance to those congregations where the utterances of prayer and praise were the extemporaneous effusions of the heart of the minister. In reply to this he would ask them to make one supposition. If the clergy of the Established Church were left to follow their own ideas in public

prayer, was it not very probable, nay, was it not certain, that a great deal that was erroneous in point of doctrine would be said? The people would be left to the mercy of the minister, and would be made *the victims of his ignorance.*"

An honoured name has passed away from among us. Of the late Rev. Dr. Guthrie it has been said: "No one who heard him could forget the tone of his voice, the wealth and variety of his illustration, and the pathos which overpowered his audience. But he never forgot to preach Jesus Christ. Although he was little of an ecclesiastic he did lasting service to the Free Church, by which he will be long remembered. Those comfortable manses which the ministers of that Church now enjoy were chiefly erected by his efforts. He was mainly instrumental in raising £100,000 for that purpose, and it was in that labour that he contracted the heart disease from which he so long suffered. The world has heard of him as a great philanthropist—and so he was. And he is gone! A man to be missed in a day like this, when we have men of little fame and little liberality, and when a man of large liberality and strong sympathies is much needed in the Church. At St. Leonard's, a week ago, the loving friend was surrounded by loving friends: the lover of little children had a little child to sing to him what he called the 'bairns' hymns,' 'Gentle Jesus,' and 'There is a Happy Land.'"

The London Congregational Chapel Building Society announces that during the last twenty-four years it has aided in the erection or enlargement of 103 chapels, providing accommodation for more than 90,000 persons, at a cost of £430,000, of which the Society had contributed £124,000.

Mr. Newman Hall has expressed his thanks for £8,200 received by him for the perpetuation of the Surrey Chapel Institution. £12,000 more is required.

The Rev. Dr. Kennedy will preach the annual sermon in connection with the London Missionary Society at Surrey Chapel, and the Rev. Thomas Jones, of Swansea, will preach to the young. John Crossley, Esq., of Halifax, will preside at the annual meeting.

The following pastorates have been accepted:—Rev. J. G. Jukes, of West Bromwich, at Newark; Rev. Samuel Chisholm, of Bourne, at Spalding; Rev. John Trist, of Clitheroe, at Lynn; and Rev. Elvery Dothie, B.A., of Lancaster, at Selhurst Church, Croydon.

OLD ANTHONY.

BY MARY SHERWOOD.

CHAPTER V.

ANTHONY had closed his eyes, as though some pleasant dream were passing over him, but as Zachary repeated his question, he opened them, still with the same quiet smile upon his face.

"Why, as to wage, Master Zachary," he said, "it would be enough for any good and faithful servant to hear his Lord say, 'Well done,' when all was over and the rest time came. But blessed be His name, there is more than that; there is the 'joy of the Lord' that He has promised to those who serve Him well. And what that joy shall be," added Anthony, glancing reverently upward, "no tongue can speak, and no heart can know."

Zachary was silent for a moment; then, half vexed with himself, he took up the argument afresh.

"Ay, ay," he said, unwilling still to own himself convinced; "but a man had need make a long arm to reach as far as the other side of the grave, that way to get his wage. It's a poor look-out, as I take it, for him to wait so long afore the Lord settles with him for what he is a doing now. Weekly wage would be a better thing, to my thinking, and let alone the chance of so much coming in a lump, as one may say, when you are past needing aught."

Anthony turned himself with difficulty, and laying his cramped and aching hand upon the Bible at his side, he pointed to a verse upon the open page, and read aloud the words, "Godliness with contentment is great gain; having promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come."

"That is my experience, Master Zachary," he said. "The Lord has good things to give to His servants in this life, as well as in the next. I've seen a deal of trouble in my time, and I have lost pretty nigh everything that most men set store by; but this I can say, that the Lord has never taken anything from me but what He has given me something better in its stead. He took my wife out of my arms and laid her in her grave; and He took my girl Rachel from me; and He took my two lads and the little one, till I was left to go down childless to the grave; and He took my bits of

savings, and the use of limbs for work. But blessed be His name, He has never taken His love away from me, and with that I am richer than all things else could make me."

The old man paused a moment, as if in meditation; his face shining the while with that strange, sweet light that comes from the very presence of God within the soul.

"Ay, rich and happy, too," he went on, presently. "There are times when I have set here with these rheumatics keeping on as if some live thing was gnawing at my bones, and yet the Lord has filled my heart that full of the comfort of His love, while I wouldn't have changed places with the richest man alive. No, not with the Squire himself, if he would have took my pains from me and given me his houses and his lands instead."

"You are right there, Anthony," said a deep voice from some one who had been standing till now a little withdrawn in the open doorway.

Zachary started, and Anthony looked round bewildered, and made a vain attempt to rise from his chair and salute his unexpected guest. It was the Squire himself, who, unperceived by either of the two old men, had been a silent hearer of the conversation, and who came forward now, and as courteously as if he had been speaking to a gentleman like himself, bade Anthony not disturb himself by rising. He had just heard, he said, from the gatekeeper, that the old man was suffering too much to be present in person at the distribution of the doles, so he had brought the money to him himself.

Zachary with all convenient speed made his "obedience" and his exit, congratulating himself that it was not he who had taken the great man's name lightly on his lips; while Old Anthony, in some little perturbation, began a humble disclaimer of any intention of disrespect in what he had just been saying.

But the Squire waived his apologies, and set the old man at his ease, by declaring that it was he who ought rather to ask pardon, for having listened to what was not intended for his ear.

"And I think," he added, seating himself, as if he meant to stay and continue the conversation on his own account, "I may thank you, too, for I have heard better teaching from your lips just now than I have ever heard in my life before from any one else. You may well say you would not change with me; for if all you say be true, and your face looks as if it were, you are happier as you are than any

man's wealth could make you. You must have some wonderful secret of your own to keep you so much more than content with all your troubles and privations."

Anthony looked into the Squire's face, kindlier and lest stern just now than was its wont, but furrowed by the marks that sorrow, and remorse, and unrest had ploughed so deeply into it; and a swift prayer went upward from his heart, that to this dark and weary soul, so long seeking rest and finding none, might be given the like comfort that he himself had known. And with the prayer there came the thought that perhaps it was to this very end that his own suffering had just now been sent him, that through it he might witness for his Master, proving by his own experience that there was no burden so heavy but in the strength that the Lord gives it could be borne.

"You say true, sir," he said, and a quiet smile came like sunshine over his face again. "You say true. I have a secret, though it is one that every one may know if they will. 'The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him;' and a blessed one it is, for it tells them that have it how sorrow may be turned into joy, and how even loss may be counted as a gain."

There was no mistaking the simple earnestness of the old man's tones, the inwrought conviction of the truth that spoke in every word. The Squire had been accustomed to despise as "cant" anything in others, especially in the poor, which savoured of religious speech; but he felt that the old bedesman was speaking out of the fulness of his own innermost experience; and he felt, too, what no human being can be quite insensible to—the touch of that intense sympathy which at the moment was breathing itself out upon him.

There was something in Anthony's dim, aged eyes, in the tones of his trembling voice, that touched a chord long unstirred in the Squire's heart. It broke the spell of his hitherto silent grief; it made him long, reserved and self-enclosed as he was, to stoop down and touch his thirsty lips with one drop of that comfort which in his rebellious pride he had hitherto denied himself the comfort of; and to lay, though but for a moment, the burden of his pain upon another, who, like himself, had known what it was to bow beneath the same bitterness of woe.

How it was he hardly knew, but the icy barriers of his pride melted away in that atmosphere of self-forgetting love which he felt surrounding him. He found himself, almost to his own surprise,

talking to the old bedesman as a man talks with his friend, inquiring into his history, listening to the tale of sorrow which he had to tell, and hearing of the goodness that had supported him through all.

Anthony's voice trembled, and his eyes grew dim, as he spoke of his wife and children, and of the pang that it had been to part first with one and then with another, till all were gone, and in his old age he was left alone. And then his spirit rose, and his voice gathered strength again, as he broke into a triumphant strain.

"Surely," he said, "the Lord has all my treasures in His own keeping, and He will give them back to me in His own good time. I have a good hope, sir, a good hope through grace; and a man that has that can make shift to do without a deal of things else. I had rather a thousand times, sir, be as I am, and feel that all is kept safe for me up yonder, and that when the door of this clay cottage is opened, there is nought to do but to step over the threshold and into the mansion prepared for me in my Father's house above, than I would be as many a man is, that has nought to care for but what this world holds for him, and knows that when he is bidden hence he must leave all and go out into the dark."

The old bedesman paused. His eyes were closed, his lips were moving as if in prayer. The peace which passeth all understanding was resting like light upon his face, as though the hand of God visibly had touched it.

The Squire, too, was silent; his soul was reverent; his heart was humble at that moment as a little child's. The sacred flame burning ever on the altar of the old man's life had lit up the darkness of his own. The scales were falling from his eyes; he saw, as he had never seen before, that religion was a reality; that those who possessed it, though they had suffered the loss of all things else, were rich beyond all that this world has to give. Feelings too big for utterance were struggling within him. At last, as though obeying an impulse that he could not resist, he rose and grasped the old man's hand in his.

"You are a happy man, Anthony," he said, in a voice broken by emotion. "A happier man than I am. I would give all that I possess, ten times told, to feel as much of heaven on this side the grave as you do, and to be as sure of it on the other, too."

At that moment, from the heart of the aged saint, a prayer arose which cleft its way on the strong wings of faith right up to the great white throne—a mighty cry, the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man, that into this darkened soul light might shine.

"Sir," he said, "if you was to give all you had, ten times told, you would be nought bettered by it. It is the heart that the Lord wants, and may He help you to give it to Him!"

"Amen," said the Squire, solemnly; and he went out quickly and shut the door.

That day there was joy in the presence of the angels of God over a sinner repenting. The proud man had become as a little child, and the angel of peace had led him by the hand into the kingdom of God. With Squire Silverdale, from that time forth, old things had passed away, and all things had become new!

(To be concluded in our next.)

RECENT ARTICLES ON MINISTERS' INCOMES.

WE are thankful to learn that some articles recently published in these pages with regard to ministers' incomes have been read with interest, and, we hope, with profit. There can be no doubt that, in effect, a great reduction of ministers' incomes has taken place within the last few months, and has involved anxiety and even privation in many a home. Our churches are justly scandalised if a minister gets into debt; yet surely, in the event of such a calamity, part of the responsibility would rest upon those who by oversight or illiberality may have brought about the embarrassment.

One esteemed and useful minister recently writing to us, says that it would be to him "an unspeakable consolation" if, by being made a member of the Pastors' Retiring Fund, he could hope for provision being made against the wants of old age; and he asks if he is correct in an impression he has received, that if he were to make a payment of £5, the privilege of membership might be secured for him. And then he adds words which it would be well if some of our readers would ponder: "As I have no other prospect for old age, I naturally feel anxious to secure an interest in this fund. At the same time, when I tell you that £80 a year is the total of my income from all sources, you will readily believe that even five pounds can scarcely be saved. Yet I would rather hold back five pounds from my family now than not be secure of such provision."

Again. A minister of superior ability writes: "I greatly thank you—and in this, I assure you, I am heartily joined by my wife—for the two

special articles in your January and February numbers. Take my case. I was six years at college; and then, with what anxiety God knows, I undertook to labour here in the Christian ministry. The sole earthly return for this is £100, paid sometimes so irregularly, that a month elapses after it is due: this for the most exhausting, constant, and incessant toil possible to man. No wonder ministers fail and churches are vacant!"

Once more. An evangelist, who has been some years at work, writes: "I am glad you have written upon the subject of ministers' salaries, and sincerely hope some good may come of it. I can honestly say we feel the pressure of these hard times very severely. Even with the strictest economy, we find it no easy task to feed and clothe four of us, besides paying house-rent, the purchase of firing, &c., out of our £60 a year, or £5 per month. With the help of my good wife, I have put down a few figures, which will show you pretty exactly what is our expenditure out of our £5 per month:—Rent, per month, 10s.; coal and wood, 8s.; bread and flour, 15s.; groceries, &c., per month, £1 7s.; meat, 15s.; vegetables, 3s.; milk, 1s. 6d.; lighting, 2s. 6d.; total, £4 2s. You will see by the above figures how much remains for the education of our children, provision against sickness and old age, the purchase of clothing, &c. Of course, the purchase of books is out of the question, with the exception of monthly periodicals. I think it is not to be wondered at if sometimes we are depressed in spirit in the midst of our grand and glorious work. I think I need say no more. The facts speak for themselves."

We would press this matter on the grave consideration especially of our Deacons. Our ministers cannot, or, at any rate, will not, speak for themselves—will not assert even their own just claims. They may be blamed or not blamed, for often carrying their delicacy too far; but, even if poor, they are usually too proud to assert even their rights in these matters, nor ought they to be placed in such a position as that it should be required. The initiative should be taken by others. The responsibility, in fact, lies with the deacons. The members of our churches and congregations would, in numberless instances, do more if the subject were wisely and kindly placed before them by the church officers, to whom they naturally look for guidance in these affairs. And if we may be allowed to state our own impressions on this subject, and to utter a faithful word, it would be that those churches that have been least aware of their

duties in these matters are those in the wealthy north-midland districts of England. Tales are told which it is hardly possible to believe, of the wretched incomes that used, in years past, to be given to ministers of high character and ability in rich towns of Yorkshire and Lancashire, and in some districts they are not very much better now. Prosperous manufacturers will attend chapels to which they contribute the most contemptible fraction of their incomes; will show a generous liberality to every kind of object—political, philanthropic, and aggressive, at home and abroad, and yet neglect the decent support of their own ministry. In fact, to put it broadly and bluntly, we might say that in some of the north-midland counties the belief of certain individuals in our churches is, "Be generous before you are just. Give to anybody and everybody, whether he has any claim upon you or none, but don't on any account discharge the plain debt which you have incurred to your minister. Give splendid collections for Timbuctoo, and half starve your own pastor in the next street. Have a larger collection than ever for the children of your Sunday-school, and keep your minister so poor that his children are compelled to live—only Heaven knows how."

Some years ago we were visiting a deacon whose memory is held in affectionate remembrance by all who knew him, for he was one who loved to crowd into his life words and deeds of kindness for everybody—we refer to the late Mr. Stephen Hill, of Salisbury. "There," he said, with a smile of pleasure as he joined us under the shade of the cherry-tree in the garden, "I've done a good afternoon's work." "What is it?" we inquired. And then he told us how he had recently somehow got the impression that a little addition to his minister's income would be at that time very opportune; how that he had thought over the matter, had decided to add to his own liberal contribution, had called upon a few friends quietly to talk the matter over, and to ask them to join him in his little scheme of kindness; how one and another had cheerfully consented; and how the result was that he had already that afternoon secured an increase to the stipend of their minister of thirty-five pounds a year. And as the incident and its surroundings rise in our memory, we would tenderly and reverently say—Peace to his memory!

And surely, gentle reader, that act of kindly service was worth the doing! Worth doing—for it could not but enrich the large and loving heart of him who did it. Worth doing—for the sake of all who joined in it, and for him whose home was made the happier,

and whose work was made the lighter for the doing of it. Worth doing—in the esteem of Him who has said that even “a cup of cold water” given for His sake to a disciple shall in no wise lose its reward.

Perhaps the eye of some deacon rests on these words. Perhaps his heart is touched by the recital of this little incident. If so, may we ask him, while even now the tender impulse moves within him, to devise some plan, to adopt some measure by which he may imitate the example, win for himself the blessing of our friend at Salisbury, and “go and do likewise.”

F. S. W.

PRAYER: FORMAL AND FREE.*

BY REV. JAMES MATHESON, B.A.

THE first requisite for acceptable worship is to be sought, not so much in what we say, as in what we are. Forms, or the absence of forms, are relatively insignificant, in comparison with a right state of thought and will and feeling in the worshippers. But granting this, the manner of prayer, though secondary, is not unimportant. If we try to investigate how far one way is more excellent than another, we must keep in view the end to which prayer is a means. Waiving collateral objects, what is the supreme object of prayer? Is it not converse with heaven, actual and immediate? Presumptuous if it were a thing of man's device, this cannot be withheld without presumption if it be a Divine command. We are of a race created and moulded in the image of God, and we think He desires still that men should return to Him and filially love Him. As we draw nigh to God, does He in very truth draw nigh to us? How can we come best and most immediately into the presence of the infinite righteousness and power, the inexhaustible pity, the immeasurable love, which He is? To minds which are strongly predisposed to devotion, and full of it, no peculiarity in the mode of worship may be of much consequence. Yet, even to them, one method may be more profitable than another. And what of worshippers who are listless and depressed, or

* “Common Prayer without Liturgical Forms;” abridged from an address recently delivered to the Nottinghamshire Association of Independent Ministers and Churches, as one part of the duty allotted to the chairman for the year. Hodder and Stoughton, London.

more or less indifferent? Is it not hard enough, at the best, to shake off the deadening impressions of secular routine, the weakening, corrupting influences of the world and the flesh? Nonconformists are encouraged by a considerable body of experience, testified in former generations as well as in this, and by the nature and object of prayer, to believe that liturgical forms may be dispensed with, and that the effect of dispensing with them is on the whole gain instead of loss. If unwritten prayer be more homely, it is closer to reality. If it is less intellectually admirable, and affords less æsthetic pleasure, there is so much less of intermediate ground on which our weak nature may rest between the soul and the world invisible and eternal. We owe consideration and respect to those who report an experience different from our own; but to ourselves the inevitable tendency of continually repeating the same combinations of words would be to make those phrases, however solemnly beautiful, mechanical, if not unmeaning.

Besides being free from the disadvantage of perpetual iteration, unwritten prayer may also be in closer relation to existing facts. The minister is with us no mystically endowed priest, but simply one among many brethren chosen out from the rest to fill one place in the great Divine plan of division of labour. But he is presumed to know something of the sorrows and joys of his congregation, their temptations and sins, the victories of their faith, what are the burdens of solicitude and fear which they are bearing for themselves or for each other. These colour not the language only, but the very substance of the confessions, the thanksgivings, the requests, which he offers on behalf of his flock. He is compassed about, as they are, with infirmity; but he feels with them and for them; he is a living, sympathising exponent of their aspiration and their need, their repentance and faith toward God. No two congregations are morally or spiritually identical, nor are any two weeks or months in the history of the same congregation.

Let it be added, that what is called free prayer is not necessarily free from a just self-restraint. Free prayer, if men use it lawfully, does not mean the emptying of the mind of everything which the mind happens to contain. In prayer, no less than in conversation, there is room for a certain modesty of reticence, "a sober standard of religious feeling." But this, like greater laws, may be very well put into the mind and written in the heart, independently of any ecclesiastical rubric, or "commandment contained in ordinances."

It may possibly occur to some who have followed thus far our course of inquiry, that it is hardly fair to direct attention exclusively to the congregation. Is not the duty of being the voice of the congregation in prayer a grave responsibility for the minister? So grave, we reply, that it is not in our view to be accepted solely and undividedly by him. There are to be found in our communities, as in many others, laymen whose devout spirit and unaffected piety of action and of thought, as well as other gifts, eminently qualify them to give utterance to fit words of supplication and prayer. The minister with us does not feel at liberty to claim, nor does he at all covet, any mysterious prerogative or priestly power. He is one among many brethren, chosen it is true with the assent or the impelling power of his own convictions, and by prayer set solemnly apart, but chosen to fill one place in the great Divine plan of division of labour. He voluntarily embraces it, as one of his most frequent offices, to lead the devotions of his people. Is he always attracted to this part of his duty? He is not always alike attracted to it. Most generally it is far from being a burden. It is often an exceeding great joy. But there are some conditions of body and of mind in which he shrinks from it, and to shelter himself behind a form would be for the moment a relief or a deliverance. There is no reason why he should not, except he find it in his own conscience. His conscience, however, almost invariably suggests a convincing reason. It is, that to restrict all that is about to be presented in the shape of prayer to anything written or printed, would, he honestly believes, be a greater hindrance to an actual approach to God than his own ailing or depressed condition. He, like all around him, is compassed about with infirmity, but he knows something of what is in the mind of his people. He can feel with them and for them. Many of their griefs are known to him, the innocent gladness of their children, their friendships and their cares, the tug and strain of their perplexities. However consciously unequal to the occasion, he can at least hope to be a sympathising exponent of some of their dearest, tenderest memories, their anticipations of joy or of dread. He remembers that other far greater ministers of Jesus Christ than he have had to say of prayer, or of preaching in the church, "I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling."

To live an active, faithful Christian life, is the way to secure comfort and triumph in death.

MAGGIE'S BIRTHDAY.

"MAMMA," said a very weak little voice, in a pretty bedchamber, "mamma, will you come here?"

"I will come in one moment, Maggie, darling. I am mixing you some cool lemonade."

"How kind you are to me," said the little feeble voice again, as Maggie's head was gently lifted, that she might taste the pleasant drink. "I wanted you to come in, to ask you if I might have my birthday party to-night."

"Your party, dear. You are too ill for that."

"But to-morrow is my birthday, and you know the doctor said Jesus might take me to heaven now very soon. I don't think I shall lie here to-morrow, for I feel so much weaker. Don't you remember, before I was sick, you promised me that on my tenth birthday you would let the school-girls come and see me."

"I remember, Maggie."

"Won't you let them come?—and mamma, won't you let me give each one something to keep? Tell them not to bring me presents—I want to make those."

"But, Maggie, I am afraid it would tire you too much."

"It will be only for a little while," said the child, gently. "I thought, perhaps, I could say a word or two that would make them think of the day when they must lie where I am. Not preaching, mamma, only to remind them of Jesus. If you had not taught me to love Him, mamma, how could I bear to leave you and my father, dear Kate and the boys?"

Mrs. Huntingdon kissed the sweet little pale face looking lovingly into her own, and said,—“If you will try to sleep now, dear, I will send Frankie to the school, and let Miss Markham know your wish.”

"I will try," said the patient little girl, closing her eyes. "The pain in my knee is all gone now."

The mother's eyes filled with tears, but she moved gently from the room, and sent her oldest son to summon Maggie's playmates to say farewell to their little companion.

It was just after dusk, on the same pleasant summer evening, when Maggie sat waiting for her guests. She was dressed in a cool muslin wrapper over her snowy-white night-dress, her fair soft curls smoothly brushed, and her wasted little figure propped up by pillows. While she waited, her mother spoke to the sorrowful little

group in the drawing-room, each of whom had brought an offering of sweet flowers for the dying girl.

"You all know," she said to them, "of the terrible accident that occurred to our dear Maggie. She was thrown from a carriage, and one limb was badly crushed. We hoped, by amputating it, to spare our dear little girl's life, but the operation was not successful. Mortification has set in, the pain is all gone, and Maggie has but little time to live. She was anxious to bid you all farewell, but I must warn you all to be very quiet and gentle, as she is too weak to bear much excitement. You can come up now."

Silently and very gravely the little girls followed Mrs. Huntingdon to the room where Maggie sat waiting for them. By her side was a little table, upon which were placed all the little treasures and trinkets Maggie possessed. She looked up with a sweet smile as the schoolmates of her well, happy days, came in. Her chosen friend came first to kiss her, and put a cluster of snow-white roses in her hands.

"Dear Hannah," said the sweet feeble voice, "thank you. They are so fragrant. I want you to wear my little gold cross and chain, Hannah, and think of me; and won't you try to remember you must lie here too, some day? I want you to think every day that, when Jesus calls you, you want to be ready to obey Him. I love you, dear Hannah, so much. Kiss me, and good-bye."

Every one received a little token. Some were reminded of the sudden call Maggie had received; some were very gently asked to forsake a fault that was marring their dispositions; some were fervently besought to renounce a careless disregard of the loving Saviour, and all received a kiss and a word of farewell. Quick sobbing breaths filled the room, as, at the last words, Maggie lay back, white and faint, but smiling lovingly upon them all. They stole away, leaving the child almost covered with the beautiful flowers they had brought. Each one grasped the keepsake that was to remind them of their little playmate, who so short a time before had been as rosy, gay, and healthy as they were.

When they were gone, Mrs. Huntingdon went again to Maggie's room. She was lying very still, but her fingers touched the flowers lovingly, and her face was peaceful and happy.

"Do the flowers make the air close, Maggie?" she asked.

"No, indeed. Please let them lie where the girls put them, until bed-time. Mamma, will papa soon be in to prayers?"

"It is not ten o'clock yet, Shall he come in now?"

"Yes, mamma, now. I am tired."

It had become a family custom, since the little girl's accident, to read the morning and evening chapter in the Bible and say the Lord's Prayer in her room, and Mrs. Huntingdon, seeing how pale and weary she was, went at once to assemble the family.

"Papa, will you hold my hand while you read? Kate, Frankie, Will, kiss me. Now, mamma, hold my other hand."

"Are you too tired for me to read, Maggie?" asked her father, feeling how cold the little hand in his own was growing.

"No, papa. I may fall asleep, but I have kissed you all for good-night."

The holy words of comfort were read in solemn tones, and the prayer came from low, choked voices.

When the family rose from their knees, Mrs. Huntingdon bent with a white face over her child. The feeble breath had ceased to flutter over the pale lips, the gentle voice was silent, the soft eyes were closed in the last sleep of death.

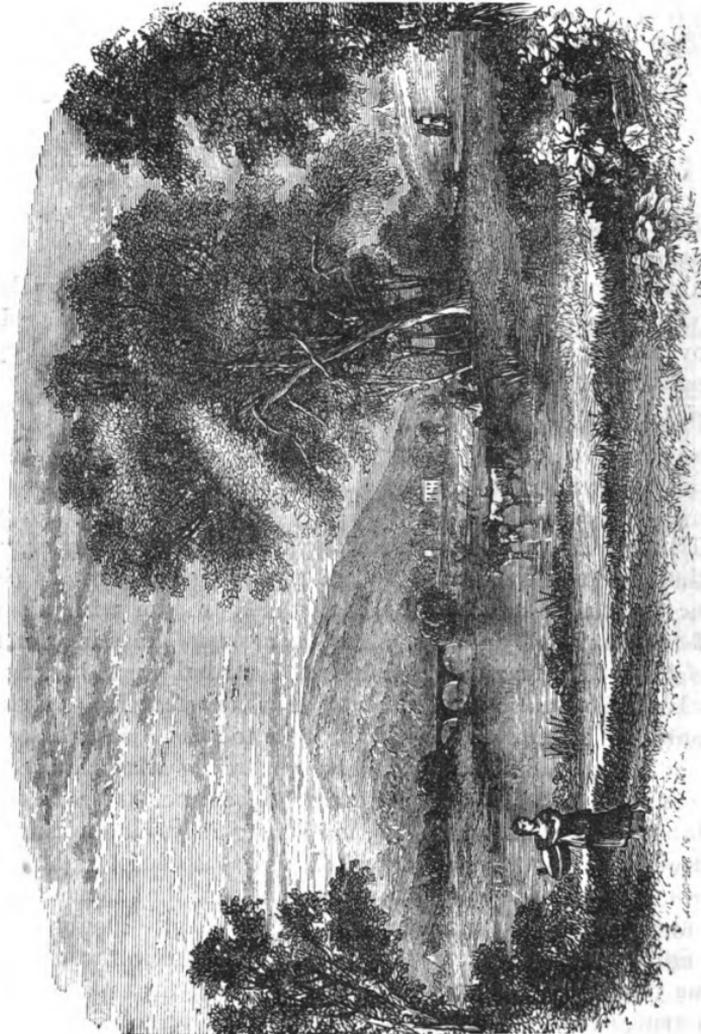
Maggie had gone to spend her birthday in heaven.—*S. Annie Frost.*

MR. SPURGEON.

"AS I had heard from Spurgeon," says the Rev. W. Cuyler, "on the previous day, his method of preparing his sermons (in a half-hour of jotting down heads), I listened to him with all the more of 'professional' interest. His theme was the Glory of the Grace of God. It was rich old-fashioned doctrinal preaching, freshened by lively illustration. If Robertson was perfect in the style to read, Spurgeon is almost perfect in the style to hear. After listening to Brother Spurgeon several times, and conversing with him freely, I am persuaded that the secret of his marvellous success lies in these three things: a magnificent voice, his strong racy Saxon English, and a prodigious earnestness in preaching Jesus Christ right home to sinners' hearts. He believes with all his soul that men are sinners, and that unless they repent they will be lost. Doubts never trouble Spurgeon. He never stops to defend the outworks of Revelation, he plants his guns on those redoubts, and fires red-hot truth with unerring accuracy of aim. As a preacher of the living Gospel, he is the nearest to John Bunyan of any Englishman since Bunyan's day."

ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

"A FEW words of Allan Cunningham strengthen me like a dose of Peruvian bark!" Such was the character once given by Miss Landon of her friend Allan Cunningham, and the justice of



BLACKWOOD, NEAR DUMFRIES.

her eulogium was acknowledged by many who enjoyed the society of the Nithsdale poet.

Cunningham was born near Dumfries, towards the close of the year 1784. He commenced life as a stonemason, being apprenticed to that trade at the early age of eleven; but, although his work, like all he undertook, was well done, his heart was not in it. Books possessed a wonderful charm for him, and his poetical genius, although it was long before it attempted any great flight, early manifested itself. His poems soon found their way into print, and when



ALLAN CUNNINGHAM'S GRAVE.

he was about twenty-five years of age he was invited to London to watch through the press a work with which he was connected. In London, fortune, at first, seemed against him, and he was glad to accept a situation as assistant to a sculptor. The tide of affairs soon changed, however. Cunningham's poems had made his name known to the conductor of a paper called "The Day," and to the literary staff of that journal the poet soon became attached. From this time his career became one of progress: the severe struggles

which so many literary men have had to encounter were happily not his lot. About four years after coming to London he became superintendent in the studio of Sir Francis Chantrey. This post he held until his death, and his salary, joined with the profits derived from his writings, placed him in a fair pecuniary position. As he himself once said, in a letter to Professor Wilson, "The pen adds a little to the profit of the chisel, and I keep my head above water, and on occasion take the middle of the causeway with an independent step."

In appearance, Cunningham was large-framed and robust; his habits, too, were regular, and yet his life was not a long one. He died in October, 1842, in his 58th year. His wife survived him more than twenty years, dying in 1864. Of his four sons, three obtained commissions in the army, and in India rose to considerable eminence in their profession.

Cunningham's reputation as a poet rests mainly upon his ballads. Into these the feelings of his heart were poured, and his verses seldom fail to win a responsive echo from the breast of the reader. His naval songs, too, have been termed "noble." Amongst his prose writings, "The Lives of British Painters" is best known. Of this work Southey said, "It will last as long as any records of British art remain." Without ranking with the first of our writers, Cunningham has yet won amongst them a position of which his countrymen may well be proud; and the praise due to the poet's memory is all the greater because he gained that position without great educational advantages, and by virtue of merit and perseverance.

Our illustrations represent the locality of Blackwood, near Dumfries, where the poet was born, and the tombstone now covering his remains in Kensal Green Cemetery.

No man knows the genuineness of his convictions until he has sacrificed something for them.

WHAT a proof of the Divine tenderness is there in the human heart itself, which is the organ and receptacle of so many sympathies. When we consider how exquisite are those conditions by which it is even made capable of so much suffering—the capabilities of a child's heart, of a mother's heart—what must be the nature of Him who fashioned its depths and strung its chords?

LOYALTY IN OUR CHURCHES.

THERE is one Christian grace which I fear is little cultivated, and perhaps even little known, in some of our Independent Churches. It is what I would call the spirit of loyalty. We appoint officers, in accordance with what is believed to be a Divine ordinance, to be "over us in the Lord," and then we practically disregard the authority of their office. We build up Church institutions after a primitive and apostolic model, and then fail to give them any loyal allegiance. But in all this we are neglecting a duty that is expressly enjoined in the New Testament. There is a passage of Scripture which I think is almost ignored in these days by many among us. You have often read it, I daresay, but have you arrived at a clear impression of its obligation upon you? It is this—"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves." "Oh, that means," said an intelligent Independent to me once, "that we are to obey the laws of the land—the civil government." "You forget the connection," I replied. "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls as they that must give account." Now surely that passage means *something*. It is sometimes alleged against us by our Presbyterian brethren and by others, that in our Churches every one "rules" and no one "obeys;" and in some cases, no doubt, it is so. But this is to ignore at once common sense and Scriptural duty. It is to turn liberty into licentiousness. It is to invite disorder. It is to bring our Church polity into disrepute and contempt.

For instance: we assemble in our Church meetings not only to deliberate on matters of common interest, but directly and immediately to regulate the whole course and destiny of our Church action. Our Church meetings are the fountain of authority. If they go wrong, all goes wrong. If they are conducted wisely, calmly, devoutly, the best results may follow. If they are disorderly—simply disorderly—the worst consequences will arise. But how is order to be maintained unless the authority of the minister be respected, and the decisions he pronounces be enforced?

Talk to people about our Independent Church principles, and they tell us that our principles are good enough for the millenium—that it is in our practice that we fail. So among our Churches, and in many of them, beneath perhaps large apparent prosperity, there is restlessness, worry, irritation. This minister is doing very well, but

he is not, it is said, "comfortable." Nor is he likely to be if at any hour gossips are permitted to go about with impunity and disparage his ministrations; or a choir may take it into its head that it is not appreciated, and may mutiny; or one man be allowed to domineer over the Church; or a once active and warm-hearted member, who has at last outlived his usefulness, be now spending his remaining energies in resistance to every improvement which the rest of the Church may deem it indispensable to make; or confident criticism be offered by people about their betters, where a grateful acquiescence would be more becoming and more Christian. No wonder that under such circumstances we find deacons retaining their offices only because they fear that if they resigned matters would go from bad to worse. No wonder that ministers, so worried at last, take refuge in the Established Church, where they are welcomed and honoured, and where they hope, that if perhaps their consciences suffer, their lives will be at peace.

I plead, therefore, for greater loyalty among the members of our Churches to the institutions and administration under which they live. Let us perfect our appliances, and let us also set our faces as a flint against schism. Let us use to the full all the splendid advantages of our freedom; let us see to it that no man turns our liberty into licentiousness; and then our practices will be as unimpeachable as our principles.

F. S. W.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

"HOW went the day?" you say.

"Truly the sun arose
Bright with unhindered heat;
Soon came the bitter blows
Of hailstone and storming sleet;
Falling in heaps they froze
Fast in the field and street."

"Ah, my friend; nearer the end;
Nearer than ever, to-night, my friend."

"How went the heart?" you say.

"Calm as a windless sea;
But, with a fiendish speed,
Here came temptations three,

Luring me on to heed.

Then it was stern to be

The reiner of that heart's greed."

" Ah! my friend; nearer the end;

Nearer than ever, to-night, my friend."

" How went the work?" you say.

" Lightsome enough for a while,

Lightsome with song and jest.

Soon came the frown for the smile,—

Half a curse for the toil's behest.

But I strove against glamour and guile,

And I know I was not unblest."

" Ah! my friend; nearer the end;

Nearer than ever, to-night, my friend."

" How went heaven?" you say.

" Truly it came to me

Faint as a dawn in my soul;

Then brightening, fair and free,

To a noontide splendour whole,

Till it was a bliss to be."

" Ah! my friend; nearer the end;

Nearer than ever to-night, my friend."

" Nearer the end," you say.

" Yes, I am glad to think

How, as I lie in the night,

Close to the dim sleep-brink,

There is nothing before my sight

To cause me to sigh or shrink.

HE, my friend, stands at the end;

Nearer to *Christ*, to-night, my friend."

ALFRED NORRIS.

IF the truth of the Bible is denied, there is no Christ, no heaven, no God, no Holy Spirit: all is gone.

FINE sensibilities are like woodbines; delightful luxuries of beauty to twine round a solid upright stem of understanding; but very poor things if, unsustained by strength, they are left to creep along the ground.

POPULAR TOPICS OF THE HOUR.

IV.—“A POLITICAL DISSENTER.”

BY C. H. SPURGEON.

AMONG the charges hurled at us is one which our accusers evidently regard as a very serious one. They call us “a Political Dissenter,” and seem as if they had delivered themselves of a terrible epithet, whose very sound would annihilate us. It is a curious fact that neither the sound nor the sense of those awful words have impressed us with fear, or moved us to repentance. Politics, if they are honest, are by no means sinful, or the office of a legislator would be fatal to the soul; and Dissenters, if they dissent from error, are commendable individuals. As, therefore, neither the “political” nor the “dissenter” is necessarily bad, the mixture of two good or indifferent things can scarcely be intolerably evil.

A Dissenter who is godly and humble, and knows his duty to his betters, and walks in a lowly and reverential manner to them, is supposed never to be political. He is styled pious, and held up to admiration at meetings of the Church Defence Association, though at other places, seeing that with all his piety he is still a Dissenter, he is duly snubbed by the same parish priests who so much admire him. If a Dissenter would have a good report of those within the established pale he must toady to all rectors, vicars, and curates—he must “bless God for raising up such a bulwark for our Protestant liberties as the Church of England as by law established;” or at least he must be contentedly silent under his wrongs, and never open his mouth to obtain his rights. Cease to be a man, and you will be “a pious Dissenter;” but speak out and show the slightest independence of mind, and you will be an odious “political Dissenter.” Be thankful for the toleration which you enjoy, and eat your humble pie in a corner, and the rector will condescend to meet you at the Bible Society’s meetings; but dare to call your soul your own, and you shall be put into the black books among those dreadful emissaries of Mr. Miall. Piety in the clerical mind is pretty generally synonymous with subservience to their reverences, but we hope that without being utterly impious we may question the correctness of their judgment.

Far from us be the cringing cowardly sycophancy which makes the poor Dissenting minister the patronised minion of the aristocratic rector; equally far from us be the obsequious silence which gains

custom for the Nonconformist tradesman who sells his conscience as well as his wares. If these be pious, may we be clear of such piety. To us let it happen to speak the truth, and bow the knee to no man, if this be what is meant by being political.

It is easy to throw stones at others, but glass houses should whisper caution. If it be so terrible an evil for a Dissenter to be political, what must be the condition of a political Churchman? Yet every clergyman is just that, since he is the employé of a political church, or rather he is commissioned by the political authorities to attend to the national religion: he is therefore a political Churchman *ex officio*. Moreover, if it be a serious injury to the piety of a Dissenting minister to attend a meeting of the Liberation Society once in a year, is there no loss of grace in attending a Church Defence Association? Mr. Spurgeon speaks about a score sentences in a sermon upon Cæsar and his proper sphere, and this is so detrimental to his soul's prosperity, that he receives letters by the score from excessively gracious Churchmen, who are in agonies over his spiritual declension. This is very kind and motherly, but is the like care taken with that excellent man, Mr. Ryle, who has not only delivered a great many political speeches, but has written pamphlets on the subject of Church and State? We trust our worthy brother has been nursed with much watchfulness, for he has the political disease very heavily upon him, if we may judge from certain of his tracts. He is a fearful instance of a political Churchman. We believe the high church party consider him to be a Dissenter, and we rejoice to believe that they are pretty near the mark, judging the good man doctrinally; and if they are right in their views, Mr. Ryle is a political Dissenter himself, only he is out of his proper place. Will some of his friends remind him of his danger. And will they at the same time take note, that for every word upon politics spoken by us, pious churchmen can be found who have uttered ten or a hundred. In them it seems to be commendable, and in us censurable. How is this?

The truth is that many of us are loath to touch politics at all, and would never do so if we were not driven to it. Our life-theme is the Gospel, and to deal with the sins of the State is our "strange work," which we only enter upon under the solemn constraints of duty. To see Popery made the national religion has aroused the gentlest among us. An evangelical church, imposed upon us by the State, was a grievance and a wrong, but to force a shamelessly ritualistic establishment upon us as the national religion, is a tyranny which no

Englishman ought to bear. Is an Anglican priest to swing his censer in our faces in the name of the nation? Are the idols and broadened deities of ritualism to be held up before us, with this exclamation, "These be thy gods, O England"? The case is so, and we protest, for we are Protestants—we will not tamely endure it, for we worship the living God. We will go on with our spiritual duties quietly enough if those in power will deal out equal measure to all religions. We shall be delighted to have no more grounds of appeal to public justice, and no more reasons for difference with our fellow Christians. If we are political, give us our rights, and we shall be so no more. If our spirituality be precious to our antagonists, let them deliver us from the temptation which puts it in peril.

For a Christian minister to be an active partisan of Whigs or Tories, busy in canvassing, and eloquent at public meetings for rival factions, would be of ill repute. For the Christian to forget his heavenly citizenship, and occupy himself about the objects of place-hunters, would be degrading to his high calling. But there are points of inevitable contact between the higher and the lower spheres, points where politics persist in coming into collision with our faith, and there we shall be traitors both to heaven and earth if we consult our comfort by slinking into the rear. Till religion in England is entirely free from State patronage and control, till the Anglican Papacy ceases to be called the national religion, till every man of every faith shall be equal before the eye of the law as to his religious rights, we cannot, and dare not cease to be political. Because we fear God, and desire His glory, we must be political—it is a part of our piety to be so. When nearest to God in prayer, we pray that His church may neither oppress nor be oppressed; when walking in holiest fellowship with Jesus, we long that He alone may be Head of the Church, and that she may no more defile herself with the kings of the earth.

Let not our opponents mistake us: we dare carry our cause before the throne of God, and habitually do so. Our protests before man are repeated in our prayers to God. Our deepest religious emotions are aroused by the struggle forced upon us. We will not say that Nonconformists who are not abused as political Dissenters are not pious, but we will say that, if we shirked the work which makes us political, we should prove ourselves traitors to the Lord our God. The curse of Meroz would fall upon us if we came not up to the help of the Lord in this the day of battle. The history of the nation, and the

destiny of millions, may depend upon the faithfulness of Nonconformists at this hour, and our persuasion is that the day will come when it shall be fame rather than dishonour to have been reckoned—**A POLITICAL DISSENTER.**

THOUGHTS—GRAVE AND GAY.

IT'S a deep mystery—the way the heart of man turns to one woman out of all the rest he's seen in the world, and makes it easier for him to work seven years for her, like Jacob did for Rachel, sooner than have any other woman for the asking. I often think of those words, "And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her."

Dr. Stuart Robinson made a good point in a sermon. He was alluding to the objection made by the unconverted to Christianity on account of the sinful and inconsistent lives of professors of religion. "No wonder," said the doctor. "They are compelled to associate with some of you, and it is a marvel of Divine grace that, with such associates, they are half as good as they are." That settles that objection.

I have often had occasion to remark the fortitude with which women sustain the most overwhelming reverses of fortune. Those disasters which break down the spirit of a man, and prostrate him in the dust, seem to call forth all the energies of the softer sex, and give such intrepidity and elevation to their character, that at times it approaches to sublimity. Nothing can be more touching than to behold a soft and tender female, who had been all weakness and dependence, and alive to every trivial roughness, while treading the path of life, suddenly rising in mental force to be the comforter and supporter of her husband under misfortune, and abiding with unshrinking firmness the bitterest blast of adversity.

Prejudices are like rats, and a man's mind like a trap: they get in easily, and then perhaps can't get out at all.

The intellect of the truly wise man is like glass: it admits the light of heaven, and reflects it.—*Archdeacon Hare.*

While benevolence has a tender heart, compassionate eye, and hands as soft as the down of innocence, she is shod with brass, to spurn at dangers and trample difficulties under foot.

Christianity is no abstract sentiment, it deals with realities; death and hell are realities, and we need a real Saviour.

Musing seems to be a state of consciousness lying somewhere between the emotional and the intellectual: it touches both, yet belongs to neither.

CHURCH NEWS OF THE MONTH.

IN this country there are three stages through which every subject of public discussion passes: first, the stage of indifference—scarcely anybody cares anything about it; secondly, the stage of hostility—when the battle, for and against, wages hotly and more hotly.; and thirdly, the stage of assent—when everybody begins to say to everybody else, “I always told you so.”

The State Church question has satisfactorily passed through the first stage,—it is not now regarded with indifference; and it would seem as if it were emerging from the second stage into the third. So at least it would appear from the attitude *The Times* is beginning to assume towards it. Of course no one attaches any importance to an opinion of the leading journal *as an opinion*: it has ardently defended every fallacy under the sun; but as indicative of the changing direction of public thought and conviction, the value even of a weathercock may be invaluable. Instead of defending the Establishment and all its belongings through thick and thin, as was once its wont, *The Times* now writes in the following fashion; and though there may be an ebb and flow of the waves, it is evident that the tide is *turning*, and will before very long flow swiftly and strongly in the right direction.

“If there ever was a question in which the Church of England, as represented by its noisiest advocates, was in a thoroughly false position, and the victim of sheer suicidal obstinacy, it is in the matter of the Burial Bill. It is not easy to conceive how these advocates, and the busy gentlemen who have been agitating every parish in England for the last two months, can really have given one serious thought to the question. Had they employed their reasoning faculties, and the simplest powers of observation, not to speak of their Christian charity, on patent facts, they would not have treated this measure as a novelty, or as a gratuitous attack on the rights of the Church and the prerogatives of truth. They would not have put out of sight the

existence of a grievance which can neither be denied nor despised. Nor would they have denied that the just claims of Nonconformists and others have been refused too long, and that thereby social and religious scandals have grown into a form which is both grievous and irreparable. There is put into the mouths of the Clergy, at we know not whose prompting, an energetic and uncompromising demand that every corpse whatever brought to the churchyard shall be declared by supreme parochial authority to be that of a saint, of whose eternal happiness there is all reasonable expectation. It is demanded that everybody shall be pronounced to have died in the Lord, and thereby rested from his labours, whatever those labours were.

"We decline to believe that the Clergy make this preposterous and impious demand. That they should submit to the existing state of things, and treat as a saint and a good Churchman everybody of whom the contrary cannot be proved with mathematical certainty, is the sublime of charity. But that they should quarrel, and fight, and clamour, and scream for the right of declaring all people to be one as good as another as soon as the breath is out of their bodies, is folly, and nothing else. Nor is there the least pretence for assuming that the question is new, or that it will wait, or that the resistance has so far been beneficial or successful. We say it advisedly, that the very ugliest and most foolish thing to be seen in all this country is that which is now to be seen near almost every town, proclaiming its folly from the most conspicuous site in the neighbourhood. It is the hideous spectacle of two mortuary chapels, often vying with one another in mediæval frippery, and declaring to the world how the Christians there hate one another, and how even in death they will be divided." This is a scandal, not to the Gospel only, but to our common humanity.

Meanwhile, as Mr. Osborne Morgan in his able speech declared, the Burial Bill "is no longer a question between Churchmen and Dissenters. No; I will tell you what it is. It is a contest between outraged humanity on the one side, and that ecclesiastical assumption which is as rampant in Canterbury as in Rome." In illustration of this spirit a beneficed clergyman declares: "I say boldly that ninety out of every hundred would far rather see the Church quite disestablished and disendowed than such a measure become law. If such a bill were to pass the Lords, I would at once throw my loyalty to the winds, and desire nothing better than that England should become one of the States of the Union."

To a suggestion that Nonconformists should be content with a silent burial of the dead in the churchyard, even the *Spectator* replies: "What should we Churchmen say to such a privation? Is it not of the very essence of funeral rites that at the last look of the coffin, at the solemn moment when the anguish of the last leave-taking is felt, there should be words of prayer and religious hope pronounced? Why, you might just as well propose to refuse Dissenters the right of shaking hands at the moment of parting on the ship or in the train, on the plea that it would be quite good enough for them if they got their outward leave-taking done in their own homes, as propose that they should coldly deposit the corpse, without a word of solemn prayer or hope, in the earth, and so leave it."

How far some Churchmen are prepared to go in the defence of their Establishment, has recently received a remarkable illustration at Nottingham. At a school-board election the walls of the town were placarded with bills, "Vote for —, and no rates," the "no rates" being a simple falsehood; and those who had circulated it subsequently admitted that it was a falsehood. Shortly afterwards, at a meeting of the Liberation Society, when the Mechanics' Hall was crowded to overflowing, an attempt was made to set it on fire, in the hope of creating an alarm of fire — and at the risk of a massacre! And yet these men tell us that they wish to do "God service."

The "latest phase of the Romanist conspiracy" is the title of an article in the Evangelical church newspaper, the *Rock*, from which we gather that "a Society for the Maintenance of the Faith" has been established among the Ritualistic party, for which "clerical members, being priests, should at stated times say mass." The object of the society is the overthrow of Protestantism within the Church of England. "Every one is asking," says the *Rock*, "what steps will be taken by the Bishop of London, in whose diocese are the headquarters of this atrocious conspiracy?"

No wonder that a correspondent of the same paper says: "If the 'Establishment,' as such, be all we have to fight for, we may as well lay down our arms. Unless the leaven of Romish error, which now exists so largely in the church, can be excised, I fail to see how Protestant Churchmen can conscientiously resist the demands which the advocates of disestablishment are making. Otherwise they will be giving their support to what may ultimately become a revived Romish State Church in England."

A large number of Evangelical Churchmen of Leicester are seriously dissatisfied with the manner in which the Bishop of Peterborough has exercised his patronage in regard to the numerous churches that have become vacant during the period of his episcopate, and have memorialised him upon the subject. A counter-memorial from the Ritualists has also been got up.

The *Rock* is "exceedingly glad to hear that the Church Missionary Society has respectfully declined to entertain the proposals lately made by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel for further devotional exercises in common."

The following is the style in which the *Church Herald* writes about its own bishops. There never, it assures us, was a time when bishops were "so painfully commonplace and notoriously unremarkable;" and it proceeds to refer to them as "popularity-hunting prigs, gaitered chatterboxes, flimsy scholars, smug vulgarians; men whose principles, whether good or bad, are so deeply buried in the dark recesses of their own consciousness, that neither themselves nor anybody else have ever been able to find them out;" "ever talkative windbags," "tub orators," "cunning and clever," who keep as "chaplains, lick-spittle creatures of the baser sort, who hoist moral storm-signals to see which way the wind blows, or who act as clerical detectives in plain clothes, and inform his lordship of their earnest labours." We do not quote these words because we endorse them, but just to show how vainly Mr. Matthew Arnold and other superficial idealists flatter themselves when they speak as if the Establishment were the sole fountain of all purity and culture, "sweetness and light," and that vulgarity, coarseness, and invective are to be found only beyond its pale.

The *Record* (low church) says:—"Oftentimes to come into contact with a lord bishop is to become painfully conscious how largely the spiritual and purely religious element is absent. They are gentlemen and great public officers, keen politicians perhaps, and skilful manipulators of men; but they are not 'apostles,' nor do they always carry with them the savour of the sacred office that they bear.

The *Economist* holds that the attitude Mr. Disraeli has recently assumed towards the Dissenters "makes the opportunity for a hearty reconciliation between them and the Government particularly

promising. And in view of a dissolution, which, whether it happens this year or next, cannot be long deferred, this reconciliation is plainly most desirable." We as Nonconformists shall be delighted to witness such a reconciliation. But whether it be possible or not, depends solely upon whether the premier is prepared to withdraw the reactionary policy with which in matters educational he has of late years afflicted this country.—Mr. Miall's motion will come on as soon as he can obtain what is absolutely necessary to ensure a good debate—the first place for a given evening. It is probable that the motion will come on upon some Tuesday in this month.

The unfortunate vote, of 300 guineas, out of the funds of the Corporation of London, for a pulpit for the church about to be erected for the Poultry Chapel congregation, has borne its natural fruit. Two other ecclesiastical grants have since been made—one for Dissenting Sunday-schools in Silver Street, and the other for St. Sepulchre's church. Notice of a motion for a grant to another church has also been given. Thus the beginnings of inconsistency are like the letting out of water.

It appears at present that it is not lawful for guardians to appoint a Nonconformist minister as chaplain, even though the Nonconformist will discharge the duties without remuneration, and the State-churchman demands payment. Thus do the privileges of the Established clergy cross us at every step in public life.

Never was a more deserved tribute paid than when our revered friend, the Rev. Dr. Moffat, recently received a testimonial of the value of nearly £6000.—The Rev. J. H. Snell, on the occasion of his removal from Swindon to Hackney, was presented with a purse containing £30. During Mr. Snell's ministry, a debt of nearly £2000 has been removed from the church. A manse has been purchased, to which £580 has been paid.—The Independent chapel at Marlborough has been re-pewed and otherwise improved, at a cost of £500.

The following pastorates have been resigned :—Rev. W. Young, at Wirksworth, Derbyshire, and Rev. Joseph Woodhouse, at Leominster.—The Rev. W. Jackson, of Whitby, has accepted an invitation to Bournemouth; the Rev. J. Haley, of Staniland, near Halifax, has accepted an invitation to Lister-hills church, Bradford; and the Rev. F. S. Morris, of Aberdeen, to Montrose.

OLD ANTHONY.

BY MARY SHERWOOD.

CHAPTER VI.

A CITY set on a hill cannot be hid. It was wonderful the change that, as every one could see, had passed upon the Squire after that New Year's Day. The haughty, restless look seemed to have clean vanished from his face. His very gait was different, as he walked up the aisle of the village church on the Sunday following that memorable visit to the old bedesman. It was as though some iron hand that long had pressed him down had been at length removed, and now the man had leave to walk erect, and to lift up his head in God's blessed sunshine. The village folk whispered to one another as they heard his voice, clear and sonorous, sounding forth as he joined in the chanted psalm, "O come, let us sing unto the Lord; let us make a joyful noise unto the God of our salvation!"

No one had ever heard the Squire's voice before joining with the congregation as they sang the praises of God in His sanctuary. When he did go to the church, which was but seldom, he had stood up alone in the Manor-house pew, with that dark, silent face, as though he owned no fellowship with those around him, and held himself apart from others, even when standing in the presence of Him who is the God of love and the Father of us all.

But how much greater was the general surprise when, in the course of that very week, the Squire sent for his bailiff, and proceeded with him to inspect the cottages on the estate; especially a cluster of dilapidated tenements at the further end of the village, which were almost falling down from decay, but which nevertheless were inhabited by near a dozen farm labourers and their families, who year by year shivered through the winter cold, chilled by the wind and rain, which found their way in by countless crannies in the leaking roofs and crazy walls. The poor folks stopped up the gaps as well as they could with wisps of straw and patches of mud and mortar; but every high wind or steeping rain undid their previous toil, and searched out some fresh crevice at which to enter.

No wonder that the cottagers' children died off so fast from the cold and damp, or that in one or other of the miserable abodes there

was always some one laid up with sickness, or suffering from ailments which, in a more wholesome dwelling, would have been unknown. Still, a roof of some sort was better than none, and though these poor folk were far worse housed than the horses in the Squire's stables, they had been glad to put up with such shelter as was to be had. They were employed on the estate, and they must either leave their native place and trudge forth with their families to seek work from strangers, perhaps to starve for want of it, or they must remain where they were, and bear their privations as best they could.

Every one was agreed that it was a shame to leave things as they were, but it was of no use patching up the old hovels, and a dozen new cottages would have cost more money than the Squire chose to spend. For, as he often repeated, he knew better than to waste his income in order to improve the estate for the man who was to come into it after him.

But the scales had fallen from his eyes now. He saw that he had lived too long to himself alone; that he was but the steward of the wealth and influence committed to him; and that the poor on his estate had claims upon him which he was bound not to neglect for any selfish interests of his own.

Six months later the wretched hovels were level with the ground, and as many snug, well-built cottages, each with a plot of garden ground belonging to it, had arisen in their stead. Twelve poor families were living now in decent and comfortable dwellings, and many a hearty "God bless him!" was heard from those who were learning to look up to the Squire as their best friend, instead of, as formerly, regarding him with secret bitterness and dread.

The cottages did cost money, it is true; and so did many other things which the Squire set about for the benefit of the village folk. But his heart was in his work. He felt that he had neglected too long the duties and responsibilities which are attached to the possession of wealth; and now, even at the cost of sacrifice and self-denial, he was determined, as far as in him lay, to atone for the past, and, while life was spared, to make a diligent use of the talents entrusted to him.

All King's Norton felt the change, and wondered and rejoiced in it. It was as though upon a clouded landscape the sun had suddenly burst forth, to warm and gladden with its beams each leaf and flower on which it shone. There were not so many hunters in the Manor-house stables as there used to be, not so many of those lavish enter-

tainments, costing each of them as much as a man might have lived upon in comfort for a year. And when guests did assemble in that noble hall, they were banqueted in more sober fashion than before. Some among the number, who had associated with the Squire chiefly for the sake of the good sport and good cheer with which they had been provided, began to drop away when these were less lavishly supplied. But the Squire could well dispense with their society. With it he had lost as well those two companions who had been wont of old so ruthlessly to torment him—the spirit of Remorse and the spirit of Discontent. He had a heart at peace now with God and man and with itself. He knew the blessedness of the man to whom the Lord doth not impute iniquity; and although, in his childless old age, he must needs reap the harvest of what on earth he had sown to himself, yet he had learned quietly to submit; so that even this affliction now brought forth for him the peaceable fruits of righteousness.

But as years rolled on, the light long quenched shone out in his home again. Sir Giles Gaveston died. He was thrown from his horse in the hunting-field, and lived but a few days after. On his death-bed he sent for his cousin, the Squire, desiring that the breach between them might be healed, and that he might die reconciled to the kinsman whom he had so deeply wronged. His wife, the Squire's first love, had long been dead; but he bequeathed in charge to him a widowed daughter and her little son, entreating him to receive and care for them when he himself was gone. He had little else to leave, for he had lived a gay and reckless life, and what property he had was mortgaged to pretty nearly the extent of its value. The Squire accepted the trust committed to him, and when he returned to King's Norton, after the death and funeral of Sir Giles, he took home with him the young widow, his own heiress now, and her child.

She was a gentle, quiet woman, inheriting the sweetness and beauty of her mother, but with a nature ennobled and strengthened by the trials and suffering which life had brought her. To the old Squire it seemed sometimes as though his long-lost early love had come back to gladden his declining years; and when the boy climbed upon his knees and called him "grandfather," as his mother taught him to do, he felt that life held not duties only for him now, but sweeter joys than he had ever thought to know again.

He is past seventy now, but he is still a hale and vigorous old man, and looks as though he might live to manage his estate, and to

be a blessing to every one upon it, until the young heir is of an age to manage it himself. He often goes to sit for an hour or two with old Anthony, and to talk with the aged saint of the bright prospects that lie before them both when life's work is ended, and the Master bids them rest. For to each a task is given; to the one to suffer still, and to the other to use wisely his stewardship of wealth. And sometimes the Squire recalls to the old bedesman that New Year's Day morning, when first the light of truth broke in upon his darkened vision, and he saw, what he had never seen before, wherein life's true riches lay, and where alone the secret of content was to be found. And then old Anthony's face will light up with a joy that is like a foretaste of heaven itself.

"The Lord's name be praised!" he said one day, when the Squire had been speaking of what that memorable day had been to him. "The Lord's name be praised, that even the weak things of the world He can make such use of. I had had a sore fight with myself that morning, and the devil had been tempting of me to think that I was but a bit of useless lumber in the world, and that the Lord was dealing hardly with me, to keep me suffering in this poor body, when I was longing to be set free and at rest. But now I see that He had a work for me to do, even to praise Him out of the midst of the furnace, and to bear witness for Him to others."

"You are right there again, Anthony," said the Squire. "A true Christian is never a piece of useless lumber in the world. If he cannot serve his God in one way he can in another; and perhaps you never served Him better yourself than when I saw you that morning, 'patient in tribulation,' and felt that you possessed in your religion the secret of content, which I had yet to learn."

"And bless the Lord! you have learned it now, sir," said Anthony, wiping away with his blue pocket-handkerchief the tears that had gathered in his eyes.

"I have," replied the Squire; "I learned it from you!"

A LITTLE boy sat in front of his father, and held the reins which controlled a restive horse. Unknown to the boy, they passed around him, and were also in the father's hand. He saw occasion to pull one of them. With artless simplicity the child looked around, saying, "Father, I thought I was driving, but I'm not, am I?" Thus is it often with men, who think that they only are shaping a destiny which a higher Hand than theirs is really fashioning.

DIFFICULTIES OF NONCONFORMIST PASTORS IN RURAL DISTRICTS.

BY A VILLAGE PASTOR.

THE sentiment that is born of rural sights and sounds is very different from that which may be produced by actual experience of the facts of the case. There may be the widest divergence between the images that speak of rural peace and the actual condition and character of village life; so that when you wander far from the "roar of populous cities," when in some sequestered spot you alight upon some "Sweet Auburn, loveliest village on the plain;" and when, in the language of Goldsmith—

"You pause on every charm—
The sheltered cot, the cultivated farm,
The never failing brook, the busy mill,
The decent church that tops the neighbouring hill;
The hawthorn bush, with seats within the shade,
For talking age, and whispering lovers made;"

and when, having become somewhat inspired with the spirit of the scene, you are tempted to people the place with a community in harmony with your picture; then we suggest that ampler knowledge may perhaps compel the two pictures of man and nature to dissolve into widely dissimilar elements, each bearing its own form and producing its own impression.

There is, too, a distinctness and intensity, bred of few and familiar objects, which render the aspects of village life extremely well defined and prominent. I have no doubt many a rector would speak emphatically of the discordant jar to his feelings caused by the presence of objects, "palpable to feeling as to sight," within the limits of a parish sacred to himself. In like manner the Nonconformist has to meet, at every step, some features of the place that wear a dark and implacable frown. People of no very great consequence affect to look down upon him with disdain. What kind of creature he really is in the imagination of some, it would be hard to say. To them he seems always to have his hands, like Samson, on the pillars of the temple, threatening altar, throne, and constitution with promiscuous ruin. He is considered an enemy to Church and State, and as such he may safely be visited with private hatred. It is considered an affront to the majesty of the law when a Nonconformist takes part in

parish business ; and if he ever succeeds in guiding it into unaccustomed channels, then the climax of horrors is reached, and he is branded as a "political Dissenter"—whatever that may mean—who well deserves a speedy and ignominious punishment, if it could be inflicted, and to whom the many carnal weapons possessed by the Church party may be swiftly and justly applied.

Frequently the attitude of the clergyman is one of self-complacent supremacy. He acts like a local magnate, with the queen's commission always in his pocket. It is as natural for him to interfere in whatever is going on, as it is to command his own servants or children. The land under his control he can cut and carve so as at once to increase his rent and extend his power ; and his relationship to other people's landlords is frequently of such a nature that it can be effectually employed as an engine of Church discipline against all who question his authority.

If there be any charities, the distribution of them falls into the hands of Episcopalians, and very small doles judiciously applied will sometimes go a long way in securing absence from Nonconformist places of worship, if not of actual attendance at the parish Church. In some parishes loaves are given away after service, and this necessitates the attendance of the recipient. There are, sometimes, also medicines for the sick, and a peculiar kind of claret for ailing females ; a cricket field for the young men and boys ; a place in the band for those who are musically inclined, and a general and pressing invitation to the singing seats. Ingenuity is taxed to supply all sorts of motives for all sorts of people. Indeed, in a village like ours, the observer can watch the whole process of compassing sea and land to make one proselyte ; and when he is made, you can see that Scripture is literally fulfilled before your eyes.

But perhaps the most serious thing of all to the Nonconformist, and especially to the minister, is when the only place of public elementary instruction, paid for largely out of public taxes, is under the irresponsible control of the clergyman. There the children of Baptists, who never were christened, are daily asked who gave them their name, and are made to say, their godfathers and godmothers in their baptism. There sectarian and often Romanising hymns are taught them, and books are lent for their parents to read, and inducements are indirectly and subtly held out with a view to children being transferred bodily to the Church Sunday-school. I am satisfied that the severest battle between Dissent and the Establishment centres

round the school. That it is the key of our opponents' position, may be seen from the tenacity with which clergymen cling to the control of the schools, and to the unscrupulous means that so many are willing to use in order to defeat the building of Board Schools. The reason for this stubborn resistance lies deeper than the desire to give education to the young. It is the claim to influence and control, for party purposes, the rising generation, through the peculiar Church bias these schools are intended to give. To the generality of the country clergymen of the present day I attribute a deeper and more real motive for their action, than to suppose it would content them to pass our village youth through a short educational process preparatory to useful work. They mean to pass them through their Church mills, to make sectarians and Churchmen of them.

I would further observe that the peculiar nature of a Baptist or Congregational Church brings it into almost inevitable collision with the Church of England, and makes it a standing protest and a barrier against the absorption of the village community into the ranks of the Establishment. Having a settled ministry, with continued pastoral oversight, and pronounced and decided ideas on the nature and headship of the Christian Church, these Churches stand out in clear relief, and often strong antagonism to the assumptions of the village rector or Anglican priest, and thus draw down upon them the concentrated wrath of these persons. The Dissenting minister is on the spot, with a "presence that will not be put by"—an intruder, an interloper, who manifests no fear and who asks no favour, and as such he is to be put down, if possible; and if it be not possible to put him down, then his influence is to be silently ignored or laboriously reduced to the smallest proportions.

For this to be most effectual is for him to be poor. Ministerial poverty in our rural districts is a real difficulty in Christian work. You are aware that the support of Congregational Churches in the country parishes must mainly depend upon the staunch fealty of a few families, who contribute largely, if there be a decent maintenance of Church and pastor. Thus the loss of a single family may become a serious embarrassment to the Church. The weight, which was heavy enough before, is now placed upon fewer shoulders; and labouring under the pressure of poverty or debt, the small country Church often drags on a dull, spiritless, and uphill life. It becomes easy for the selfish, at such a time, to blame the pastor for what he has no power to remedy or prevent; and under the pressure

of untoward circumstances, the solitary, detached, isolated Church dwindles into a mere handful, because there are no adequate pecuniary resources upon which a successful Church could be supported. Here an effective clerical opponent sees his opportunity, and he makes special efforts to detach from our country Churches those families whose position enables them to be of greatest service in a money point of view. It is in war accounted good generalship to cut off the supplies (for famine is quite as deadly as the sword); and we, as Nonconformists, have constantly the difficulty of seeking to retain families whose names may long have been connected with our country Churches as their chief supporters.

If, then, from the very nature of a country Church, it is often weak, and if this weakness is taken advantage of by our opponents to make our weakness as effective as possible for the destruction of our influence in the rural districts, then I am placing before you one of our chief difficulties, and also one of the most cogent reasons why there should be closer ties and stronger sympathies between the flourishing Churches in our towns and the struggling Churches in our villages. The weakness of the one gives it the right of appeal: the strength of the other lays upon it the obligations of duty. Our oneness is the bond of union, and our difference is the measure of duty one toward the other.

We in the country want to feel like a small knot of Romans might have been supposed to feel in the palmy days of the Republic, when, however far from the banks of the Tiber they were, they still felt strong and full of assurance in the knowledge that Rome,—the wisdom of her senators, the skill of her generals, the bravery of her soldiers, and the resources of her people, were all combined to render their position, however distant and isolated, one of security and peace.

We want to feel that the pulsing power of our distant city Churches is not bounded by the houses that define the town; but that leaping over river, and wood, and plain, and cultivated field, it stops not until it has sent a thrill of vigorous life through the languid veins of our country Churches. Then the less shall be blessed of the greater; and as tributary streams make mighty rivers, we in turn will replenish your strength, and sometimes become a voice in your pulpits, and thus give back a tithe of the blessings we have received.

A GRIEF told is only half a grief, because we divide it with another: a love told often doubles itself by being revealed.

WHAT EMILY FOUND TO DO.

WELL, now, Emily," said Aunt Mary, "it is your birthday, isn't it? Shouldn't have thought of it, if I hadn't heard Jane just now wishing you a happy new year. Eighteen, isn't it?"

"No, I'm nineteen to-day."

"Dear me, how fast you are growing up! Emily, do get me my work-basket." And that was the sum of Emily's conversation with Aunt Mary respecting her nineteenth birthday.

There are not many girls who are very settled and very happy at nineteen. They laugh and talk, go to parties, read some books, make calls, alter their dresses, and do a thousand such things that are necessary; but by this time they have done them all a good while. And the thought will not be crushed—"Is this the whole of life?" Now such a thought as this was the actual knot in all the tangled mass of thoughts that had filled Emily's mind through the dull 15th day of December—her birthday. In other days—only a few short years ago—a wreath of red berries round a little cake, and a special kiss all round, had quite satisfied her; but even at nineteen there are fewer lips to give the birthday kiss. Besides, life had actually come now. That wonderful future she used to dream about was right here: she was already in it, and the thought would come up, "What am I doing? I don't see but I am busy all the time, but it isn't living. When I have finished my course I shall have nothing to show. There's Annie Wilson: she can draw and paint, and understands music. I see how she can fill her life up, well enough. And there's Carrie French, who is going next month to teach at school; but as for me, I can't see my way out."

Poor Emily! Something definite was what she wanted. Of vague energy and eagerness she had enough. She didn't need so much to be taught, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might," as how to find something to do. It is true of half the young Christian girls, who want to serve and live to real purpose, but don't know where to begin. When they come down from abstract thinking to the regular, hopeless Monday, and Tuesday, and Wednesday, it is as if they had come in contact with a blank stone wall.

Emily's home was a pleasant one. Her father was a stirring man of business—here and there and everywhere. The only brother who was left was in a shop in the village—a kind, good-natured sort of

man, who moved on in a certain even way, loved Emily, and told her so sometimes, but knew as much of her inner life as the Queen of England. At home every day were her mother, this unmarried aunt, and one servant. Her mother was a thoroughly practical woman, busy with her dairy and her garden, and more industrious than her sister, who hustled about all day long in a disconnected way. Between Emily's secret thoughts and this home circle there was a most impassable gulf. They could help her less than she could help herself, only this night the burden seemed too heavy for her to bear. There was no use in going away to cry over it: she had tried that before. She was in no mood for reading; so she took her unfinished dress, put the shade on the lamp, and sat down to sew on the braid.

"Tinkle, tinkle," went the door-bell. "Dear me," she said to herself, "I cannot talk to-night," but she went to the door.

"Oh, Mrs. Jackson; good-evening!" And this good lady had a hearty kiss and welcome. Something in her quiet eyes met Emily's mood. She untied the strings of her friend's white hood, and sat down close by her; with a very wistful look. Now they were alone, if Mrs. Jackson would only talk to her, and help her a little. However, it was only by intuition one could have told her thought. Emily never knew how to speak first.

"Do you know, Emily," said Mrs. Jackson, when they had talked a little about common-place things, "I often wonder if you are quite contented?"

Emily looked up quickly, and read something in the thoughtful face that opened her heart. She hadn't much to say, for her trouble was rather intangible—a blank, a sense of life slipping away with no real thing done.

"I sew," said she, "for John, and I dust the rooms every morning; but most of the things mother would rather do herself. Then auntie takes a good deal of care, so I don't seem to be very necessary. The weeks go on, and I don't see what it all amounts to."

"You finished school last summer, didn't you, Emily?"

"Yes; father thought I had been long enough. Besides, my head troubled me so much when I was studying, it was of no use for me to try to go on. Oh, dear! Sometimes I wish I were so poor I should have to support myself. I believe I should be much happier."

Mrs. Jackson was silent a minute, pondering, while she drew Emily to her with a caressing motion. "I understand," said she. "I've lived through it all. I think the great thing for you now is, to know

just what you ought to do. You want to find the right path between yielding in a lazy way to circumstances, and trying to force your dreams against Providence. Suppose we think things over, and see a little."

"Well," said Emily, "I have wanted to go with Carrie French, to teach. I believe I know enough for that. But you see, I can't stir a step. I'm the only daughter, and they think I'm not strong, so I never could persuade father and mother that it is anything but nonsense. There's no use thinking any more of that. If I lived in a large town there'd be plenty to do for poor people, but you know how it is here. There it is—I seem to be so shut up." And her lips quivered a little as she went round the old hopeless circle again.

"But, Emily dear, God means to have you do something that calls out all your powers. If He shuts you up here in this village, the work is here. I know what you want to say. You have lived here so long, with everything going on in a regular way, you can't break through. You don't know how to get anything to begin with. It is like putting out your hand to take an apple in a dream—just as you put it out you wake up."

Emily looked up with a smile, and eyes brimming over. This was just the trouble.

Mrs. Jackson was silent another minute or two. She knew Emily didn't need to be directed into seeing home duties better just now. She was already a good daughter and sister. The finer shares of help and home service she would find by degrees, if she could once start in the right direction. To go out was the best thing for her first. The silence was broken rather abruptly.

"Can you sew well, Emily? Do you like it?"

"Why, yes, pretty well; but why?"

"Well, I have thought much of you, of what you need to assist you in your present state of mind. And I have thought much of our minister's wife, of what she needs in her feeble state of health. Did you ever think of what she has to do—with her feeble health, to take care of her house, and sew for those three children? You know that she cannot afford—or rather, I should say, we do not pay her husband sufficient stipend to allow her to keep a servant, and obtain the help she should have. I know this is a shame, and have often thought of it. I have often thought of the style in which many of our people live, and yet they seem not to think of poor Mrs. W., toiling day after day, and night after night, till her health

is quite broken down, when a very little from each would put this all right. Now I propose that you take your work-bag, the first pleasant afternoon, and go down there and sew for her. You can manage it all pleasantly, and you will give more comfort than you can think. When you come away, bring home something to finish. Then, if you can, interest some of the other girls in it. If you had ever been very tired, and seen piles of sewing waiting to be done, you could feel what good it would do her.

“Look around, then, and see if there isn't some one else who needs just such help in some similar way. Then, Emily, be all the time looking out for little chances—not to find fault, or find something to speak of that would be hurtful—but to do something for everybody you see. If you go over to the post-office, don't go dreaming and thinking of yourself, but watching. If you meet Charley Clark, speak to him pleasantly, however sulky he looks. He is one of the kind that few like—though he has been somewhat successful in life—so a little sunshine like that is just what he needs. If you see Martha Cricks, don't say in your mind, ‘Ah! how cross and gossipy she looks!’ but give her a kind word, and try to imagine what made her so, and what she might have been in different circumstances. And so on, Emily: keep it up, week after week, watching for little chances in all sorts of ways, to make somebody—anybody—even Bob Lightfoot, at the corner, happier—better, if you can. Don't let any one slip by your thought, simply because he always has. Stop and ask yourself, ‘Now, isn't there something for him?’ You will have to think in a flash sometimes—but do it. Then there is Christmas coming. There are ever so many people here who live right on past all these holidays, and hardly ever know in their lives what it is to have a present. You can make some little thing; some cushion, or necktie, or collar—just some small thing, and astonish them with it. It would be such a surprise. It would give a thrill of hearty pleasure to persons who are not used to thrills of any kind.”

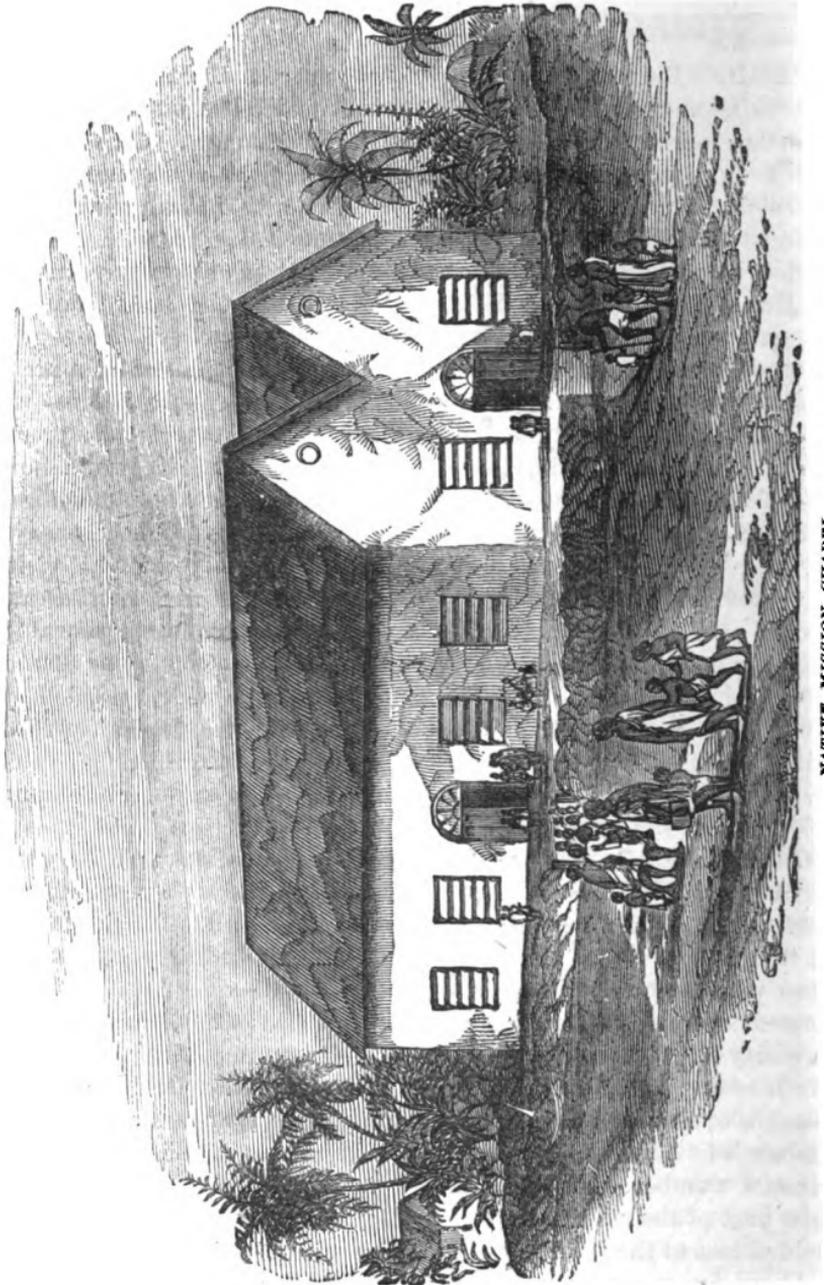
Emily drew a long breath, while a certain light slowly kindled in her eyes. “I think I shall have enough to do.” She laid her head upon Mrs. Jackson's shoulder. A silent kiss told the story of a trouble solved, a lifelong rest and work begun. Her eager desire, her underlying Christian principle of self-denial, would develop the little hints into a rare life—a life, however, possible to any girl who is at this moment saying, “What shall I do? What can I do?”—
By an American Writer.

MISSIONS IN THE SOUTH SEAS.

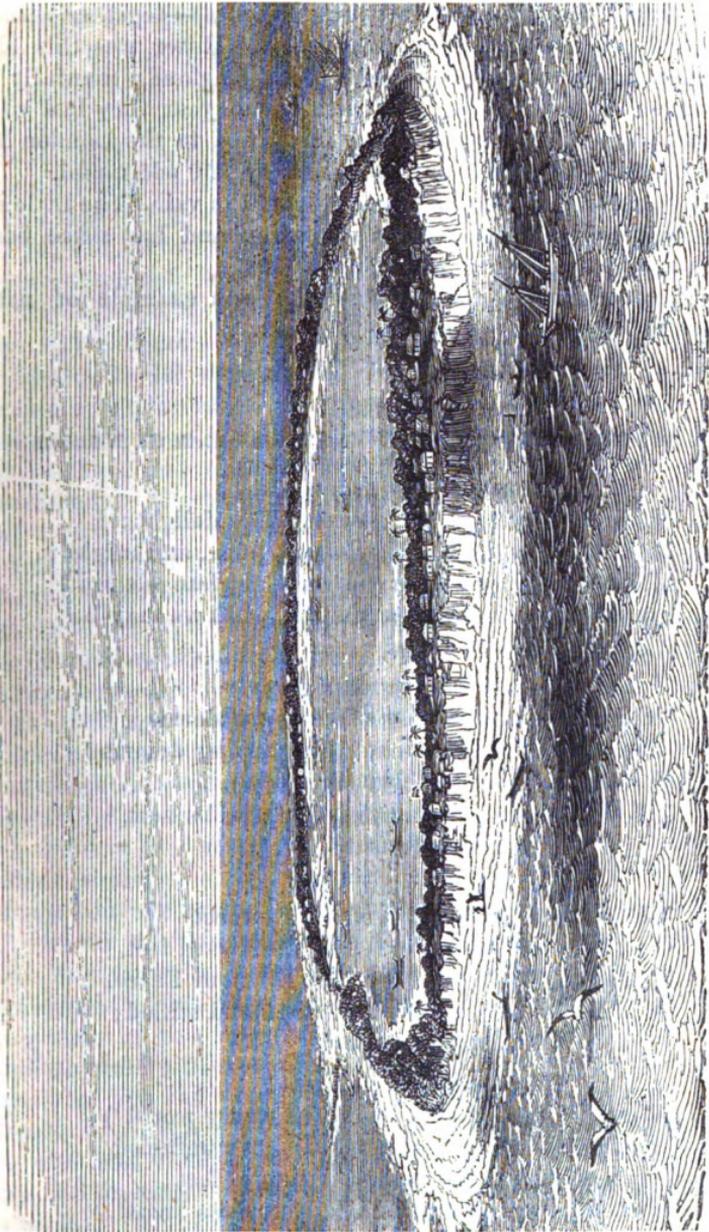
A BRIGHT example, not simply of the success which has attended missionary effort, but of the success which has attended native Christian agency, is seen in the island of Mangaia. This island, only twenty miles in circumference, with a population numbering 3000 souls, situated far away in the southern seas, ranks prominently amongst those regions into which the light of the Gospel has been carried by the coloured converts themselves. For twenty years, as the Rev. William Gill tells us, in his "Gems from the Coral Islands," Mangaia was left exclusively to native Christian teachers. At length, however, it was arranged that Mr. Gill—then stationed at a large island one hundred and twenty miles distant—should proceed to Mangaia, and ascertain the extent to which the Gospel had spread there. The testimony he bears, shows how perseveringly and how ardently these native teachers, for twenty years alone, must have laboured. On the evening of the day on which he landed, he says 800 persons gathered and heard from him the object of his visit. Day after day believers and inquirers came to him for instruction and advice. On the first Sabbath after his arrival an early morning prayer-meeting, attended by 300 persons; schools, attended by 800 or 900 children and young persons; and a public service, attended by 2000 persons, showed the deep hold which the Gospel had gained amongst the natives. "It was altogether," says Mr. Gill, "a day of deep interest—one that we had little expected to experience among a people who had only had native teachers' instruction."

One can scarcely forbear smiling at the conscientious scruples with which some of these good people were troubled after embracing Christianity. One, for instance, came to Mr. Gill, asking, "Is it a sin to eat raw fish?" whilst another was exceedingly anxious to learn whether or not it was wrong to eat half-cooked pork. They seemed to think that, in order to be good Christians, they must of necessity have their meat well done! Other inquirers would ask, "Is it wrong to eat rats?" while others again were troubled to know whether or not the Bible commanded wives to sit at meals with their husbands! This last point seems to have been a difficulty with an unusual number of the natives. Degradation of the females had been part of their heathenism, and it proved to be that part which yielded last to the influences of the Gospel.

About five years after this first visit by Mr. Gill, a heavy calamity



NATIVE MISSION CHAPEL.



A CORAL-REEF LAGOON.

fell upon the inhabitants of this island. In one day a terrific hurricane destroyed the crops, plantations, and houses—together with the chapel and school—throughout the island. Bitter was this blow. Assistance, however, was nobly sent from England; manfully the islanders set to work again; and within one year they had so far recovered their prosperity, that they forwarded to the London Missionary Society £78, and to the Bible Society £50 additional.

Truly the native teachers had not laboured in vain. The little seed had become a great tree, and was bearing, and has since borne, precious fruit to the honour and glory of God.

Our illustrations show a mission-chapel—an example of native skill and industry—and a coral-reef lagoon.

REST.

“Thou hast made us for Thyself; and the heart never resteth till it findeth rest in Thee.”—*St. Augustine.*

MADE for thyself, O God!

Made for Thy love, Thy service, Thy delight;
 Made to show forth Thy wisdom, grace, and might;
 Made for Thy praise, whom veiled archangels laud!
 Oh, strange and glorious thought, that we may be
 A joy to Thee!

Yet the heart turns away

From this grand destiny of bliss, and deems
 'Twas made for its poor self, for passing dreams!
 Chasing illusions melting day by day,
 Till, for ourselves we read on this world's best,
 “This is not rest!”

Nor can the vain toil cease,

Till in the shadow maze of life we meet
 One, who can guide our aching, wayward feet,
 To find Himself our Way, our Life, our Peace.
 In Him the long unrest is soothed and stilled;
 Our hearts are filled.

O rest, so true, so sweet!

(Would it were shared by all the weary world!)
 'Neath shadowing banner of His love unfurled,
 We bend to kiss the Master's pierced feet;
 Then lean our love upon His boundless breast,
 And know God's rest! —*Sunday Magazine.*

HOW THE CHAPEL WAS EMPTIED.

I USED to live at Woolborough, and when I was there, I became a member of the Congregational Church in High Street. I found in that Church some very kind friends, with whom I had much pleasant intercourse, and with whom I took part in Sunday-school and other Christian work. I shall have reason to thank God as long as I live that I ever was associated with them.

All the time to which I refer, Mr. Martin was the minister. He was not what might be called a great preacher, but he was a good one. He always spoke as though his soul were in what he had to say. The Church, which seated about nine hundred people, was well filled. It did one's heart good to look round on the congregation on a Sunday morning or evening, and to hear the full, hearty way in which they sang the praises of God. There was a large Sunday-school, and in other ways the people worked vigorously and harmoniously. Much of this might be ascribed to the tact, the genial loving spirit, and the untiring energy of the pastor; and he was well sustained by a band of faithful, earnest men. As the result of all, through God's blessing, much good was done. Up to the time I left Woolborough there was scarcely ever a Church meeting at which members were not received into Christian fellowship; and what was especially encouraging, most of them were young people from the Sunday-schools and the Bible classes.

It was with great regret that I left Woolborough; but the directors of the bank in which I was accountant made me an offer of the managership of one of their branches in another part of the country, and I did not feel at liberty to decline the proposal. I found an excellent minister, and kind Christian friends, and work to do, at Hilltown; but my heart often went back regretfully to Woolborough.

A year or two after I settled at Hilltown, I heard with much sorrow, first that Mr. Martin had been compelled to resign his charge on account of ill health, and then that he had died. The Church was a long time in choosing another pastor. No wonder they found it difficult to meet with a minister exactly to their minds, after having enjoyed, for five and twenty years, the services of good Mr. Martin. At length I learnt that they had invited a minister. He was a young man, who had been settled for a few years over a small charge, where, the limitations of the sphere taken into account, he had been very useful.

The tidings which reached me, however, were by no means as satisfactory as I could have wished. I had no direct communication with Woolborough, for it so happened that the friends with whom I used to correspond had left the town; but I heard, in a roundabout way, that the congregations were much smaller than in Mr. Martin's time, and that in other respects there was a great falling off from the old prosperity. Three years passed, and then I heard that the Church was once more without a pastor. Nearly another twelvemonth then elapsed, and I heard that again they were "settled."

About a year and a half after all this, some business matters connected with the bank required my presence in Woolborough, and I spent two Sundays there. I anticipated my visit with great pleasure, for I had never forgotten my love for the Church there, and I had still some old friends left whom I greatly esteemed. But I cannot say that my expectations were realised.

On the first Sunday morning—a fine bright May morning—I went to the Church. The old doorkeeper recognised me, and gave me a hearty welcome. I thought I should like to sit in my old place, and so I asked him if he thought the people who occupied the pew would have any objection to my sitting with them. "Bless you, Mr. Johnson," he replied, "ten to one, you will have it all to yourself."

I could not enter into further conversation, but I took my way at once to the seat which was hallowed to me by so many precious recollections. It wanted between five and ten minutes to the time of commencing worship, and when I entered I don't think there were six people in the whole Church. "Oh, well," I thought, "they will come by-and-by; it is early yet." But when the minister ascended the pulpit and began the service, I doubt whether, leaving out of the account the Sunday-school children—and there were not many of them—there were a hundred persons present. Perhaps fifty more came straggling in at different times after. A congregation of a hundred and fifty, instead of seven hundred at least! I cannot express the feeling of disappointment which came over me. There were perhaps fifty more at night, but that was all.

"And what sort of minister had they got?" some reader may ask. A very good minister, I reply; and as for his sermons, they only needed good congregations of interested and sympathetic hearers to make them powerful. I have always maintained, since I knew anything about preachers and preaching, that no man can preach his best, or anything like his best, to empty pews.

During the week I had a good deal of talk with some of my old friends about Church matters. The fact was, they would scarcely speak of anything else. I could not help seeing that the minds of nearly all were pervaded by deep discouragement.

I took some trouble to get to the bottom of things, and, I may be permitted to add, some trouble to set matters right. Perhaps my readers would like to know what I believe to have been the cause of the sad decline. I will try to tell them.

After Mr. Martin's death, from all that I could learn, the deacons acted very judiciously with respect to the choice of a successor. They made the most careful inquiry beforehand as to the characteristics of the ministers they invited to supply the pulpit; and when the matter came to a final decision, I did not hear, although they were unanimous in supporting Mr. Cousins, that they had pressed their views unduly. The invitation to Mr. Cousins was signed by fully four-fifths of the Church, and there was another from the congregation; but the minority had fixed their affections on another gentleman, and instead of yielding gracefully, they still insisted that the greatest possible mistake had been made in passing by Mr. Watkin. From that time little that the deacons did seemed right. Every proposal they made was closely scrutinised, and if exception could be taken against it, exception was taken. In Mr. Martin's time our Church meetings were most orderly and devout; but now everybody who went did so with an uncomfortable expectation that something unpleasant might occur. The deacons, with one or two exceptions, bore all this with forbearance; but some of their friends were not so patient, and strong things were said on both sides. At length it became a difficulty to get a Church meeting at all.

Meanwhile a new Congregational Church had been recently opened in the suburbs of Woolborough. A few people who lived in the district where it was built left High Street as soon as Mr. Martin died, but secessions now followed. Some quietly withdrew to other Nonconformist denominations, and a few others to the Established Church.

The minority took occasion from the declining congregations, not to inquire if there were anything in their own spirit or temper to account for it, but rather to say that it was just a proof of the truth of what they had always said, that Mr. Cousins was not the man for the pastorate. I am afraid that what they thus said had far more influence than it ought to have had with some who had signed the

invitation to Mr. Cousins. A disunited Church seldom, if ever, attributes its want of prosperity to its disunion. It is nearly always the minister who does not succeed.

Mr. Cousins laboured with energy and zeal for some time, and bore up manfully against his discouragements; but at length he was wearied out. Having received an invitation from a small Church, although at some pecuniary sacrifice, he accepted it. I think his removal was a mistake, both on his own account and that of the Church. If he had remained a little longer, things would have worked round.

After the lapse of nine months, the Church invited Mr. Holden to the pastorate. I do not think there was much diversity of opinion about him. Many in the Church had got into a state of indifference, and they scarcely cared who was invited, so that they were once more settled. Happily they had found a young man of real worth, who saw that if, by God's blessing, he could succeed in uniting the people, Cross Street was a sphere of great usefulness. But he had not united them yet. He had some warmly-attached friends, who esteemed him greatly, and he was gaining on others; but there was still a grievous lack of cohesion and of hearty, united work.

I went to the prayer-meeting on the Monday evening, hoping to meet there some of my old friends who were still connected with the Church. To my disappointment I saw only one or two of them there, and the attendance was very small. What had passed had produced an abiding feeling of coldness, and on both sides really good people staid away because they did not like to meet one another. What a hindrance is strife to prayer!

When Mr. Martin was the minister of High Street Church we were, most of us, active and earnest in our endeavours to bring strangers to hear our worthy minister, and we made them welcome when they came. It seemed to me that now the people had got into such a listless condition, that few cared whether strangers came or not. Outsiders get to know what is going on in our places of worship. I was told that many persons who liked Mr. Holden's ministry said, "What is the use of going where coldness and deadness alternate with strife?" And they went to places where they liked the ministry less but the people more.

One thing gave me hope for High Street: there was in the hearts of many of the people a feeling of deep sorrow on account of the low state of things; and I believe my visit tended to deepen that

feeling, because it reminded them vividly of a time when the Church was pervaded by earnest life. I did what I could to encourage them. I reminded them that Woolborough had increased by several thousands within the last ten years; and that even though they might not get back any who had left them, there was a large population from which they might recruit their ranks. But this was indispensable—they must at once bury all differences and then start afresh.

A number of the principal parties met together. There was a little shyness and awkwardness at first, but it soon passed away. Two of the gentlemen prayed very appropriately and earnestly. One of the deacons then rose. The condition of the Church, he said, had not of late been such as they could desire; it was very likely they had none of them been without fault; and if there had been anything on his part which had given offence, he regretted it deeply. Others followed in the same strain. Only one gentleman attempted to rake up old grievances; but his doing so called forth general disapproval, and he himself had the candour to admit that he was wrong.

"I tell you what, friends," said one of the company; "for my part I am ashamed that such trifles have kept us apart. And we have been longing to be friends all the time, but we have been too proud to say so."

There was an excellent prayer-meeting next Monday evening. Tears filled many eyes that night as prayers went up to God from hearts which had not united in prayer for years.

That was the beginning of better days. Workers who had long been idle returned to their work, and others joined them; the congregations are gradually increasing; many members have been added to the Church; and the hearts of both minister and people are greatly encouraged.

I believe our friends at Woolborough have learned a lesson which will be of service to them for many a day. They have found out how easy it is, by mere indiscretion, to produce division in a Church—how strength may be frittered away by apparent trifles—and how it is possible to turn "a garden of the Lord" into a wilderness. I trust that their experience will not be lost upon others; and that what I have written may prevent others having to tell a tale like that which I have told—"How the Chapel was emptied."

POPULAR TOPICS OF THE HOUR.**V.—THE DISESTABLISHMENT CONTROVERSY.**

THE controversy is mainly one, not between Church and Dissent, but between the material and spiritual elements of English life in all ranks and parties; and the "world-power" on which the Establishment relies is so great as naturally to inspire its adherents with some expectation of successful resistance. Never had any Jericho mud walls so thick and so high, and never were the Philistines (we use the term in Dr. M. Arnold's inoffensive sense) in greater force on those ramparts. The Establishment is strong as any Philistine could wish in its antiquity, in its enormous wealth, in its rooted interest in the land, in its support by nearly all the upper and fully one-half of the middle classes, in its innumerable family traditions, in its glorious buildings, in its more glorious literature, in its all-pervading political influence, in its parochial authority, in its stately ceremonial, in its ever-charming liturgy, in the industry, social status, and thousand fine qualities of its clergy, and in the red-hot passionate attachment of their wives and daughters. It is strong in its music and poetry; in its ancient narrowness which suits some, and in its modern breadth which suits more; in its attempts at consistency, and in its still more earnest attempts at illogical compromise and comprehension. It is strong in its respectability, if ever respectability was strong on earth; strong in its position as the religion of the Queen and of the Prince of Wales; of Parliament on both sides of both Houses, of the Law Courts, of the Army and Navy, and Volunteers, and Artillery; of the Universities, of the Prisons, of the Corporation of London, and of all the Municipalities. Glory and honour adorn it everywhere. It touches society at nearly every point of its surface, and meets the tastes and interests of every condition.

And yet this great Image, with its head of gold, and breast of silver, and belly and thighs of brass, has feet part of iron and part of clay, and may therefore come to grief sooner than is expected by some. For there is a strength which becomes weakness before the action of moral and spiritual forces, and so it will be with this wonderful institution. Its present eminence is based on injustice, and is purchased by the sacrifice of truth and honour; and under such conditions it must inevitably first lean, and finally fall with a

crash. The conscience of England is secretly revolted by the pretensions of her clergy. One-half of the people feel in their own experience the daily annoyance of unjust repression, and the privileged half know in themselves that their elevation by conformity is contrary to the rights of their fellow-countrymen, and to the very idea of equal legislation. The clerical body, again, twenty thousand strong, is held together solely by a mutual connivance in the non-natural interpretation of words, which is itself one of the most scandalous immoralities in Christendom; and the legal decisions which sanction such perversions of language have imported the element of Jesuitism into English law. Lastly, the theology of the Established Church has been expanded into an aeriform unreality, while on every side simony flourishes unrebuked, and ritual is sinking into theatricals.

In a word, this Church Establishment, with all its fascination, is losing the moral respect of England and of Europe, and the nobler qualities of individual Churchmen cannot long suffice to arrest the process of disintegration. Conscience within and conscience without will prove more than a match for all the magnificence and prestige; for justice and truth are stronger than compromise, than sophistry, than decoration, and even than a whole bench of bishops crying, "Peace and unity!" when both of them are impossible. We do not expect that the Liberation Society will achieve more than a share of the work of disestablishing the Church of England. There are many other forces together tending towards that issue, and those which are most spiritual are more potent than even the political demand for religious equality. Cicero says that in his time two Roman augurs could scarcely look each other in the face without laughter. The three Church parties of England will not be able to keep their countenances much longer. The efforts of the "Catholics," the Broad Churchmen, and the Evangelicals, to look, to outsiders, like brethren dwelling together in unity, are becoming too painful and convulsive. When the Propagation Society and Church Missionary Society will no longer pray together, the time cannot be distant when the fact of an incurable diversity of religious views will be acknowledged and acted on.

Just in proportion as earnestness ripens into resolution, will men prepare themselves to sacrifice the seen for the unseen. We offer no chronological prophecy assigning the date of the catastrophe. Nothing is more dubious than the order of political events. But nothing is

more certain than that the moral sense of the English people is preparing the revolution which amidst a thousand selfish and sentimental regrets will finally establish equality before the law as the State-religion of the empire.—*The Nonconformist.*

JOHN BUNYAN.

TO pass away the gloomy hours in prison, Bunyan took a rail out of the stool belonging to his cell, and with his knife fashioned it into a flute. The keeper, hearing music, followed the sound to Bunyan's cell; but while he was unlocking the door the ingenious prisoner placed the rail in the stool, so that the searchers were unable to solve the mystery; nor, during the remainder of Bunyan's residence in the jail, did they ever discover how the music had been produced. In an old account of Bedford, there is an equally good anecdote, to the effect that a Quaker called upon Bunyan in jail one day, with what he professed to be a message from the Lord. "After searching for thee," said he, "in half the jails of England, I am glad I have found thee at last." "If the Lord sent thee," said Bunyan, sarcastically, "you would not have needed to take so much trouble to find me out; for He knows I have been in Bedford jail these seven years past."

THOUGHTS—GRAVE AND GAY.

MR. PAXTON HOOD tells a tale about a poor woman who had been worse than pauperised by that system of almsgiving which is suspected to be the offspring of proselytism. A new curate, who had just entered on his work fresh from Oxford, and knowing little of the duties of clerical life, visited old Betty. After the customary courtesies had passed, he seemed a little at a loss what to say or do next. His nervous fear showed itself to the quick vision of the old woman, who saw that another novice had come into the parish. After an ominous pause or two, which old Betty regarded as signs of the youthful curate not knowing how to proceed, she at once put him in the path of duty by saying: "Young gentleman, you read a psalm, then give me a shilling, and bid me good-day: they all does it."

A story is current of a lady who, having recently attended a great

ritualistic celebration, was eagerly interrogated by one of the officiating priests, "How she liked it?" "Well," replied the lady, "you could not expect me to be pleased with the sermon, which advocated auricular confession, of which I specially disapprove." "No, no," replied the clergyman, "it was not the sermon I meant." "Oh, you meant the music?" said the lady. "Gounod was certainly very well performed." "No, no," again struck in the gentleman; "not the music." "You are speaking of the prayers, then? They were extremely well intoned." "No! no! no!" cried the excited priest. "I want to know what you thought of *our grouping* before the altar? Did we arrange the colours of our vestments so as to produce an artistic effect?"

Love always wants to show itself. It can no more stay hid than the little flower stays hid in the bud, or the young apple in the apple-blossom, or the seed-corn in the hill. They must burst out and do something, to prove what life there is within.

Far sweeter music to a true woman than the tones of harp or piano touched by her hand, are the cheerful voices of husband and children, made joyous by her presence.

Hope is like the cork to the net, which keeps the soul from sinking in despair; and fear is like the lead to the net, which keeps it from floating in presumption.—*Watson*.

You cannot escape from anxiety and labour; it is the destiny of humanity. You may avoid indeed, to a great extent (some at least may), taking part in the struggle of life, in the sharp and eager competition of an open profession, or the not less intense pursuit of some worthy object of study. But, by what seems to me a just and wholesome retribution, those who shirk from facing trouble find that trouble comes to them. The indolent may contrive that he shall have less than his share of the world's work to do; but Nature contrives that that little shall only the more weary him.—*Lord Stanley*.

You ask, if the Roman Catholic were lord in the land, and you in a minority, if not in numbers, yet in power, what would he do to you? That, we say, would entirely depend on circumstances. If it would benefit the cause of Catholicism, he would tolerate you; if expedient, he would imprison you, banish you, fine you, possibly he might even hang you! Be assured of one thing, he would never tolerate you for the sake of the glorious principles of civil and religious liberty.—*Hambler, Roman Catholic Paper, Sept., 1851*.

Let all troublesome topics be avoided at meals. Do not dwell upon the difficulties of business, the delinquencies of domestics, or the discipline of children, at the dinner table; for a cheerful spirit not only gives relish for food, but a good start at digesting the same.

How deeply rooted must unbelief be in our hearts when we are surprised to find our prayers answered; instead of feeling sure that they will be so, if they are only offered up in faith, and are in accord with the will of God.

We cannot enter heaven as those who pass in a crowd. God deals with souls as men deal with sovereigns, which they examine and weigh one by one.

With four qualifications, a man may be pretty sure of worldly success: they are—gold in his pocket, silver in his tongue, brass in his face, and iron in his heart.

CHURCH NEWS OF THE MONTH.

THE following startling announcement recently appeared in two respectable provincial journals:—"The Government have decided not to repeal the twenty-fifth clause of the Education Act. The terms of Mr. Forster's bill have at length been settled, and I am able to assure you of the above. What he intends to propose will be a small compromise, which I have reason to believe will not be accepted by the Nonconformists. The Ministerial proposal is likely to receive the support of the Conservatives." Of course if such a policy were to be adopted there could be only one result—a formal secession of the Nonconformist body from a party that had not only betrayed Liberal principles, but had dissolved the conditions upon which party allegiance and mutual honour can exist; and the most decisive measure would have to be devised for making such a secession as palpable and peremptory as possible.

But we do not attribute to Mr. Gladstone any such infatuation. Englishmen, as a rule, are not fond of the Eastern method of performing the rite popularly known as "the happy despatch." Nonconformists can put up with a good deal; but there is one thing to which they would object—being dragooned (at the instance of their own leaders) by Tory squires into submission to a reactionary policy.

Such a course would excite the same sort of feeling that the Parliamentary soldiers cherished towards Charles I. when they discovered that the king was in correspondence with the French government for the supply of a French army with which to put down Englishmen. When Conservatism governs England, it must be by its own strength—not by connivance or conspiracy of a Liberal premier.

The facts of the case are probably these: That Mr. Gladstone knows that Mr. Forster has brought the cabinet into a mess; that it won't do to touch the Education question without settling it; that though an Education Amendment Act has been promised for the present session, the fact that the Government that made the promise has since resigned, may furnish a decent pretext for delay; and that next year the whole subject may be riper and the time more favourable for a final settlement. Our readers will agree that it will be better to endure their present grievances than that the Government should only "meddle and muddle;" and meanwhile it will be the duty of Nonconformists everywhere to bring into the fullest light the inequalities and enormities of the present iniquitous system of so-called National Education.

We may add that, in compliance with a memorial presented by the Nottingham Nonconformist Association, the Town Council has, by a majority of seventeen to nine, decided to defer for six months the honouring of a precept for £500 sent to them by the School Board. The memorial stated that there are "not a few ratepayers in the borough of Nottingham" who would refuse to pay the rate if it were levied, unless on an assurance that "no part of the money so demanded shall be spent in the payment of the fees of the children attending sectarian schools."

Earl Russell has consented to lay the foundation stone of Christ Church—a building which is intended to perpetuate the work now carried on in Surrey Chapel.—At South Croydon Church, Aberdeenshire, the defrayal of the erection of the new sanctuary, and the debt on the iron church, have cost about £3000, towards which the people have contributed, or received from friends, above £2000, of which sum more than £1000 was given and collected by Rev. Joseph and Mrs. Whiting.—The memorial stone of Tabernacle Chapel, Llanelly, was laid on Good Friday by Lady Stepney. The building, which will be in the Italian style, is intended to accommodate 1000 persons, and the cost will be £4000. Lady Stepney contributed £50 towards the building fund.

The work of the Church at Stratford, under the pastorate of the Rev. J. Knaggs, is worthy of special notice. The building cost £17,000, and is crowded; the church, formed about five years ago, numbers 297 members. Besides Sunday-school work, and visitation of the lodging-houses in the neighbourhood, a lecture-hall, capable of holding about 400, has been erected at Harrow-green, where mission services are held; and at Leytonstone, a piece of freehold land has been purchased, on which to erect a chapel capable of accommodating 800 persons. Meanwhile the debt upon the main building has been removed, in doing which munificent contributions have been received to the amount of nearly £8000 from Mr. W. Settles; from Mr. J. Spicer, of £1000, who also collected £560; from Mr. S. Morley, who gave £1000; from the London Congregational Chapel Building Society, and others. It is proposed, after a brief interval, to commence the erection of school buildings and six mission rooms in various parts of Stratford.

A new Gothic church, with lecture-room and vestries, capable of accommodating 400 worshippers, is about to be erected at Widnes, at a cost of £2900, towards which about £1900 have already been subscribed.—The reopening services of Abney Congregational Church, Stoke Newington, have been concluded. The church has been repaired, &c., at a cost of about £1250, towards which £1000 has been raised.—New class-rooms in connection with the chapel at Romsey, erected, at a cost of £1500, on land presented by the Right. Hon. W. F. Cowper-Temple, have been opened by Mr. John Kemp Welch, of Sopley-park.

A presentation which excited considerable interest among the friends of Rotherham College has been made to the Rev. C. C. Tyte, who has for nineteen years ably discharged the duties of classical tutor, but who has recently resigned that office. The presents included a purse containing £425; an album, containing portraits of those students who had received instruction from Mr. Tyte; and an address.

The Rev. J. Morley Wright, St. James's-street, Nottingham, has accepted the invitation of the Church at Bond-street, Leicester, vacant by the removal of the Rev. R. Harley to Mill-hill; the Rev. E. Clarke, of Castleford, to Matlock Bank; and the Rev. W. Champness, of Wem, to the co-pastorate, with Rev. A. Clark, of Stockport.

THE GUIDED MESSAGE.

IT is now many years since the incident took place which I am about to relate, but the impression made upon my mind was such that it seems but yesterday.

I was living, at the period I refer to, in a little cottage at the sea-side. It was one of those places which, during a certain season of the year, was filled with visitors, presenting a striking contrast to its appearance a few months afterwards, when the waves beat upon a solitary shore, and when the cry of the sea-bird seems the only sound that is left, instead of all the noise and bustle of a gay multitude.

When "the season," as it was called, was at its height, I would often, in my quiet hours and in my daily walks, watch with interest and amusement the crowds that gathered in groups upon the pier, or loitered on the beach. Sometimes feelings of pity would fill me when I gazed upon the giddy throng, and wondered how many among them were preparing themselves for, or even giving a serious thought to, a better and more enduring life than the present fleeting one, which might be not inaptly compared, I used to think, with one of our passing "seasons." Sometimes, but not often, I saw the same face year after year; children, with their merry laughter, always had a charm for me; and the sad spectacle that strikes the observer, of invalids, with weary expression and languid eyes, drawn in chairs, amid all the activity and life around them, would attract my gaze.

But it was not one of these that especially excited, first my curiosity and then a deep interest, in the summer of 18—. Unusually fine weather had attracted large numbers to the sea, and the season was pronounced by rejoicing lodging-house keepers to be a good one. I had observed in my walks three persons, an elderly couple and a young girl. It was not so much the deep mourning which they wore, that arrested my attention, nor was it the extreme loveliness of the girl, but the settled sadness, almost amounting to despair, upon all three faces. Noticing nothing around them, they would daily turn their steps towards the beach, the two old people clinging, as it were, together, while their young companion followed, gazing with melancholy eyes upon the sea.

I could learn little of them from inquiries, nor did I like to show my curiosity by questioning my neighbours. By-and-by the crowds

thinned, and as the bright summer ended, fewer people were seen day by day upon the sands and pier, till at last I said, as usual, to my little niece who lived with me, "You and I, Ellie, and the pretty white birds and great roaring waves, will soon have it all to ourselves again."

I soon discovered, however, that my three unknown friends had not left, and apparently had no intention of leaving. They still took their customary walks, weather, solitude, or company, seemed equally indifferent to them. When one or two families are left alone, especially at the sea-side, it is easy to become acquainted, and though in this case there were peculiar obstacles, yet by degrees certain trifling civilities passed between us, and a kindly feeling sprang up. The old lady would notice little Ellie, and the child would collect shells for her new friends; the young girl would also occasionally come and see us; till at last, before winter had quite assumed his sway, I had learnt the sad story of this afflicted family from the lips of my young friend, Grace Elton, herself. I will relate it briefly, though it was told me hesitatingly, with many pauses and many tears.

Grace was no relation of the two elder people, but was an orphan, who, with their warm consent, had become engaged to their only son. Indeed, the attachment had commenced when both were children, and it had strengthened as they grew up. Arthur Maynard was a handsome, high-spirited, generous boy, the darling of his parents, who having married late in life, and lost several other children, centred all their hopes and all their affections upon the one treasure left to them. They would have spoiled him had it not been that they were actuated by Christian duty, and they strove to bring up their child to love and reverence their heavenly Father. As he grew older it became evident that fixed principles were the one thing necessary for the guidance of a character naturally unstable and easily influenced. While at home he showed an outward respect towards religion, and would listen attentively when spoken to upon the subject. This was partly owing to his great love for Grace Elton, who lived near, and was his constant companion. She had from early youth given her heart to God, and most affectionately and earnestly would she urge her friend to do the same. But he could not decide, putting off the consideration of his most important interests till a more convenient opportunity, and sad trouble was in store for them all.

It was, alas, a too common story. The young man went to London, and when there was led into temptation, to which, having no stead-

fastness of principle to enable him to resist it, he easily fell a victim. Terrible accounts of debt and difficulty came home to his parents. In vain did his father command and his mother entreat, and in vain were Grace's loving remonstrances. He came home at intervals, and his presence and promises of amendment, together with occasional fits of bitter remorse, would cheer the hearts of those who were only too ready to hope for the best. But promises and resolutions made in one's own strength are of little use, so that it was not to be wondered at that bad news came again and again to crush their hopes. At last, when no heavier blow seemed possible, intelligence arrived that the son, who should have been the comfort and support of his parents' declining years, had left them, as he said, for ever. He could not, he wrote, make them more unhappy than he had done. He was going to sea at once, and he hoped they would forget that they ever had a son. For himself, he cared not what became of him.

Months passed, and nothing was heard of the ship in which his father had ascertained that he had sailed, till on one terrible day an account of its wreck was seen in the newspapers, and the loss of all on board save one or two sailors. Further inquiries only confirmed the fact; and now it did indeed seem as if the trials that had befallen them would bring down the grey hairs of the father and mother in sorrow to the grave. After a long illness, Mrs. Maynard wished to leave their house altogether, and the broken-hearted husband made no objection. Home had lost all charm for them, and wherever they wandered, Grace Elton had followed them. "And now," said the poor girl, as she finished her story, "people say it is wrong of us to indulge our grief, and that we should submit, and even feel that it is all for the best. How can we, when he left us in misery and in sin, and we cannot even rejoice in the hope of meeting him again. Alas," she added, with a look of intense suffering, "we cannot even pray."

The case was indeed one beyond the reach of human help. The death of our loved ones is, and always must be, sad; to miss them from our side, to know that the once kind face and sympathising words can never come back to us again. But if we can trust that we may one day go to them, and never part again, surely the bitterness of our grief is taken away. But no such comforting thought could be indulged in by this unhappy family. They knew that he whom they had loved had resolutely turned from good to choose the evil,—his last act had been one of disobedience and ingratitude. Whatever

God's mercy may be, and we know that it is infinite, and far beyond our feeble power of conceiving it, without one word of repentance or of hope from him they had lost, they felt that they had no right to take comfort, even from the thought of that mercy.

"We cannot even pray," poor Grace had said. "Yes, dear," I replied, "you can pray, and it is the one thing left you to do. Pray for God's help. Go to Him as a little child goes to an earthly father to be comforted. I cannot help you, but your Father can and will. Ah, my child, be thankful that you can still pray. Never despair while One rules all things. Who is so good and loving as our God? There is nothing that He cannot do, therefore He can (though you do not see how, and though no one else can) heal your broken hearts."

My words seemed to calm the poor girl, and she left me, promising to hope still in God, and to do her best to cheer her father and mother, as she called Mr. and Mrs. Maynard.

I fancied they all looked a little brighter when I next met them, and Grace whispered, "I have taken your advice."

It gladdened me to know this, especially as just then business in a neighbouring town took me away for several months. F. M. S.

(To be concluded in our next.)

THE JUBILEE SINGERS.

TWENTY years ago it needed no prophet's vision to see that American slavery had "the sentence of death in itself." As in country places, when we observe a tree belted with a white ring, we know that the tree is marked for felling, so believing eyes saw that God had marked for destruction that iniquitous system which held in bondage His suffering African children: indeed, the axe was already laid to the root of the tree. But who would have thought that the hour would come so soon? or that God's messenger would visit America "with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood?" or that, before the year 1873 began, the once degraded negroes would be crowding into schools and training colleges? Yet all this is matter of fact. God said, "Let the children of Africa go!" and, with Divine sternness, and resistless might, He constrained a whole nation to carry out His will.

After a storm comes a calm, and fair flowers bloom over graves.

Slavery is buried, and the negroes are covering its grave with flowers. A little band of freed men and women, calling themselves "the Jubilee Singers," arrived in England last May, and they show, rather than tell, what pleasant flowers and fruits the African nature will bear, when planted in the soil of freedom, and nurtured with Christian care.

From a deeply interesting little book,* written by an American minister, and now published in London, we learn the personal histories of these singers, and their object in visiting this country. They are here to give concerts with a view to raise the money necessary to build and endow a normal college, to be called Fisk University, and to be entirely devoted to the training of coloured teachers. They have already, in America, obtained £8000 of the £14,000 required, and no doubt in England, "the regal seat of freedom," Christian people will heartily respond to their appeal; not only because it is made for so noble and practical an object, but also because of the pity our English hearts felt for them in their days of bondage, and our sympathy with them in their new-found liberty.

Those who have never lived in slave-holding countries can hardly appreciate the difficulties these Jubilee Singers have encountered in their mission. They have not only had to create a public opinion in favour of their singing, but also to overcome many long-standing prejudices against their colour. We can give only a brief account of these difficulties, but it will be enough to call out our admiration for the brave young men and women who have overcome them.

To begin with: Fisk University has grown out of Fisk School. In 1865, soon after the famous proclamation of President Lincoln, by which the slaves were freed, General C. B. Fisk opened a school for coloured children in Nashville, Tennessee, and it was called Fisk School. This rose, in the next year, into a training college, and its work gradually increased until, in 1871, there were ninety-nine students.

By this time the accommodation had become quite inadequate. New buildings were indispensable. But then came that question which is always turning up, "How shall the money be provided?" The pupils wished to help in the work, but they and their friends were poor, and they lived amongst former slave-holders, who looked on their efforts with suspicion and dislike. It would, therefore, be

* "The Jubilee Singers, and their Campaign for Twenty Thousand Dollars." By the Rev. S. D. Pike, B.A. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

necessary to go far from home, and extend their appeal to a wider circle.

At last a bright idea was struck out. They were all singers, and some of them most skilful and finished musicians; so they proposed to sing their way through America, and give the proceeds of their tour to the new buildings. This was resolved upon. But even the necessary outlay for clothes and travelling expenses was quite out of their power, and not till they had prayed and waited for more than a year was this difficulty removed.

At last they started on their mission. There were thirteen in all, eleven students and two teachers, Mr. George L. White and Miss Wells, under whose care they travelled. Their discouragements began at the first railway station; for, after they had taken first-class tickets, they were compelled, on account of their colour, to ride in a sort of cattle-truck. This was only one of many similar indignities they had to suffer.

From Nashville they went to Cincinnati, and their first appearance was at a public exhibition in the town. They all went, and, in an informal manner, one of the company opened a piano, and began to play the air of "Annie Laurie," with variations. The skill of the player at once attracted attention, and then the fact that a negress was playing soon drew together a large crowd. They then commenced singing, and thus gave the people some indication of their marvellous powers.

After giving several concerts at Cincinnati they went to Columbia, and then to Chillicothe. Here, at two hotels, they were refused accommodation; but public opinion turned to their favour when they gave the proceeds of a concert towards the relief of the sufferers from fire in Chicago.

They went, with very little success, from one town to another, until they came to Elmira. Up to this time their mission had been a failure. They were wretchedly clad, and as winter had set in, they suffered from cold. They were short of money also, for their receipts were often insufficient to cover their working expenses. But they kept steadily on, for they were stimulated by Christian faith and love, and upheld by earnest prayer.

Now at Elmira lived the Rev. T. K. Beecher, a brother of Henry Ward Beecher, and he took up their cause heartily, and not only secured them good audiences there, but wrote to his brother in New York, commending them to his consideration. They then went on

to New York, and made their first appearance at Mr. Beecher's week-night service. They are described as being then, "A motley group: the girls, dressed in waterproofs, and clothed about the neck with long woollen comforters, stood in a row in front. One of the young men had a long rusty coat, and mutton-legged pants, by far too short for him." But in spite of their uncouth appearance, they charmed the congregation, and a collection was made at once. Their difficulties now vanished. They took New York by storm, and when they left their success was established. From that time the tide of their prosperity steadily rose.

They went to Washington, and saw President Grant, who wished them God-speed; and then to Jersey and Boston. At Jersey they had again to encounter some prejudice against their colour. They applied for accommodation at an hotel, and received the following reply:—

"American Hotel, Jersey City, Feb. 29, 1872. Mr. Warner as desired me to say that the Jubilee Singers can not be accomodated at his Hotel att all.—John Newing."

They comforted themselves with the feeling that it would hardly have been respectable to stay in a house where they spelt so badly. At last they set their faces homeward; and when their gains were counted, they amounted to no less than twenty thousand dollars, and this was the result of only seven months' work, from October, 1871, to May, 1872. They went forth weeping, but came back with rejoicing. They had now saved their institution.

The personal histories of these singers are full of interest. One was the child of parents who had bought their freedom, and the parents of another had been freed by their master. But the rest were all slaves until that wonderful morning when the Lord "turned again their captivity." One of them gives a vivid description of the eager interest with which the slaves watched the war. In his own words: "One would see sad faces when the Yankees got whipped, and then the preacher would have prayer-meetings. I was too young to know what they prayed for, but heard the old slaves talking about freedom. By-and-by the rebels kept getting beaten, and then it was sing, sing, all through the slave quarters. Old missus asked what they were singing for, but they would only say, because we feel so happy. One night the report of Lincoln's proclamation came. Now master had a son who didn't believe much in slavery. Next morning I saw the young master come along and speak to my

brother and sister at the front door. I supposed it was about work ; but they jumped up and down, and shouted, sang, and then told me I was free."

At the beginning of their mission the singers generally gave the best classical music, and national songs ; but they soon found that people preferred their quaint, pathetic, negro hymns and songs. Indeed, they would have no other. We all remember how, in "Uncle Tom's Cabin," Mrs. Stowe described these wailing melodies, sweet and grotesque in a breath. These songs have a history. They cannot be judged by ordinary rules of poetry and music, for they were never "composed," but both words and melody are the uncultivated yet rhythmic expression of the woes and hopes and fears of the slaves. Every line tells of a suffering like that of Israel in Egypt, or of a joy like theirs when Pharaoh was drowned, and Miriam sang her song of triumph.

No extracts can do more than suggest the character of these songs, so unique in form, but so true in feeling. One begins—

"Gwine to write to Massa Jesus,
To send some valiant soldier
To turn back Pharaoh's army."

Another says, and how truly, when we remember that slaves sang it—

"I'm a rolling, I'm a rolling, I'm a rolling thro' an unfriendly world ;
O brothers, won't you help me, O brothers, wont you help me to pray,
O brothers, won't you help me to live in the service of the Lord."

The history of one of them is very touching. It begins—

"O Jesus, my Saviour, on Thee I'll depend,
When troubles are near me, you'll be my true friend.
Chorus.—I'm troubled, I'm troubled, I'm troubled in mind,
If Jesus don't help me, I surely will die."

The person, once a slave, who furnished this song, stated that she first heard it from her old father, when she was a child. After he had been whipped he always went and sat upon a certain log near his cabin, and with the tears streaming down his cheeks, sang this song with so much pathos that few could listen without weeping from sympathy, and even his cruel oppressors were not wholly unmoved.

One of the best and most characteristic is one of twenty-five verses, with this refrain :

"Go down, Moses, 'way down in Egypt land,
Tell ole Pharaoh, let my people go."

Some of the verses are an odd mixture of the ludicrous and the plaintive, as, for instance,—

“ We need not always weep and moan, Let my people go ;
And wear these slavery chains forlorn, Let my people go.

“ O brethren, brethren, you'd better be engaged, Let my people go ;
For the devil he's out on a big rampage, Let my people go.

“ O take your shoes from off your feet. Let my people go ;
And walk into the golden street. Let my people go.”

The music is as characteristic as are the words. It has been preserved for us by professional musicians, who took it down from the singing of the negroes, who often “ made ” the tunes in the fervour and ecstasy of the prayer-meeting, or in seasons of mourning and pain, when all hope seemed dead. It is very pleasant to think that these melodies have cheered many a solitary heart, and alleviated many a distress. It would seem as if God gave this power of song to the despised and oppressed negroes, to be a leaf of healing for their anguish, and a quickening power to sustain their hope. And surely, while these untutored utterances rose up from crowded camp-meetings, or wretched huts, or lonely gatherings of fugitives in dismal swamps, surely they entered into the ears of the “ Father of mercies.” He could see the secret yearning after freedom that throbbed in the wild notes, and could hear the sad refrain, “ How long, O Lord, how long ! ”

But these songs contain a prophecy. They tell us of the future of this redeemed people, who, bought with a nation's blood, as well as the blood of Christ, are now so eager after knowledge. The “ Jubilee Singers ” are giving us the first-fruits of new powers to be used in Christian work, and of new phases of Christian life, and of new depths of Christian feeling.

“ The old order changeth, giving place to the new,
And God fulfils Himself in many ways.”

Who can tell but from these freed men may come new illustrations of the grace of God, confirming, in unexpected ways, the truth of God, and the mission of the Redeemer? bringing nearer that day when “ the New Jerusalem ” shall come “ down from God out of heaven, and the nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it.”

The “ Singers ” began their mission in England on the 6th of May, when they sang before a large and select audience in London. The Duke and Duchess of Argyll were there, and Lord Shaftesbury

spoke a few words of commendation and encouragement. It is not too much to say that their sweet singing quite surprises even critical ears. All the newspapers were lavish in their praise. The "Standard" of May 7, said: "There is something inexpressibly touching in their wonderful, sweet, round, bell voices; in the way in which they sing, so artless in its art, yet so consummate in its expression; and in the mingling of the pathetic with the unconscious comic in the rude hymns, shot here and there with a genuine golden thread of poetry."

Let us hope that these "Singers" will secure in England all the money they need. And may they not hear one word disparaging their "work of faith and labour of love," nor carry back with them the slightest wounded feeling. But may their high purpose be strengthened when they meet with unfeigned honour and love from all English Christians.

F. R.

AUNT FANNY'S TALES.

NO. I.—THE LIVE BABY-HOUSE.

I AM a quiet maiden lady, not young, possessing a comfortable little income of my own, and a snug cottage in the country, in which, however, I do not often live, for I am in request at four or five different houses in various parts of England, where I spend more than half my time. And I must confess that, although quiet, and somewhat inclined to take my ease after a not very easy life, I am nevertheless *a slave!*

My tyrants consist of some dozen bright-eyed, curly-headed boys and girls, who possess the firm conviction that "Auntie Fanny's" sole mission is to pet them. That being a decided and settled fact—an article of faith which no doubts disturb—they have several separate ideas under this one great head, the first and foremost being that this same "Auntie" is somehow full of stories, and that she came into the world for the express purpose of telling them, in season and out of season, by night or by day, in-doors or out. Nothing will satisfy their insatiable appetites, and nothing could possibly convince them that stories, "real good stories, out of your own head" (for my listeners are as critical as any "public"), do not flow as easily from "Auntie's" brain as their own ever-ready prattle does from their red lips. No excuses are listened to for a moment. Well, I have no prospect of escape, for you see I love my chains and my persecutors.

No, my slavery will never cease till my life ceases; for when these bright eyes and curly heads have grown sage, and are filled with stories of their own, more will be constantly arising to fill up their places—more little feet, more clinging arms, more eager voices, and all calling for “a story, a story!”

So much for my preface. On a certain autumn evening I was sitting before a bright fire, which cast fitful gleams of ruddy light over a handsomely furnished room, in which the gas had not yet been lighted for the evening. I was alone; I was tired; for the day had been spent in rather a fatiguing pursuit. I was in fact *meditating*. My feet on the fender were becoming warm; my chair was a very easy one; a sense of rest and comfort was stealing over me; my enemies might have said I was *dozing*. If it was so, I was soon to be roused from such untimely repose. A noise was heard outside that I knew too well—the pattering of four pair of small feet, the scuffling, the chattering, all the usual accompaniments to the abrupt entrance of Maud, Harry, Alice, and Tom, my London nephews and nieces. I kept quiet a moment longer—vain subterfuge! “She isn’t asleep, she’s making up our story,” cried saucy Harry, peering up into my face. “Now, Auntie, there’s a nice time before we go to bed, while mamma is washing baby—let’s make haste,” adds prudent Maud, anxious to lose no time. “Take me up, Auntie,” calls little golden-haired Alice, nestling into my arms, while the others range themselves on footstool and rug.

“Now we’re ready,” remarks Tom, gravely, with a pair of large wide-open eyes prepared for any amount of wonders, and full of faith which old age might envy. The rogues! Well, I was ready for them to-night.

“I am going,” I began, “to tell you a *true* story this time, and it will be all about what I saw this very day.” “What’s the name?” they cried—for these children are as particular about the name of a story, and as anxious that it should not be common-place, as any sensational novelist of the present day. “The name,” I replied, still ready for them, “is the live baby-house!” “What, really alive?” “What! like mine in the nursery?” “What can you mean, Auntie?” from a torrent of voices. “Now hush, all of you, and listen to me.

“This morning I went into the city, down to the east end, a part of this great London where you have never been. No green parks, no broad streets, no handsome houses, no well-dressed children with

pet dogs, no beautiful shops full of toys. (A sympathising sigh from Alice.) Everything was dirty and black and miserable; little ragged, half-starved children played in the gutter (no, Tom, I daresay you *wouldn't* mind that, but you wouldn't like the starving), while their thin, pale mothers stood at the doors of their wretched dark rooms, with their thin, pale babies in their arms. I soon found what I was looking for; indeed, before I asked, one of these sad-faced mothers said, 'Be you looking for the Children's Hospital, ma'am? There it is.' I looked and saw a large building, larger at least than the surrounding houses, but except for the inscription over the door, I should not have guessed what it was.

"I rang and asked for permission to enter. This was very readily granted by the doctor, who was the founder of the place, a tall gentleman with such a kind face that you would have liked him at once, and thought as I did, that the poor little children were very fortunate. He begged me to come and see his patients, and all over the house. It had not been built for a hospital, but was two old houses thrown into one, and furnished all by this good doctor and his wife, who first thought of the kind scheme. But everything looked very comfortable. I see, Maud, that I must 'begin at the beginning,' as you say, and tell you everything straight through. Well, I first went into a large room, full of benches, where sat a good number of poor women with little children either in their arms or by their sides. These were the out-patients, who come for advice, or to ask to leave their little ones; and if there is room, and the children have nothing 'catching,' they do so. Then I followed my guide into a large ward, with little beds down each side, where children lie—boys and girls about your ages, Maud and Harry, but with faces as unlike your rosy ones as disease and pain could make them. But they nearly all looked up and smiled when their kind doctor came in with a cheerful word for each. It was very plain that they loved him, and their love must have rewarded him for all he had done for them, and also the improvement he daily saw in their health. Poor children, many of them had never seen a clean bed, or a bed at all, till they were brought to the hospital. A heap of rags or a little straw was their idea of a bed. Nor had they ever tasted nice broth and pudding before. A crust of bread and a little cold tea was all their mothers could give them. And sadder than all, till they came here some of them had never seen kind faces, never heard loving words, or felt tender hands. Brought up in misery and neglect, the poor little things

look surprised at the kindness they get for the first time. They cannot understand it. Ah, my children, you, with your kind father and mother, and all the tender care that surrounds you and your happy home ('and kind Auntie,' whispered little Alice, while genuine tears stood in her blue eyes), can never understand what these poor little outcasts suffer. But don't cry, Alice. Happily God cares for His poor little ones, and He has put it into the hearts of many good, noble men and women to spend their lives and their money in saving and helping them.

"And now I will take you into a more cheerful ward. It is airy and large, like the first, and has pictures and coloured texts on the walls, and the same row of beds down the sides; but here the patients are getting better. Most of them are out of bed, or sitting up half dressed, and they have toys and picture-books, and are even trying to get up a little game in one corner, and you can hear merry laughter, in which the pleasant-looking young nurse joins. All the nurses looked bright and kind, and one, quite young, was brought for me to see. She had been a patient, and when she got well she begged to stay and be a nurse. She had been so happy there, and was so grateful for the care she had received, and she wanted to show her gratitude by helping the others, so she stopped; and we saw her tripping from bed to bed, tucking up one little invalid, raising another, and playing with those who were well enough to play.

"Then I went into the last long room, and this was, I think, the saddest of all. It was the babies' ward. The beds here were very small, and each held a tiny form—some so still and white that you could hardly tell if they were alive; some feebly moaning, too weak for a good loud baby's cry; and some looking about with great solemn eyes, which seemed too big for their little pinched-up faces. If you were to see one of these poor little creatures by the side of your baby-brother up-stairs, with his round dimpled legs and arms, his merry blue eyes and fat rosy cheeks, you would hardly believe they were both babies of the same age; and if your baby were to burst into one of his fits of crowing or of crying, I think it would frighten the hospital baby. This ward was very quiet, unnaturally quiet, but the little things were improving. The good doctor assured me of that, and he spoke hopefully and cheerfully of these, as of all his patients. At any rate, they had good food here, bottles full of milk like little Frankie's, and kind nurses to carry them about; and sleep and food seemed the two things they most wanted.

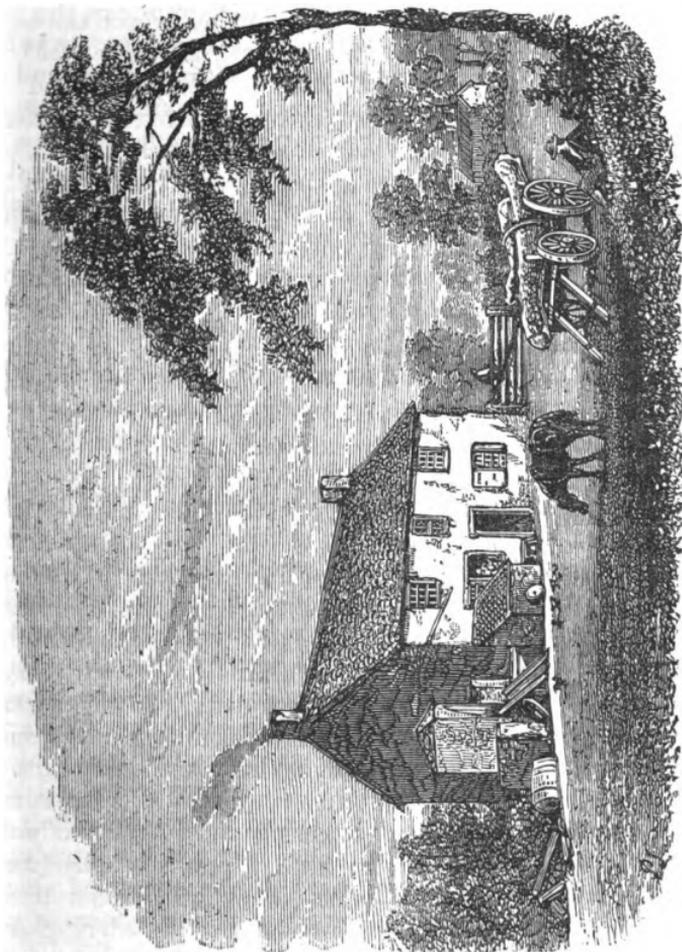
"I had now seen all there was to see of my live baby-house except one thing, and it would never do to forget that. A funny, curly-coated dog was trotting about the wards, now poking his nose up to me, then into the children's beds, and licking their little hands, or jumping and playing with those who were up and better. He seemed on friendly terms with every one, and a pet with great and small. Well, do you know, this dog came astray one day to the hospital, as if it knew it would find a home there; and it was quite right. The kind hearts that were saving the children could not turn away a poor dumb animal from their doors, so in it came, and has been there ever since. I must not quite end without telling you that while they are in the hospital the children are taught what may be a blessing and help to them all their lives, and that is the beautiful story of the Good Shepherd, who gave His life for the sheep and for the little lambs who are lost. There is a picture in the wards of the Good Shepherd carrying the lambs on His shoulders, and I thought how suitable it was. What a blessed thing it is that the poor little stray lambs who are gathered in out of the streets should be taught about our loving Saviour who blessed the little children! And now, good-night, my pets; here's Alice nearly asleep, and there's Ann at the door."

That story pleased the children very much, and I had to repeat it more than once. Its immediate results were apparent next morning, when two fat, not to say sticky hands, extracted from two pockets certain small much-treasured coins, which were delivered mysteriously to me, with the whisper, "For your baby-house, Auntie;" when a collection of toys was made in the nursery, and packed up in a box for the same destination; and when, peeping into the play-room, I observed Alice's baby-house undergoing great changes; the gay furniture tossed out and the beds placed in rows; the dolls divested of their finery and covered up in the beds; while I am petitioned for more white stuff to make sheets and counterpanes, "Because, Auntie, we want to make more beds. Our house is now a hospital for children."

MR. ORSMAN, the city missionary, defines a costermonger in the words of one of themselves: He is "a cove wot works werry 'ard, for a werry poor livin', and is always a bein' hinterfered with and blowed up, and moved hon, and fined, and sent to quad by the beaks and the bobbies."

GEORGE STEPHENSON.

FEW men of this age have taken such long upward strides as George Stephenson, or better earned a title to fame. Some men are born great, but others achieve greatness, and Stephenson was among their number. Perhaps no finer example could be found



THE BIRTHPLACE OF GEORGE STEPHENSON.

of steady perseverance, unbending resolution, and high-spirited exertion, than the life of this man. The son of a colliery labourer, nurtured among hard toil for daily bread, ignorant of letters until he was twenty years old, he yet lived to effect a revolution in English

locomotion and life, and to prove the truth of the words, "Seest thou a man diligent in business, he shall stand before kings."

He was born in the colliery village of Wylam, which stands on the banks of "coaly Tyne," about eight miles west of Newcastle. Our engraving represents his father's dwelling. It was, although dignified by the name of "High Street House," one of the roughest sort of labourers' cottages. The walls were of bare bricks, the floors were of clay, and the roof was unceiled. At the time George was born his father was too poor to rent the whole of the house, and the family used only one room for all purposes. Looking at these outward circumstances, some one might put an old question in a new form, "Can there any good thing come out of Wylam?" and we might answer, "Come and see; for out of Wylam came the father of railways and of locomotive engineering."

Every age has its romances and its heroes. The story of George Stephenson is the romance of the "iron age." No knight-errant of the days of chivalry had a more heroic heart than he, or ever did battle against greater odds. This man, to adapt Longfellow's words,—

"To me a grander shape appears
Than old Sir William, or what not,
Clinking about in foreign lands,
With iron gauntlets on his hands,
And on his head an iron pot!"

Stephenson's rise was by no means rapid. He had the patience and self-control of a true genius, and was willing to wait until his hour came; but when it came he was ready. He had proved his inventive genius and mechanical skill in many ways before he was called to undertake his first work of any magnitude—the Stockton and Darlington Railway. His next was the line between Liverpool and Manchester, and in this, two great difficulties taxed his resources to the utmost. One was taking the railway over Chat Moss, that Slough of Despond, in which it seemed at one time likely that our railway system would be buried. The other was the introduction of locomotive engines. For a long time Stephenson stood alone in his firm faith that no others would be adapted to a system of rapid transit. One man stood against a whole nation. Even the directors of the line were opposed to him. But at length he induced them to offer a prize of £500 for the best locomotive engine; and, in a severe competition at Rainhill, the Rocket, manufactured by him and his son Robert, carried off the prize. The Rocket, now superannuated,

and kept as a national curiosity, is still to be seen in the Museum of Patents, at Kensington.

From that time George Stephenson rose steadily in power and fame. His life has shed an undying lustre on English labouring life, and surely our ten thousands of working men might apply to him the words addressed to Robert Burns :—

“ Before the proudest of the earth,
We stand, with an uplifted brow ;
Like us, thou wast a toiling man,—
And we are noble,—now !”

Just at this time, when all men’s minds are interested in the question of education, the example of Stephenson, in the care he took to give his son Robert a thorough education, will have a special value to working men. The great father trained a greater son ; and, humanly speaking, the son owed all his greatness to the opportunities for study provided by his father’s wise forethought and noble self-sacrifice. Would that our working men would “ go and do likewise.”

George Stephenson was born in June, 1781 ; he died August 12th, 1848, and was buried in Trinity Church, Chesterfield.

THE INFLUENCE OF BIOGRAPHIES.

THE contemplation of the goodness of the sainted dead will be found, in the case of most young persons, to operate powerfully in raising and keeping the standard and tone of life pure and high. Most people, young or old, are conscious of a quite peculiar feeling, and of the movement within them of an influence quite unique, as the result of biographical or autobiographical reading of a really interesting kind. Nothing touches life so deeply and sensibly as life. Nothing moves it to finer issues. One excellence and another, which perhaps had seemed too ethereal for realistic embodiment in an actual human life, and amid common conditions, are found to have been actually embodied and expressed : “ Ah, then, my secret thought is, after all, a possibility ! The secret sighs of my discouraged imagination may yet break into songs. With God all things are possible.”

Nor need there be to our thought much subtraction from this influence in consequence of unconscious exaggeration of the good qualities of the departed in the glowing portraiture drawn by the hand of friendship or love. True, some qualities are exaggerated.

But 'tis equally true that some are forgotten, or unknown. And after all, the exaggeration, where it is honest, is only, as it were, an acceleration of the development which is actually going on—only an enlargement along the lines of truth, only a heightening of colours already existing; and the perfectly legitimate feeling of the reader is, “I am looking not at a picture of the fancy, but the very man himself as he is growing to be. The ideal will become the real in a while.”

It is so. The great artist begins his pictures here, and we never see the finishing. But we see how the finishing is to be. Face and feature begin to come out to view, and gleam of intelligence and glow of love. Wonderful process! The canvas of this picture is the organic substance of the human soul. Thoughts and feelings make the colouring. An unseen hand—light as a “wind blowing where it listeth”—is busy, without ceasing, in the living work, and then, suddenly or slowly, by the same unseen hand, the picture is removed from sight. But can we help anticipating and believing in the perfecting of a process so beautiful, so good, so worthy of God? And can we but be thankful that we have been permitted to see the beginnings of it? and—best of all—looking then with appreciative eye on God's selectest work in others, can we fail to receive some increase of the same good work in ourselves? Is it not certain that, looking, we shall become like? being changed by the subtle, benignant laws of grace into the same image we thus see and admire—“from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.”—ALEXANDER RALEIGH, D.D., in “*Sunday Magazine*” for May, 1873.

GLEANINGS IN THE MAY HARVEST FIELD.

WHERE is one fact that I have never yet seen disputed. There are people who go abroad, and who spend a day or two in looking at the work your missionaries do, and not so much in looking at it as in trying to find occasion to scorn it. But find me a missionary that has come back to us to say, “I have wasted my life. I have gone with the Gospel, and it was not fitted for the people. I found a people, and they were not fitted for the Gospel.” No; the men who give their lives to it, the men who pour out their hearts' blood upon the altar, are not the men that complain of the sacrifice that has been made. The men that know the most about it, and look at it the most earnestly, who think of it, live for it, pray over it, and die in it—those

are not the men, at all events, who cry out with a craven fear for the future, or with a discouraged agony over the past.—*S. D. Waddy, Esq.*

God has done great things for us in the mission-field, and will do so again; but the appeal to our churches is not to be made on the ground of success, but on the higher ground of duty faithfully done to our God and to our fellow-men. Sir Arthur Helps, in his beautiful life of Brassey, says that he, like a great general, never showed despondency in the presence of his officers. Not only have we no right to show despondency, but we have a right to be jubilant after what we have heard to-day. We have heard a splendid report; but there is yet to come another report, kept by that Faithful Witness who said of old, "I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience." We cannot know their works; cannot report their labours, cannot estimate their patience. We report the number of conversions and the direct results of their labours; but we cannot report the unconscious influence of a life like Dr. Livingstone's, that lifts up a whole people into a trustful confidence in the white man and his religion, that fills a continent with the fragrance of the King's Garden.—*Rev. E. H. Evans.*

In all the South Sea Islands, we find that the blessings of civilisation spring naturally out of Christianity. Take the food produced, to begin with. Every man here who can raise six ears of corn where only one formerly grew, is said to be a benefactor to his country. Well, take the cocoa-nut as a sample of the food produced on this island, and where there was one produced formerly there are twenty now, resulting entirely from the blessings of Christianity. I might speak of their clothing and their houses. They are dressed now, they have plenty of clothing. You would think their costume rather peculiar and picturesque, to say the least. Then with regard to their houses—the miserable huts which they had a few years ago, in which, if the family all lived and slept together, they must have been packed nearly as thick as sardines in a box, have given place to good, well-plastered, respectable cottages. Every village has them. While there was not one when we landed, they are now too numerous to count. Then with regard to commerce. Twelve years ago there was no trade except in pigs and yams; now we have a large import and export trade with the civilised world beyond us. I cannot give you the exact figures of our trade, because the traders there are rather jealous of our knowing the figures. I do not know whether they are

afraid we should see they are making too much money; but I can give you a pretty good estimate. The amount of hand-picked cotton exported last year was 85,000 lbs. Then the value of English and American goods, principally from Manchester and Birmingham, was from £1500 to £2000, and it is increasing. This, of course, is only one island, barren and poor in comparison with other islands.—*Rev. E. H. Evans.*

And last, but by no means least, comes our brother Luddington. When he had decided to offer himself his health was deemed insufficient for the undertaking; the doctor would not give him a certificate. He felt like a broken-hearted man, because he was not allowed to go to Africa to save those people. Our committee very wisely gave him the option of consulting another medical practitioner, and these doctors differ. A certificate was given, and so he was allowed to go; but said they, "Your little girl must not go;" and so they had to arrange, he and his beloved wife, that little Minnie should stay with some friends at home, and imagine that this were your case—that you had to leave your little Minnie.—*Rev. Danzy Sheen.*

For the last thirty-three years I have been labouring in the island of Jamaica. The mission there is not an old one. When I was speaking at Liverpool the other day, a lady came to me, and said that she was at the ordination service of the first missionary that was sent to the island of Jamaica; and yet, what is the fact now? Why, that Jamaica is as amply provided with the means of grace as is England herself! Taking into account the population and the places of worship in connection with the different denominations in the land, I do not hesitate to make that statement. But you may ask, "Are these places of worship attended well?" I think I may say, in reference to all the denominations in the island—I am sure I may say it in reference to our own denomination—that, with one or two exceptions, arising from very peculiar circumstances, our places of worship are crowded, and in many instances overcrowded, with those who desire to hear the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. But you may further ask, "Do these people who go to the house of God get any good by going there?" In answer to that question, I will say that the different denominations in the island of Jamaica are as particular as to whom they receive into church fellowship as are the churches here; and, looking at the statistics of these different churches, what do we find? That one

out of three adults in the island of Jamaica is in connection with some Christian church, and walking along the narrow path that leadeth to eternal life.—*Rev. Mr. Henderson.*

He believed that when the women of India were converted they would be among the most zealous propagators of Christianity. He rejoiced to believe that there were several native female converts in Calcutta and several in the Punjaub. One striking case had occurred in Allâhabad. A Bengalee woman, the daughter of a zemindar, was a strong advocate of idolatry, reading her Shasters every day. She said to Mrs. Lewis, "Oh, if you could only read this Shaster, you would like it very much; if you could only read the life of Creeshna in Bengali!" Mrs. Lewis said, "Oh, if you could only read the New Testament, you would like it very much; if you could only read the life of Christ!" It was agreed that they should mutually teach each other, and the Hindoo woman was converted, and received baptism. She did not leave her husband, but he also became a convert. He believed that the wife had much more power over the husband than the husband over the wife in this direction, and that this would be the first thing of which converted wives would think. The husband and wife are now living at Lahore.—*Rev. T. Evans.*

How some people will ever get to heaven at all, who talk so much about Christianity, and find so much fault with other people, and yet, when they die, leave hundreds of thousands of pounds, I cannot understand.—*Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.*

Sunday-school teachers, write the record deep; let it stand out clear and strong to the view, and depend upon it, it shall not be lost. It shall, like bread cast upon the waters, be seen after many days. I remember a striking illustration of this in connection with the American war. George Henry Stewart, passing through the camp, was challenged by the sentry. He gave the wrong password. The sentry said, "Mr. Stewart, it is my duty to shoot you dead, but I know you; go to the general and get the right word." Mr. Stewart did so, came again, gave the word, and was allowed to pass. He then turned to the soldier and said, "You were very properly anxious about my having the right password; may I ask, have you the right password for eternity?" He said, "Yes I have." "What is it?" The reply was, "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin. You gave it me in the Sunday-school twenty years ago."—*Rev. J. P. Chown.*

THOUGHTS—GRAVE AND GAY.

"I ONCE," recently remarked Dr. Halley, "heard Algernon Wells tell a story of a very respectable agriculturist in Essex, who was not only respectable himself, but, like many other respectable people, was very particular about his respectability. This very respectable farmer was elected a deacon of a Congregational Church, and possibly his respectability may have had some influence in determining the election. He had the misfortune to lose his beloved wife, and applied to the minister—a scholarly sort of man—to preach the funeral sermon, and put a little Latin into the beginning, because it would make the sermon so very respectable. Now, I think, somewhat emulous of his respectability, I shall put a little Latin into the beginning of my speech—it may serve as an appropriate motto, or as a text for a few remarks. It shall be very little—not enough to frighten a schoolboy out of the chapel, especially as now, in these highly favoured days, Latin is not so closely associated with flogging as it used to be in my boyhood—only two words, *obsta principiis*—resist the beginnings—the beginning of a departure from the simplicity of religious worship."

One of the most eloquent and resolute denouncers of slavery—William Knibb—laboured long and faithfully in the island of Jamaica, and when a price was put upon his head—which showed there was something in it—said, "God is on my side, and truth is on my side;" and he kept on advocating the claims and requirements of our poor fettered fellow-subjects until, on the memorable 1st of August, at twelve o'clock at night, he rose in his pulpit, and said, "The monster is dead; the negro is free!"

Dr. G—, of Sycamore, Illinois, riding in the country one day, saw a sign upon a gate-post, reading thus: "This farm for sail." Stopping his horse, he hailed a little old woman, who was hanging out some clothes. "I say, madam, when is this farm going to sail?" "Just as soon, sir," replied the old lady, "as anybody comes along who can raise the wind!" The Doctor drove thoughtfully on.

One of the delegates who attended the Agricultural Labourers' Conference usually adds to his five open-air meetings a-week, at least one open-air sermon on Sunday. No longer a local preacher, he has become an itinerant, all but the pay. I heard a friend begging Arch to attend a union meeting on Saturday night. "Can't go," said

the president. "I have a Sabbath appointment, and I mon put them off for the union or anything else." It is well for the country that the movement is for the most part in the hands of such men as these.

The Ultramontane paper, the *Osservatore Romano*, complains that Protestantism has opened in Rome several places for religious instruction and reading of the Bible, and that those places are frequented by many soldiers of the army. Many an honest father of a family, it says, would be extremely sorry to find that his sons are beguiled into those places of moral ruin; and it complains that the Italian Government allows such places to go on undisturbed in what it calls their criminal work of the destruction of so many souls.

No man can be a Christian without having a Christian spirit. It is the condition of the heart that determines whether you are a Christian or not. Being a Christian is not being faultless; it is not being in a state in which you will not stumble or fall; it is being in a state in which you recognise the hatefulness of sin and seek to overcome it. Taking the soul, uncultivated as it is, and subduing it, and putting in the right kind of seed, and giving it the right tillage, and then waiting patiently for the harvest—that is what makes you one of Christ's husbandmen.—*Beecher*.

Providence is a sea. Men are pebbles thrown upon the beach, in order to be fashioned and polished by the waves of successive tides for the majestic temple of eternity. Whilst all are of one nature, some are larger and more rugged than others, and require a longer time and rougher seas to shape them to celestial forms, and brighten them with the hues of immortality.

He must needs run whom the devil drives; there is no doubt that evil men are devil-driven—yea, devil-ridden. He rides them with whip and spur to the doing of his black work, and therefore no wonder if they are so swift, and make such haste about it.

The radical condition of all business intercourse is reverence for principle—confidence is the sanction that gives credit to the note of hand, and that imparts potency to seal and signature. It is that which extends a telegraph of mutual faith around the globe, maintains a bond of communion between men at opposite ends of the earth, and whitens the sea with commerce.

Early piety presents a heart to God unsoiled by the world: like the morning fire, it burns clear, being free from ashes.

CHURCH NEWS OF THE MONTH.

WHEN Mr. Gladstone entered into a collusive arrangement with the Conservative party to curtail the debate on disestablishment, to precipitate a division, to place the supporters of the measure in the worst possible position, and by doing all this "before dinner," to throw an air of contemptuousness over the whole affair, he not only strengthened the schism which is already deep in the Liberal party, but he made it necessary that every Nonconformist who has any respect for himself or his principles should henceforth press his claims with a resoluteness of purpose and a regardlessness of mere party consequences which hitherto have not been contemplated. The Nottinghamshire Nonconformist Association has wisely expressed its conviction in a resolution that, "Whereas the recent debate and division in the House of Commons on Mr. Miall's motion show that many Liberal members of Parliament and of the Government are prepared to regard Nonconformist grievances with indifference or contempt;" this Association "is of opinion that the time has arrived when the friends of religious equality throughout the kingdom, and Nonconformists in particular, should, in view of a general election, adopt more decided measures than they have heretofore contemplated for the assertion of their rights, the removal of their disabilities, and especially for the disestablishment and disendowment of the English and Scotch Churches; and this Association will be glad to take counsel with other kindred organisations, in order to make the action that is to be taken *as practical and peremptory as possible.*"

We would at the same time venture, with all respect, to offer a serious warning to Mr. Miall himself, with regard to his share in this matter. As a true and unselfish patriot, and as a Christian who owes no allegiance except to duty and to right, he appears to be under the impression that the House of Commons is ruled by similar principles. He argues and acts as if he fancies that if he can prove a thing to be a great wrong, Parliament will on that account remedy it; if he can prove a certain course to be right, Parliament will sanction it. Not a bit of it. History proves that the greatest iniquities will lie unredressed for ages if only there are powerful vested interests that are concerned in the perpetuation of the wrong. Governments may come, and governments may go, but the tide of evil will flow on unarrested for an hour unless *political and party exigencies* can be

created which shall necessitate interposition and action. Parliament does not like "abstract resolutions." Surely it was not because of any new discovery either in the way of fact or argument that led Mr. Gladstone to the disestablishment of the Irish Church. Mr. Miall had exhausted that subject twenty years before. But it was because Irish Fenians shot their landlords, and Irish agitators spread confusion and alarm through the land, that Parliament redressed one of the wrongs from which Ireland had suffered. Similarly, political disabilities remained unrelieved, and would have so remained, until working men deployed in thousands under the club windows, and tore down the palings of the park. Then, and not till then, did politicians yield to fear what they refused to yield to reason.

So with Nonconformists and the disestablishment question. It is known in high places that we cannot shoot landlords, or burn homesteads, or engage in acts of violence; and, knowing this, the Liberal leaders will not only refuse to lift a finger to give us religious equality, but a Liberal premier will lend himself to a dodge for contemptuously silencing even discussion of the subject. But though there are many things Nonconformists cannot do, there is one thing they can do. They have *talked* about a Nonconformist secession: they can now make it a *reality*. They can lay an arrest on Liberal government in this country till, in the cold shade of opposition, Liberals can make up their minds to be Liberal. In an age when all thoughtful men are every day becoming more Liberal, when nearly the whole respectable press of the land is Liberal, when the mighty drift of these stirring times is Liberal, we can bring about the stupendous anachronism of a reactionary Government ruling over a progressive people; and from a contradiction like that a Liberal Government will at length be only too happy to emerge and to take office on conditions in which their long despised Nonconformist allies will have something to say.

We commend these considerations to the Nonconformist Associations that are at the present time holding their deliberations, and to the Nonconformist constituents of those so-called Liberal members of boroughs who lent their aid to Mr. Gladstone's smothering of the disestablishment debate. And we look to Greenwich and Bradford to take the initiative.

We have said that nearly the whole respectable journalism of the time is Liberal, and it is pitiful to read the sort of garbage of which the Tory press is in general composed, and on which it usually

feeds. A single specimen, cut from a recent number of the *Yorkshire Post*, will suffice as an illustration. Speaking of voluntaryism, it says:—"Plant it in districts where there are no wealthy persons to open their purse-strings in behalf of the poor, and it breaks down, succumbs, and dies out. It may offer the Gospel, but it is not a Gospel without money and without price. It is one which must be paid for. Failing this condition, there is no Gospel at all. There are abundant illustrations of this truth in the experience of Dissent. There are hundreds of examples scattered up and down the kingdom where the Nonconformist chapel, established in a very poor district, after languishing for want of local support, has eventually been shut up and transformed into a lecture-room or music-hall." The former part of this statement is made in the face of all the work that is done by Methodism; and the latter part is just as true as if we were gravely to inform our readers that Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's had recently been turned into cowsheds.

A writer in the *Globe* professes to be scandalised by the adoption by Nonconformists of some of what have hitherto been peculiarities of the Established Church. It refers, for instance, to the erection of steeples, the change of the name of "meeting-houses" into "churches," the designation of religious buildings after the names of the apostles, such as "St. Philip," and even of Christ Himself, as in the instance of the new "Christ Church" to be built for "Mr. Newman Hall, of Surrey Chapel." We scarcely need to reply that every alteration that has been an improvement in the methods of the Established Church has been borrowed from Nonconformists, among which, passing over a hundred smaller matters, we may specify—popularised services, the education of the poor, and voluntaryism itself.

The only thing about which parties in the Established Church are agreed, appears to be their aversion to Nonconformity. The following is the style in which they speak of one another. The *Rock* recently said:—"If a burglar has broken the eighth commandment, Mackonochie has broken the second, and is more to blame." On the other hand the Ritualist paper replies:—"A judicial blindness has settled down upon the Evangelicals, and they are bereft of all reason."

An Episcopal clergyman remarks of the Dissenters Burial Bill that, if it is "ever to reach the House of Lords, and run the gauntlet of the criticisms which it will there meet with, it must lose

that drop-down, curtseying manner which marks all our permissive legislation. Nothing encourages resistance so much as that mode of pleading for a Bill—that it is only a little Bill. Is it not a little one? say these fugitives to a clerical Zoar. This only makes the opposition more bent than ever to prove that it is the inch given, on which will follow the demand for the ell—the thin edge of a wedge which, when driven home, will rend even the unwedgeable oak.”

The important fact is announced that the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland has adopted a resolution condemnatory of the Established Churches of this kingdom. It declines, at present, to “ agitate ; ” it declines formally to say that there is no remedy but disestablishment, at the same time it rejects a motion indicating some other remedy. Three years ago it would not have discussed the question at all. But the men who belong to the Free Church are not men who hold opinions without acting them out, and we have not the smallest doubt that, before very long, we shall see the Free Church decisively influencing the final settlement of this question.

Amongst the bills to be submitted to the Spanish Cortes by the Government is one for the “ Separation of the Church from the State.” It is to be hoped that the religious liberties of Englishmen will not fall *far* behind those of Spaniards !

The Rev. Samuel Martin has been compelled, after a pastorate of nearly thirty-one years, to tender his resignation to his church at Westminster. “ The many friends who have, through these long years, learnt to know and to love him—and to know him always was to love him—will unite in the earnest hope and prayer that with complete and prolonged rest, a life, precious to so many, will yet be spared, renewed health and strength will return, and that voice again be heard which has been a blessing and a glory to the Church of Christ.”

The work contemplated by the English Congregational Chapel Building Society, in the twenty years of its existence, was to aid the erection of fifty chapels in five years, or 200 in twenty years. But up to the present time 416 chapels have actually been aided, many of which would have had no existence at all but for this society. During these twenty years no less a sum than £108,000 have been received and applied to chapel-building ; and it is estimated that fully £750,000 have been expended in the erection of the various chapels which have received aid from the society. For some years the society has

had on its hands as many as 100 chapel cases at a time. It is now proposed to develop yet further the system of loan. The loan fund, which at first amounted to £10,000, has increased to £20,000; it is hoped that it may at length reach £50,000. By such means and other help the society's income might easily be raised to £10,000, a sum which, utilised by existing methods, would be productive of church-building to the extent of £60,000 per annum.

Many a home will turn gratefully to the Rev. W. Guest for his services in connexion with the establishment of the Milton Mount College. The original idea was to construct at first the main building only, which would have accommodated 80 pupils, and afterwards to add wings with space for 70 more. But as £1600 had been promised for the wings, on condition that the building was at once completed, and as their subsequent addition would have necessitated the suspension of school operations for six months, it was determined to complete the building at once. Speaking roundly, the building will cost £20,000, of which £15,000 have now been raised.

An anonymous friend has sent Mr. Spurgeon a donation of £1000 towards the new buildings for the Pastors' College.—It is announced that the Wesleyan Methodists will have an increase in the numbers to report at their next annual conference.

The attempt to establish a new Independent church in the increasing borough of Bootle, near Liverpool, has so far succeeded that it is decided to take steps for the erection of a suitable chapel.—The foundation-stone of the new Congregational Church, Milton-next-Gravesend, has been laid. Thomas Scrutton, Esq., Treasurer of Milton Mount College, performed the ceremony.—The friends at Malpas, Cheshire, have cleared off the remaining debt of their chapel by means of a bazaar. The place was built eleven years ago, at a cost of £1760.—A meeting has been held at Basingbourne, to complete the payment for the manse which has been erected there, at a cost of £550, exclusive of the ground, which was presented by Mr. D. Flitton.—A union of the two Congregational Churches in Wellingborough has been effected.—Mr. John Shore, who has recently retired from the office of superintendent of the Sunday-school of Oxton-road Church, Birkenhead, the duties of which he has discharged for twelve years, has been presented with a handsome timepiece.

The Rev. J. S. Barker, B.A., has accepted a unanimous invitation to the pastorate of the Congregational Church at Edgware.

THE GUIDED MESSAGE.

No. II.

IT was early in the following spring that, accompanied as usual by my little niece, I again returned to our seaside cottage. The first few days were occupied indoors, but it was not long before the lovely weather tempted me to join Ellie in her searchings for shells and seaweed. Very soon I met the family who had so much occupied my thoughts during my absence, and I immediately observed a surprising change in their appearance. Short as our interview was, I could not but be struck by an expression of peace that overspread the countenances of the elder pair as they inquired after my health, and spoke to Ellie. As for Grace, she looked another being—a glad light filled her beautiful eyes, and the colour of health had returned to her pale cheeks. The languid step and listless look had vanished. "When may I come and see you?" she whispered, as she kissed me warmly. I fixed an early hour, and went on my way wondering, but certain that, whatever had caused it, I might bless God for the happy change. The next morning Grace was seated by me, and I said, "You have something to tell me, dear: what is it?"

"A wonderful thing has happened," she replied. "I have been longing to tell you. We have had news of Arthur!"

"What!" I cried, in astonishment. "Can it be that he lives?" Never shall I forget the girl's look of holy joy as she answered, "Yes, he lives—lives in God's beautiful sinless home for ever, where no death can come, nor sorrow, nor parting; and we have only to wait patiently a little while, and we shall meet him again. God had heard our prayers, dear friend," she continued, "even while we were faithlessly mourning. But perhaps, if we had not gone to Him again, as you advised, He might not have given us the unspeakable comfort of hearing from Arthur's own written words that he is safe for ever."

Still wondering, I begged her to explain what had happened. "I will," she said. "You know that since we have come to this place, we have made friends with many of the sailors. They come to us on Sunday afternoons, as many as like, and we read, and pray, and sing together: their hearty voices singing God's praises do me good. I always liked sailors, they are so brave and cheerful; but of late I have felt more drawn to them than ever. Well, you know old Davy. Many a

pleasant chat I have had with him on the beach, and in his cottage, while he mends his nets, and tells strange tales of his past life—a life full of dangers and of interest. From my first meeting with Davy I liked him; but I little thought what cause there was for my interest in him, had I only known it, nor what a secret he had in his keeping; and very likely, if it had not been for your wise counsel, I might never have found it out. For at first I could not bear to hear any one mention a storm or a wreck; and when a rough sea and sky sometimes turned the old sailor's thoughts and words in that direction, I would stop him, or walk away. But since God has given me resignation to His will, I have overcome this weakness, and let the old man talk as he would; and sometimes asked him questions, helping him to remember terrible scenes he had witnessed, and fearful dangers from which he had escaped. It was one of these occasions which I must now describe to you. I started in the afternoon for a walk along the cliff alone, for it was too stormy for my father and mother to venture out. I was not feeling unhappy, though my grief was, as ever, present to my mind. But I am sure we were all happier since we had turned to our heavenly Father in prayer. I do not know why, except that the very act of prayer seemed to bring relief.

“I thought much of poor Arthur; not as I knew him latterly, but as the bright innocent boy, so full of promise, so loving to us all, and so anxious to do right; of the time when life looked hopeful and pleasant before us, and we both resolved to give our best strength and energy to God's service; and of our kneeling and praying together for the blessing that maketh rich, and addeth no sorrow. And then the remembrance that sorrow had come, the worst sorrow that could befall us, and changed everything, blinded me with tears as I stumbled along the cliff path. All day it had been gloomy, the sky overcast, and the sea a leaden colour, only broken by flecks of white foam. Far below me it dashed itself against the rocks with sullen, ceaseless roar, and I stood and watched it, and the black clouds, which had gathered into a thick mass like a vast curtain, enveloping the whole heavens.

“But while I looked there was a change. The curtain slowly rose—first a thin line of brightness was visible along the horizon, and gradually a broader strip of clear pale green sky appeared. The effect was indescribably beautiful. What a wonderful difference it made to everything, this exquisite fresh pure light dispelling the darkness,

which rolled back to unveil the glory it had hidden! Like the light of God's grace in a believer's soul, I thought, clouded by doubt and mistrust, until He bids the clouds disperse, and gives a childlike faith again. The words, "At evening time it shall be light," came into my mind with a new meaning. It was as if God Himself had stooped to comfort me; and it was a "peace that passeth understanding" that filled my heart as I walked homeward.

"On my way I looked out for my old friend. There he was, sitting by a boat, engaged in his usual occupation. 'Come for a chat, Miss?' he said; and he found a sheltered spot, where, wrapped in my shawl, I was soon listening to one of his yarns, as he called them. 'Ah, we do find curious things, Miss, sure enough,' he said, in reply to a remark of mine; and then, after a pause, 'There's something I'd like to show you, and have a bit of advice about. I'd have done it afore, but you seemed afeard of hearing about wrecks and such-like.'

"'What is it, Davy?' I asked. 'If I can help you, I will.'

"'Thanky, Miss,' said the old man; 'it's close by, in my cottage;' and he led the way, talking as he went. 'You see, me and my mate were out fishing off the coast of Yarmouth last summer, and we found the bottle floating among some spars and planks of wood, and I brought it home, and put it with my bits of curiosities. There wasn't no name—the salt water had got in and soaked the paper—and I didn't know what to do with it. My son's coming home soon, and he'll do all that's right; but my mind misdoubts me as something ought to be done: there's some poor souls as it would give comfort to, perhaps."

"I was following the sailor up the winding cliff path, and his words greatly agitated me. A vague idea took possession of my mind, making me tremble, so that I could hardly stand. 'Give it to me, Davy,' I gasped out, sinking into a chair as soon as we reached his house. And this is what he gave me," said Grace, finishing her narrative, and handing me what was evidently the leaf of a book, hastily torn out, and upon it some words written in pencil. It was not easy to decipher them. The disjointed sentences, half illegible and discoloured by the water, told a terrible story of wet and cold, and all the horrors of a sinking ship and a perishing crew; but in the midst of the misery and despair, what joy and hope inspired the message thrown overboard at the last moment: "Ship going down—Dear friends forgive me—Safe in Christ—Meet me in heaven." So

much was plain. More had evidently been written, probably the name and address of the writer, but this was gone. Enough remained, however. Grace knew the handwriting as well as she did her own, and the message of comfort had been directed in a wonderful manner to the very hands for whom it was intended. "I took it home," concluded Grace, "to my dear father and mother, and we knelt down and thanked God for the marvellous blessing He had sent us; and now we do not know how to show our gratitude for such an unexpected mercy."

It was indeed a strange and striking story of God's providence, and many a time have I thought of it when tempted to be faithless and unbelieving. Nothing is too hard for the Lord, and He can make the wind and the sea obey Him; and that He guided that little bottle with its precious message across the stormy deep to the sorrowing, waiting hearts, in direct answer to their earnest prayers, I have not a doubt. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

I have little more to add. My friends resolved to remain at the spot so memorable to them, and they became a blessing to the neighbourhood, ever seeking to work for Him who had been to them "a very present help in trouble."

F. M. S.

AUNT FANNY'S TALES.

No. II.—NELLY'S DISAPPOINTMENT.

IT was a glorious afternoon in June, and I was surrounded by a merry group of children when next I was called upon to entertain my little public—you, my young readers, and my own exacting little relatives.

Annie, Mabel, and Freddy had been busy preparing a throne for "Auntie Fanny," spoiling a haycock for the purpose, and had succeeded to their entire satisfaction. "It is better than a purple velvet and gold one, like the queen's!" said they, as they placed me triumphantly upon it. It certainly looked most tempting, and sent forth a delicious fragrance. And if it felt rather uneven here and there, and if little crawling and hopping atoms came out of the hay, tickling my face and hands, and then scampering off in a tremendous hurry; why, I would not, on any account, have hurt the feelings of

my loyal subjects by the smallest doubt as to the dignity of my position.

"We are to have tea out-of-doors," remarked Mabel, "and strawberries."

"Do you remember, Auntie, this time last year," asked Annie, a thoughtful girl of twelve, "when Cousin Nelly was staying with us?"

"I remember," said Fred. "She was a bright, hearty girl; she and I used to have such fun. She could climb trees like a boy; I wish she'd come again."

"Well, you'll see her in the holidays," said Mabel, "for we are all going to Ivy Grange."

"How happy Nelly was," Annie began again. "She was expecting her mamma and two little brothers home from India. I almost envied her. I don't mean, you know, Auntie," she explained, "that I should have liked mamma to be away so long; but I never did see a girl so happy as Nelly. She could talk of nothing else: do you remember, Auntie?"

I remembered very well, and I remembered something else, and that was a promise I had made; and that I was presently to be reminded of that promise, I felt quite sure; nor was I mistaken.

"You said you'd tell us, one day, all about Aunt Rivers coming home. We never heard from Nelly till a long while afterwards. She was much too busy to write."

"And this is just the day for a story," observed Freddy, lying on his back and staring up into the trees.

"Wait till after tea," suggested Mabel, "and Jack and Lily will be here."

"Yes," I said, "we will wait till after tea, and you shall have your story. I shall call it 'Nelly's Disappointment.'"

"Oh, Auntie! what can you mean? That name will never do," they cried.

"Tell me a better," said I.

"Nelly's Joy"—"Nelly's Delight"—"What Nelly Longed for,"—were quickly suggested. But I was firm.

"A story-teller always chooses her own name," I said. "At any rate, don't find fault till the story is finished." Silenced, but unconvinced, they arranged themselves round me in the hay-field after tea, two little cousins from a neighbouring farm having arrived to swell my audience; and then I began.

When I travelled down to Devonshire last summer, to make a short stay at the Grange, I found the old house all in confusion, "turned topsy-turvey," as old nurse said, preparing for the newcomers. Grandmamma was busy giving directions; the servants were pulling out furniture, dusting, arranging, altering, and airing rooms. "Miss Nelly was gone crazy," nurse informed me. She was indeed wild with delight and excitement, running hither and thither, all lessons at an end for the present, deciding which was to be her mamma's room, where Charlie's and Cecil's little cribs were to be placed, and where they should keep their toys. As for her own treasures, everything, even to her great dog, Lion, was to be given up to "my dear little new brothers," of whom she never tired of chattering. Now and then she stopped to peep into the photographic album that lay on the drawing-room table, to take a look at her mother's portrait. It was all she knew of that mother; for, as you know, children, it was eight years since she had been left, a baby of a year old, at the Grange.

"I shall know mamma, I'm sure," she exclaimed to me. "She is young, and pretty, and merry-looking—I think she'll play with me sometimes. Oh, how much I shall have to tell her!" and then off she would fly again. I could not get any quiet talk with her. Now I did not want to damp Nelly's hopes and spirits, yet I could not help feeling sure that the coming event would not be all to her that she expected. You know, my children, young as you are, that in this life things do not turn out all we expect; better sometimes, but never quite the same. And you know that there is always something to bear, to put up with, and we must never set our hearts on being happy all in our own way. I tried to warn Nelly, but she would not listen. "I am quite sure, Auntie, that I shall not be disappointed," was all she said. So I waited, feeling sure the lesson would have to be learned.

A week passed, and the important day had arrived. I was to leave that evening, but I had promised to wait and help receive the travellers, and give them the warm welcome we had prepared for them. Nelly positively refused to leave the window at least an hour before the train could possibly have arrived from Southampton. Pressing her face against the glass, or running down to the garden gate, she watched every vehicle that passed along the road. At the right time, however, a cab laden with luggage turned in at the gate, and drove up to the house. In a few moments more, Nelly was clasped

in her mother's arms. Mrs. Rivers looked very pale and tired, too tired even to talk much that evening. She lay on the sofa, while grandmamma sat beside her, watching the altered face. As for the children, little white-faced twin boys of five years old, they had been asleep in the train, and woke up fretful. No coaxings or remonstrances could persuade them even to look at sister, and they were carried off to the nursery, and speedily deposited in bed. Nelly watched them, however, with great satisfaction — they were pretty boys, with large blue eyes, and so much alike that she could not tell which was Charlie and which Cecil. Then she came downstairs, and sat on a footstool by her mother, only jumping up when I left, to run to the door with me, and whisper, "It is as nice as I expected, and I'm so happy."

In a fortnight I returned to the Grange. The first thing I noticed was that Nelly did not come to meet me, as usual. I looked for her everywhere, and at last peeped into her own little room, and what do you think I saw? Merry Cousin Nelly crying as if her heart would break! One arm was tightly clasped round Lion's neck, and the great dog looked as sympathising as any two-legged friend could do.

"Why, what's the matter?" I said, sitting down, and drawing the dismal little face nearer to me.

"Oh, Auntie," she sobbed, "it's all changed; it isn't a bit nice, after all."

"What is it, Nelly? Tell me all about it."

"I hardly know, Auntie," she replied. "But for one thing, Charlie and Cecil can't bear me, and I wanted them to love me. And they are afraid of Lion."

"But you have your mamma, Nelly."

"Oh, yes, mamma's very kind, but she doesn't want me. It's so different from what I expected," she ended, with a deep sigh.

Now you know that this was very much what I did expect, and I felt no doubt but what matters might easily be set right. Nelly was not naturally a selfish child, but in this instance she had been selfish, for her own happiness had been the one thing she thought of. She now needed only a little guidance, and this I hoped would come from her mother, of whom I presently went in search, leaving Nelly with a few kind words. I found Mrs. Rivers lying on a couch in her own room, looking a little better, but still pale, and with rather a wearied expression on her face. The window was open; and, mingled with the songs of birds, came fretful voices from the sunny garden.

"It is the children," she said. "They get so hot and irritable this weather; and, do you know, I'm afraid they were a good deal spoilt on board ship. I was too ill to attend to them; and people pet children just to amuse themselves. How I wish I could get stronger."

"You will not," I said, "while you are worried. How does Nelly get on?"

The mother sighed again. "Poor Nelly! I fear she is not quite satisfied with her new mamma; but just now I cannot stand her high spirits and merry talk. Dear child, I like to see it, and I hope soon to be able to enjoy it."

"But surely," I said, "Nelly can amuse the boys."

"I don't know how it is," replied Mrs. Rivers, "but they don't get on very well together. I'm afraid they are naughty, and perhaps Nelly isn't used to little children."

I now told your aunt all I knew and all I thought about matters, and the result was an interview between Nelly and her mamma that very day. I was not present, but I heard about it afterwards, so that I can tell you just what passed. When Nelly was summoned to her mother's room, she entered slowly and reluctantly. Possibly her conscience pricked her a little, and it is certain she also felt she was much to be pitied.

"Come here, Nelly," called Mrs. Rivers; "come and sit down on this footstool by me. I want a talk with my little girl this morning. Why, how grave she is! Is anything the matter, darling?"

Her mother's kind looks and words brought the tears into the child's eyes, but she could not trust herself to speak.

"Auntie tells me you have been disappointed lately, and we know that disappointments are hard to bear; harder perhaps for children than for grown-up people. It is curious, Nelly," continued mamma, "but I too have had a disappointment lately, so we can sympathise with each other."

Something in her mother's face made Nelly look up and say, "When, mamma?"

"Since I came home. Shall I tell you about it?"

Nelly's eyes said "Yes."

"But first," said her mamma, "I will guess what yours is, then tell you mine, and we will compare them, and see which is the worst. Well, then, I guess a certain little girl has been thinking all day and dreaming all night, for a long time past, of the great happiness of

having a mamma of her own, and two sweet little brothers. She had settled it all in her own mind. The mamma was to be well, and strong, and cheerful; ready to talk to her, and hear all her talk, to go for walks with her, and see all her favourite spots, and to help her with her lessons and her amusements. And the brothers were to be healthy, good-tempered little fellows; loving sister as sister was ready to love them, and letting her play with them whenever she felt inclined. And all this was to be done just as the little girl had planned and wished it to be. Instead of this, she finds a pale, weak mamma, who can't go for walks at all, who lies on the sofa in the most uninteresting way, who cannot even listen to her little girl's chatter; and two delicate little boys, rather cross, very shy, and, we will allow, a little spoilt. Poor Nelly! no wonder she is vexed.

"Now for mamma's disappointment. All the way home, when she lay ill and wretched, she kept thinking, I shall soon have a dear little daughter to help me, and wait upon me. When she heard Charlie and Cecil quarrelling or fretting, she thought, my little girl is older and wiser; she will help me to take care of them. She will be very kind, and patient, and thoughtful, I hope. They are babies, and don't think of mamma's comfort. How nice it will be when I get my eldest daughter. And poor mamma finds——"

But mamma was not allowed to go any further. Nelly's face had gradually changed from interest to shame, and from shame to sorrow. And now she sprang up, and putting her arms round her mother's neck, exclaimed, amid tears and kisses, "Stop, mamma, please don't go on; don't say what you found—not yet, not for a few more days," and she ran from the room.

That very evening, I am glad to say, a new and pretty sight was to be seen. At tea time Nelly entered, bright and smiling as of old, with a little brother holding each hand, Lion walking majestically behind, as if in charge of the whole party. The little boys were laughing and talking. "We've had such fun, mamma," said Charlie, running to his mother. "Sister has mended my horse," said Charlie, as he climbed into his arm-chair, and began his bread and milk; adding, gravely, "I love sister." "And we're not afraid of Lion," put in Cecil.

"Magic," I said, smiling. "The magic of kind words and a loving heart," whispered Nelly's mamma, as she kissed her little daughter. Nelly blushed with pleasure, and handed the tea to her mother carefully. It was a new feeling, and a very happy one, to be taking care

of others, instead of being taken care of. After tea the boys refused to go to bed unless sister came too. She went cheerfully, putting down a new story-book she had taken up. She helped nurse undress them; did not scold when Cecil jumped about, so that the strings could not be untied; or when Charlie splashed her all over from his bath; or when they refused to kiss her, till she was halfway downstairs, and then called till she ran up again. At last all the various nightly difficulties were overcome, and nurse had packed both the little ones safely in their cribs. And then Nelly was rewarded by such a smile from her mother, that she wondered she had never tried her new plan before.

But I must tell you, that as the days went on, it was not always easy work. It never is easy to give up our own way, and to care for others more than ourselves. Sometimes the boys were very mischievous and unmanageable; sometimes mamma was ill, and could not see any one, and then Nelly felt lonely; but she persevered. As you know, children, Nelly knew where to go for help; and many a prayer ascended from her little room that she might be a good daughter and a good sister, and her prayers have been heard. I do not know a happier party than the one at Ivy Grange; and when Major Rivers comes home from India in the autumn, Nelly will get a new papa, who will give her all the petting she deserves.

EXTEMPORE PREACHING.

ACCUSTOM yourself to speak extempore in private, in an orderly and apposite style, on the more difficult themes of sermons. If you can manage hard themes in private, you can manage easy themes in public. Daily express your thoughts on some doctrine or duty, explaining the nature of it, the reasons for it, the objections to it. Extemporise thus on the whole system of dogmatic and practical theology. After you have perused a book, state the substance of it in accurate language. Classify your ideas on one theme after another until you are able to speak on it without much premeditation. Pursue these exercises not only in private, but as other opportunities may offer. One of the best methods of discipline which ministers can adopt is, to frame and criticise extemporaneous plans of sermons in a society formed for the purpose. A text is given out; no member of the society knows beforehand what the

text is to be; every member is required to frame at once the syllabus of a sermon on the topic thus unexpectedly proposed; each one presents his syllabus for criticism within a few minutes after he hears of the subject; he thus learns to think for himself, to think rapidly as well as consecutively, to think amid some distracting influences.

The minister must discipline himself also in the art of expression. We may reasonably expect that he will be as diligent as the statesman is in gaining a command of his mother tongue. Lord Mansfield not only translated all Cicero's orations into English, but also re-translated the English orations into Latin. William Pitt, before he was twenty years of age, had read all the works of *nearly all* the ancient classical authors, and sometimes "dwelt for hours on striking passages of an orator or historian, in noticing their turns of expression," &c. For the purpose of obtaining a mastery of language, Lord Chatham not only addicted himself to the translating of Demosthenes into English, but he also read Bailey's folio dictionary *twice through* with discriminating care. Other statesmen have devoted much time and labour to the critical study of Shakespeare, Milton, Dr. Barrow, Dr. South; also grammars of their native and of foreign languages. They have aimed in this manner to gain not only that copiousness, but also that preciseness of utterance which Charles James Fox ascribed to William Pitt: "I never hesitate for a word; Pitt never hesitates for *the* word."

Make a special as well as a general preparation for each one of your extemporary sermons. Before you begin to preach, be sure that you are able at once to decompose your subject by analysis, and instantly recompose it by synthesis. Like various other rules, this may be modified by circumstances. Some men may preach on many themes, and many men may preach on some themes, with but little work immediately preceding. The work has been performed in the remote past.

The special preparation for an extemporary sermon may be made in various ways. One of these methods is the *spontaneous*. While sitting by the bedside of an invalid, or walking in the fields, or engaging in familiar conversation, or examining a picture or a statue, or listening to the sermon of another man, or writing an elaborate discourse of his own, a minister is startled by entirely new thoughts on some entirely new theme. *These first thoughts are the best which he will have on this theme.* Let him seize them just as they are, and hold them fast. Let him commit them at once to paper. They may

be as delicate and as evanescent as the aroma of a flower. If every minister could preserve a record of his own original plans of sermons, the records would be to him one of the books which are books. As these thoughts rushed of their own accord into his mind, so they will penetrate the minds of his hearers. *These* will be the thoughts that are exactly apposite to an extemporary sermon.—*Professor Park.*

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

COME what may, after all, the really valuable part of religion must be learned in the church or the home; at the Sunday-school or the mother's knee. The twenty-fifth clause of the Education Act is intended to meet the case of one who conscientiously objects to the efficient secular training of a board school. And we are to subsidise his notion? One man conscientiously believes he ought to burn heretics. We would leave him to enjoy the opinion, but object to provide him with faggots out of the rates.

Our position is clearly defined. All acknowledge the importance of teaching grammar and prayer. We say, "We will teach the grammar, on which we are all agreed; but not being agreed upon the prayer, we leave that to the parent or the church." Does any man say fairly and truly, "I object to my child learning grammar without being taught to ask the help of the Virgin Mary"? We reply, "We are only competent to teach the grammar. If you want the teaching of the supernatural aid, provide it yourself; we do not hinder you." Either this answer does or does not meet his religious scruple. If it do, there is no need of the twenty-fifth clause; if it do not, then the twenty-fifth clause is intended to support sectarianism. The case supposed is that of a clash between the conscience of the parent and that of the ratepayer. We believe the one to exist but in imagination. The scruple of the other is now centuries old, and universally respected; and for it we are prepared to take joyfully the despoiling of our goods. It is not whether one form of religion be right or wrong. I will gladly pay that the Mormon child shall learn to read and write. I will not pay his fees to be taught the degrading filth of polygamy. We deny that any sect should have the power of buttressing its errors by municipal pay. This certainly is not the function of a noble system of national education.—*Rev. T. H. Cook.*

CROOKED STICKS.

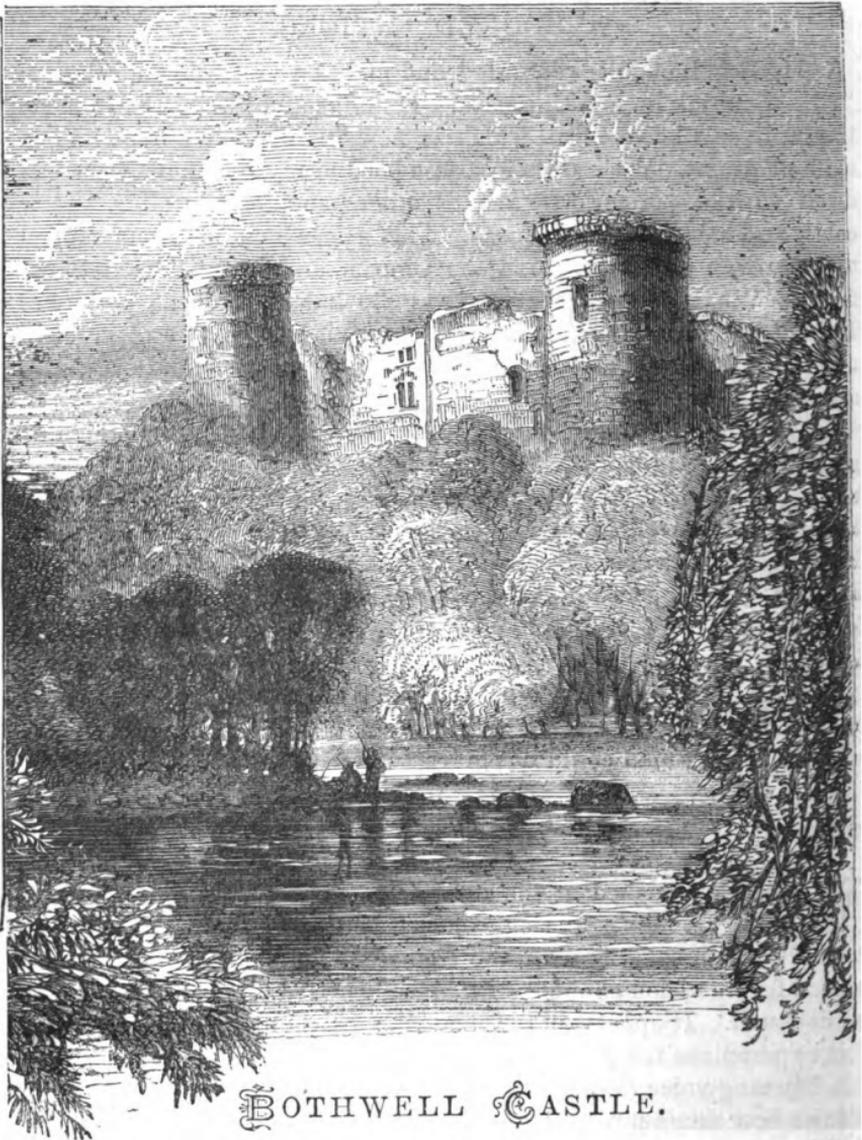
A MAN is hopefully converted, and makes a profession of religion. We think he is a Christian. He talks and prays, and in some things, lives like one: all which is new in him. We hope he is a child of grace. Yet are we in a wonder and mystery how grace can dwell with a person who makes others so uncomfortable. How coldly and sternly the man speaks to his wife, whom he is commanded to love even as Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself to die for it. What a cross, crabbed way he has toward his children! Everything in the house must bend to his iron will and crooked notions. The inmates look out for his step and voice and eyes, as a sailor does for rocks and breakers.

How uncomfortable a neighbour! No plan, work, or opinion as good as his. He has more conscience than a score of hard-working and good-natured Christian men, who are so intent on God's work that they think nothing about conscience, especially the scruples of it [*Scrupuli*, small sharp pebbles]. Yet the man evidently wants to do good. He rejoices in the cause of Christ. He seems to be going heavenward, though it must be confessed he has a strange way in it all.

Growing fungi, so soft that they can be crushed between the finger and thumb, have been known to lift out of the ground flag-stones, which a strong man could not move with a lever.

WICKEDNESS IN OLD AGE.

WE are astonished at the sight of nerveless infamy and decrepit lust. It makes us sick at heart to see the limbs that stoop so near the earth shaking with the tremor of indulgence, and the eyes whose feeble vision should be lifted heavenward blinded with the filth of debauch. It appals us that one who for threescore years and ten has experienced the goodness of his Maker should use the accents of his faltering voice to defile that name with blasphemy; that he who knows how much purity there is, even yet, in life, should to the very last maintain such an example to infect its sanctities; and that, while it should seem most men would grow solemn at least when those great shadows are thickening upon their heads, he should mock them with his toothless laughter, and, gathering curses about him like a garment, stagger headlong into the gates of death.



BOTHWELL CASTLE.

THE ruined towers of Bothwell Castle overhang the banks of the river Clyde, about ten miles east of Glasgow. The surrounding scenery is very beautiful, and has been celebrated more than once in song. A very ancient ballad says:—

“Bothwell bank, thou blumest fair.”

It is to this line Sir Walter Scott alludes in an unfinished ballad :—

“ If chance, by Bothwell's lovely braes,
A wanderer thou hast been ;
Or hid thee from the summer's blaze
In Blantyre's bowers of green ;

“ Full where the copsewood opens wild
Thy pilgrim step hath staid,
Where Bothwell's towers, in ruin piled,
O'erlook the verdant glade.

“ And many a tale of love and fear
Hath mingled with the scene,
Of *Bothwell's banks that bloomed so dear*,
And Bothwell's bonny Jean.”

The castle originally belonged to the Murray family. Sir Andrew Murray was one of the first to join the standard of William Wallace, and one of the first to suffer in his cause ; for after his defeat Murray was outlawed, and his estate bestowed on Aylmer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke.

After the battle of Bannockburn, Bothwell Castle received a number of fugitive English nobility ; but Bruce compelled them to surrender, and the estate came back to the Murrays. It went, by inheritance, to the Earl of Douglas, and then, by the fortunes of war, to several others ; and finally reverted to the Douglas family.

Not far away is Bothwell Bridge, where the army of the Covenanters was defeated by the Duke of Monmouth, in 1679. Sir Walter Scott, in “ Old Mortality,” gives a most spirited description of this battle.

Those troublous days are gone, and the strong towers are no longer the centre of noise and bloodshed ; but the sweet river flows on still, and the flowers on the banks bloom again every year.

THE quiet, consistent life of a Christian young man had a power within it equal in some respects to any pulpit. He was no advocate of young men getting behind bales of goods to read tracts. He by no means disparaged the reading of them ; but it might happen that the very religion of a young man was shown in the earnestness and thoroughness of his work in the warehouse or the shop. As one had said—“ If I were a shoeblack, I would clean and brighten my shoes better than any cleaner of shoes, just to commend my religion.”—*Mr. S. Morley, M.P.*

NONCONFORMISTS AND THE GOVERNMENT.

NONCONFORMISTS have at length become aware that they have reached a crucial period in their relations to the Government, and the gravity of the crisis cannot be overestimated.

The position of affairs is this. Nonconformists have been asking for a national system of education, from which sectarianism should be excluded: Mr. Gladstone has replied by giving every possible encouragement to the establishment throughout the land of Anglican, Ritualistic, and Romanising sectarian schools, and has afforded every discouragement to all other kinds of schools. Nonconformists have been asking for the disestablishment of existing State Churches: Mr. Gladstone has replied by erecting a brand new one on purpose for children. Nonconformists have been asking that the vast endowments of the Grammar Schools of England should be made available for the education of the people, without distinction of sect: Mr. Gladstone has reconstituted them so as to serve as a new engine of State Church ascendancy. Nonconformists have been asking for the removal of Church Rates: Mr. Gladstone has replied by a shuffling of the cards, and instead of a Church Rate has substituted a School Rate—not for the mere maintenance of a building, but for the direct inculcation of doctrines hateful to multitudes of the rate-payers. Nonconformists have been asking for religious equality: Mr. Gladstone has replied by using his great influence to arrest discussion on the subject, and has even pointed to the riotous suppression of meetings held on behalf of religious liberty as a reason why that liberty should be denied. Nonconformists have been appealing to Liberal Members for protection from the reactionary measures of a Liberal Government: Mr. Gladstone has replied by overruling their pleas with Tory votes. Nonconformists have been asking for respect for themselves and consideration for their convictions: Mr. Gladstone has replied by formally asking them to withdraw their support from him as soon as they like. Nonconformists have been asking for “bread,” and Mr. Gladstone has given them a “stone”—for “fish,” and he has given them a “scorpion.”

Such are the wrongs and the indignities that recently have culminated in the Disestablishment debate, and in the bill for the (supposed) amendment of the Education Act. And such are the circumstances under which the question has arisen: “Will Noncon-

formists tamely submit to all this? Will they continue to be the hewers of wood and drawers of water for a Liberal Government that has ceased—on the greatest questions of the age—to be Liberal?" An answer has been given, and given by a Liberal Member who lives not far from Bath. "The Dissenters are spaniels. They may whine and snarl at Mr. Gladstone's heels as they like; but when an election comes they will vote for him, and will fawn on the foot that spurned them."

The time for action is now drawing on. If, for the mere purpose of maintaining a hollow semblance of union in the Liberal ranks, Nonconformists lend their countenance to any avowed supporter of Mr. Gladstone and Church Establishments, he will assuredly believe that the words of Nonconformists are counters, not coin; that their complaints are not founded on principles by which they will stand; and that Nonconformists are unworthy of consideration in the programme of English Governments and the destinies of the English nation. On the other hand, let Nonconformists show, by their deeds as well as their words, that they hold principle and conviction dearer than party—dearer than allegiance to a Minister who has ceased to be Liberal—dearer than anything besides; and the Government may perhaps be led to pause, and to thoughtfully reconsider its position and its prospects before a general election comes, and finds it in fatal collision with its best friends, when the ruin will be certain and irretrievable. Those are the truest friends, alike of Liberal Government and of Mr. Gladstone, who warn him in time, and who show him that not another member shall enter the House of Commons by the aid of Nonconformist votes till Mr. Gladstone has abandoned the retrogressive course to which he has so fatally inclined, and until he will consent to be the Liberal head of a Liberal Government and a Liberal people.

On this subject Mr. Dale recently expressed himself in terms in which we entirely concur. The Education Amendment Act seemed, he said, to him to confirm all the worst predictions of the leaders of the Nonconformist revolt in relation to the probable educational policy of the Government. If Nonconformists had not already parted company with the Government, the Government had at least parted company with them. They had deliberately chosen a retrograde policy; and although Nonconformists had cherished very hearty loyalty to the leaders of the old Liberal party, their loyalty to the principles which both were called upon to defend was

more intense and deep than their loyalty to those leaders. The time had come when Nonconformists were at last thrown upon themselves. For a time, perhaps for a few years, they would have to act independently of the recognised leaders of the great historical party. The old union between them and the Nonconformists, which had been so fruitful in the largest and happiest results to the country, was now dissolved. He did not regard the dissolution of that union with any degree of satisfaction. The spectacle which they had seen at Bath during the last few days was not altogether an edifying one. He regretted that there should be any necessity for it, but it would have to recur again and again, in constituency after constituency, until the Liberal party had learned to apprehend more distinctly and intelligently what those principles were, which alone would secure for it the confidence of the great mass of the Nonconformists of the country. He felt that it was their duty to encourage their friends in every constituency in the kingdom, *whenever a mere ministerialist invited their suffrages, to run another man, who, whether he won or lost, should stand on the principles of religious equality.* It would try the temper of which they were made, and test their fidelity to the principles they professed. In pursuing that policy they would incur the bitter reproaches of their own political leaders. They would bring upon themselves passionate complaints from the less robust members of the Nonconformist community in different parts of the country; they would be exposed to all kinds of insult, slander, and contumely; but they relied upon the generous confidence and the hearty support of those constituencies who, during the last three years, had stood by them during the early movements of the storm; and they believed that when the storm was passed, brighter, sunnier, and better days than England had ever seen were destined for them.

It was my custom, in my youth (says a celebrated Persian writer), to rise from my sleep to watch, pray, and read the Koran. One night, as I was thus engaged, my father, a man of practical virtue, awoke. "Behold," said I, "thy other children are lost in irreligious slumbers, while I alone wake to praise God." "Son of my soul," said he, "it were better for thee to be engaged in irreligious sleep than to awake to find fault with thy brethren."

THE SAILORS' MINISTER.*

A MAN who could for forty years sustain an unbroken popularity as a preacher in the most intellectual city of America; who could command the admiration of Charles Dickens, of Harriet Martineau, and of Ralph Waldo Emerson; who was honoured by Calvinists and Romanists and Unitarians; who exercised an influence amounting to fascination over one class, and whose society was courted by every other class; who did not learn to read until he was twenty-five years old, and yet was able to give power and freshness to a ministry of half a century; such a man must have possessed a combination of powers altogether unique. Yet such a man was the Rev. Edward T. Taylor, of Boston, whose biography has lately reached us from over the sea.

This remarkable man was born in Richmond, on Christmas-day, 1793. At seven years old he ran away to sea, and followed a sailor's life until he was more than twenty. During one of his voyages the ship put into the port of Boston, and by one of those so-called chances, which are really the threads God weaves into the pattern of a life, young Taylor was drawn to the door of a Methodist chapel. His appearance was not very reputable, and he was thrust back; but, nothing daunted, he climbed through a window. The Rev. Elijah Hedding was preaching, and his form, voice, and words at once riveted the attention of the young sailor. After the sermon, a young man named Tucker spoke affectionately to him, and the result was that on that very night he found joy and peace in believing. In describing this incident, he used to say, in sailors' phrase, "I was dragged through the lubber-hole (the window), brought down by a broadside from the seventy-four (Elijah Hedding), and fell into the arms of Thomas W. Tucker." From that hour began a life of the most thorough consecration, holy and manly simplicity, fervent prayer, and earnest toil.

He went to sea again, and was taken prisoner by a British man-of-war, and was confined, along with other Americans, in Dartmoor prison. It seems that these prisoners resented very keenly what they deemed the intrusion of the prison chaplain with his liturgy; so they persuaded young Taylor to lead their devotions, and he did

* "Incidents and Anecdotes of Rev. E. T. Taylor." By Rev. Gilbert Haven and Hon. Thomas Russell. Published by Dickinson, Farringdon Street, London.

it with such fervour, and faith, and brightness, and pathos, that they were all charmed. They then requested the prison authorities to allow them to "do their preaching and praying for themselves." The prison chaplain was released from duty, and Taylor was elected in his place; and so began a life-long ministry. His first sermon was from the words, "A poor and wise child is better than an old and foolish king;" and when some of his audience began to fear that his sarcasms against "an old and foolish king" would bring them into trouble, he cried out, "You think I mean King George: I don't, I mean the Devil."

We find him next in America, and although he still could not read, his piety and power marked him for a preacher. His spiritual home being with the Methodists, he soon found an opportunity of exercising his gifts. But as it was necessary he should be licensed by a quarterly conference, he consented to preach a trial sermon before the leaders and stewards of the district. It was said that he startled them by announcing as his text the words, "By the life of Pharaoh, surely ye are spies;" but another account says that his text was, "I pray thee, let me live." So they gave him his license, and let him live.

For several years he went from town to town as an itinerant preacher, but in the year 1828 his true mission was found. An old chapel in Boston was set apart for a seamen's mission, and who so fit to take charge of it as the man who had himself been a sailor? Taylor was called of God and of man to this work, and never left it.

It was not long before the sailors learned to love and honour their minister, and soon the wealthy and educated part of Boston were conscious that a genius had come into their midst. A larger church had to be built, and even that overflowed. At the dedication of this church he said, "America is the centre of the world, and the centre of America is Boston, and the centre of Boston is North Square, and the centre of North Square is this Bethel."

Henceforth "Father Taylor" was his name; for every seaman was loved, warned, entreated, and honoured as a son, by this great "apostle to the sailors." He always insisted that the best seats in the church should be reserved for them: as he said once, "My lambs must be seated first." He once said at a missionary meeting, "What's the use of sending missionaries to the heathen, unless you first convert the sailors? A single shipload of sailors, in a single

visit to a heathen strand, will do more mischief than the labours of a dozen missionaries will undo in forty years. . . . But get the sailor converted, and he is off from one port to another, as if you had put spurs to lightning."

It is impossible to convey anything like an adequate idea of his preaching. It was full of wit and of pathos, of ludicrousness and of sublimity. It is said he was a greater orator than Gough; he was called a "homely Jeremy Taylor;" and Emerson said he was "one of the two great poets America could boast." But he never wrote a line, and only a few scraps of this marvellous ministry have been preserved.

Here are some specimens. He was describing the downward course of a young man who left a pious home, but fell into the lowest depths. At the climax of his description he thrilled his hearers by saying, "Hush! shut the windows of heaven. He's cursing his mother." Again: "Some people think they are saints. If they could see themselves as the just in glory see them, they wouldn't dare to look a decent devil in the face."

It will easily be understood why, with his love of the sea and of sailors, nearly all his illustrations were drawn from a seafaring life. Talking about creeds, he said: "Now creeds, like Joseph's coat of many colours, are made of patches; no two of them alike, or any one of them to-day what it was when first made. Even our new friends, the Millerites, since they broke their crank in trying to wind the world up, have been compelled to add a new patch to their creed, to explain the blunders in their figuring. Creeds are all well enough in their way; but you will readily perceive, like everything human, they are imperfect. No man shall make a creed for me, and I'm sure I don't wish to give a creed to any one. A common danger gives men a common creed, or, if you like the phrase better, a common religion."

He then described a vessel in a storm, on the point of sinking. In their common danger all on board prayed heartily, and at the last extremity a sail appears. He goes on: "Now, wait a minute, shipmates, and I will show you how these poor souls who, but a few minutes before, were all praying to a common Father, now began to differ — to make creeds according to their range of vision. Only one small square sail could be seen above the horizon; but the vessel was end on, and from this the sailors began to reason whether the craft was a ship, a bark, or a brig. And this controversy was

continued until she was hull out, with studding-sails set on both sides. The signal of distress had been seen; and, as if by magic, she was clothed with all drawing sail. Now, what mattered it whether she was a ship, a bark, or a brig? She was a saviour. Was not that enough?

"No; men are by nature so crooked that they will question the existence of the God in whom they live, and move, and have their being. It was a British frigate. She rounded to, and saved every soul. But suppose it had been night—for God works at all times and in all weathers—and the poor souls could have seen only her lights, rising and falling with every roll of the waves, they would have been just as much given to speculation. Sailors, as well as landsmen, are not willing to take God at His word, and wait patiently for the working out of His ways, but they want to know all about Him right off; and because they can't, then they go to work and make what they think He ought to do, and call it a creed. Blessed Jesus, give us common sense, and let no man put blinkers on us, that we can see in only a certain direction; for we want to look all round the horizon—yea, to the highest heavens, and the lowest depths of the ocean. Did creeds give these rescued souls consolation in their hour of peril? No; but the word of God did; and that is my creed. I hold to the Bible, the whole Bible, as my creed, because it never grows old or needs repatching."

Father Taylor had a very large-hearted charity towards those who differed from him in matters of belief. He said of Ralph Waldo Emerson: "If the devil got him, he would never know what to do with him. There seems to me to be a screw loose somewhere, though I never could tell where; for, listen as I might, I could never hear any jar in the machinery." To Dr. Channing, he once said: "When you die, angels will fight for the honour of carrying you to heaven on their shoulders."

He was very quick-witted and sharp in retort. Some one resented his plain speech on eternal punishment, and said: "If you should go to hell, and find the doors and windows all locked, and the keys thrown away, what would you do?" "I should expect to see you there, to find them for me," was the quick reply.

Jenny Lind was once in his congregation, and he spoke so sweetly of music, and the power of song, that the great singer clapped her hands in delight. After the sermon a tall man rose on the pulpit stairs, and asked if a person who died at one of Miss Lind's concerts

would go to heaven. Father Taylor glared at the man, and shouted : "A Christian will go to heaven wherever he dies ; and a fool will be a fool wherever he is—even if he is on the steps of the pulpit."

His prayers were often as exquisite in beauty as, at other times, they were startling in wit and fire. Mrs. Jameson has preserved one. The account is in her own words. "On one occasion when I attended his chapel, the sermon was preceded by a long prayer in behalf of an afflicted family, one of whose members had been lost in a whaling expedition to the South Seas. He prayed that the Divine Comforter might be near the bereaved father 'when his aged heart went forth from his bosom to flutter round the far southern grave of his boy.' Praying for others of the same family who were on the wide ocean, he exclaimed, stretching forth his arms : 'Oh, save them ! oh, guard them ! Thou Angel of the deep !'" Praying for a pious mother, he called her : "That morning angel, that noon-day angel, that evening angel !"

In offering the dedication prayer of a new church, he said : "O Lord, Thou knowest what mischief we ministers do. If any one attempts to sow heresy in this pulpit, or to preach aught but Christ and Him crucified, drive him out of the house, and sweep his tracks off the floor."

He had a great love for children, and at baptismal services would brim over with tender feeling. Some one said that those services, conducted by him, were enough "to put to shame all the rituals of Christendom." Some ministers objected to baptise the children of unconverted parents ; but, speaking about this, he exclaimed vehemently, while he held a little child in his arms : "Why, if the old devil himself would bring me a child to baptise, I would baptise it, and say, Devil, go to your own place ! Angels, take the baby !"

At another time a little girl was brought by her mother, and he paused a moment, and then said : "Look at the sweet lamb. Her mother has brought her to Christ's fold." Then he sprinkled her brow in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and said : "A baptism from heaven be on thee, my pretty dove," and then kissed her tenderly.

Father Taylor's prayer-meeting was one of the freest, happiest, quaintest of all meetings. The middle wall of formality between preacher and people was broken down, and as he allowed full liberty of prophesying, some most unexpected utterances were sometimes heard. A Mr. Snow was talking, and his coldness drew from

Father Taylor the exclamation : " O Lord, melt that Snow." One man was comparing religion to a medicine-chest, and grew confused in the comparison, so the father cried out : " Brother, do get that medicine-chest open and give us all a dose, and then sit down and give some one else a chance."

A wealthy merchant began to tell the sailors how grateful they should be for all the benefits they received from their employers. Taylor fidgeted for some time, and when the merchant sat down, he rose and said : " Is there any other old sinner from up in town who would like to say a word before we go on with the meeting ?"

His daughter has preserved for us this happy incident of his home life. One day he was sitting in his chair, with closed eyes and smiling lips, and she said : " Are you dreaming, father ?" Without moving, he replied : " I am in heaven a little way." " And what is heaven, really ?" she said, climbing on his knees. " It is loving God," he said, with a soft and dreamy tone.

In his later years Father Taylor became feeble in body and in mind, and lingered in life only the wreck of his former self. But flashes of his old power came out now and then. Some one supposed he must be glad at the prospect of his near release, but he said : " I'll stay while there's a bit left." Another friend said to him : " There's sweet rest in heaven;" and he tartly replied : " Go there, if you want to." " But," said the other, " think of the angels that will welcome you." " What do I want of the angels ?" he replied. " I prefer folks;" and then, more softly, he said, " but angels are folks."

He said at one time : " When I die, don't bury me up in the dirty ground; carry me out to my own blue sea, where I may have the seaweed for my shroud, the coral for my coffin, ocean-mountains for my tombstones, and the music of zephyrs and howling storms for my requiem."

At last he grew weary of life and suffering, and one day was heard to say : " O Lord, what am I here for? Lord, some summer morning snatch me to Thyself." It was the spring time when he died, and a whole city mourned for him. His influence has gone far and wide, carried on the wings of the wind by the ships of many countries. His memory is cherished by loving hearts on many shores; and no doubt, when the sea gives up the dead that are in it, many who sleep beneath its waters will be stars in the crown of this sailors' minister.

F. R.

THOUGHTS—GRAVE AND GAY.

THE new Education Act says that the allowance made by the guardians to parents who are unable to pay the school fees of their children, shall not be deemed parochial relief. It reminds us of a story. A farmer went into the city of Boston one cold winter's morning, and heard a boy crying, "Hot mince pies." The weather made him think that a hot mince pie would be very pleasant, so he bought one. After buying it, he found that it was absolutely frozen. He therefore said to the boy, "Why, you called them 'hot mince pies,' and you see they are cold." "Oh," said the vendor, "that's only the name of them." The farmer was not satisfied with the explanation; he felt there was a certain unreality in it. And so, merely to alter the name of what is received from the guardians, would not destroy its pernicious influence on the character of people who received it. The thin distinction created by the bill between parochial relief and the allowance made out of the poor rates for purposes of education, will soon disappear. If the people feel that both payments are received from the same authorities, through the hands of the same person, and out of the same funds, they will be altogether unable to distinguish between them. When the people have become accustomed to go to the guardians for their children, they will soon get accustomed to go for themselves.

A young poet once asked Douglas Jerrold to pass a candid criticism on two of his productions. Jerrold waited rather impatiently until his tormentor had concluded reading the first poem, and then quickly exclaimed, "I like your other poem the best." "But you have not heard it read." "That is why I prefer it."

The latest feminine fashion of wearing the front hair is known as the Skye terrier style. It attracts the puppies.

"Oh!" gasped fat Mrs. Weighty, as she ascended the second flight of stairs in her new residence, "I really cannot run up any more stairs." "Of course not," testily answered her husband. "But if the stairs were made of dressmakers' bills, you could run them up very easily." "I do detest puns," exclaimed Mrs. W., the next day, recounting the conversation to a friend.

The sickness of the body may prove the health of the soul.

Animal courage fights, moral courage submits to arbitration.

CHURCH NEWS OF THE MONTH.

DESPITE Mr. Gladstone's self-abandonment to ecclesiastical retrogression, the great battle still goes on, both within and without the Church.

The rampant Ritualism and Romanism of the so-called "bulwark of Protestantism" has been too much even for those who hitherto have gone in for the maintenance of the "Establishment" at any cost. "Even a worm, when it is trampled on, will turn," says an eye-witness of the Exeter Hall meeting, "and the Church Association had been flouted by bishops, been deceived by archbishops, been jeered at by curates; and now their time had come, and it was sweet to them to be able at length to indulge in a little hard language, and to demonstrate to their heart's content. I could not help thinking all the while of Mr. Spurgeon's tale of the enthusiastic Primitive, whose excited ejaculations were a real source of annoyance to his mistress, who was determined, if possible, to bring the gentleman referred to to reason. After many remonstrances, she offered him a pair of boots, on condition that he should worship rationally. For a time the bribe was successful. At length, one Sunday, at chapel, he could stand it no longer; and after writhing in the vain attempt to suppress his feelings, in his excitement he screamed out, 'Boots or no boots, glory be to God.' Similarly on Monday the language was, Church or no church, bishops or no bishops, rubrics or none, let us for once have no mealy-mouthed language, but hurl fierce invective at the heads of our foes."

Meanwhile the Dean of Carlisle says that "five hundred clergy of the Established Church have gone over to Rome; but that is not the worst: there are five hundred staying in it." Canon Ryle thus writes as to the Ritualists. "How far will these men go? How long will it be patiently borne? How is it to be stopped? Who is to stop it? Some of these questions are more easily asked than answered. With regard to the first, it is clear enough that, rejecting the modern notions of the infallibility of the Pope, the Immaculate Conception, and the like, they will go as near the Romanism of the mediæval times as they dare, or as they are allowed." "As for the bishops," says the *Record*, "whose solemn duty it is to stand in the front of this conflict with the semi-Romanism which is eating like a cancer into the Church, and undoing the work for which Latimer

and Ridley laid down life itself, it seems as if a spirit of blindness and infatuation had possessed some of them. Go into any of the Ritualistic churches, and see whether you will not be reminded of Rome; be present at one of the 'High Celebrations,' as the mass is called in Ritualistic circles, and see whether everything does not tell the same tale of Romish ceremonial and 'Romish doctrine having overlaid the order for the administration of the Holy Communion in our Prayer-book.'

The Ritualists, however, care for none of these protestations. They resolutely pursue their way. One of them calls attention to the fact that the Archbishop of York, himself a member of the tribunal which sat in judgment on the case, has publicly termed the Bennett judgment "a failure of justice."

"Meanwhile," says Mr. C. S. Roundell, an eminent churchman, "the English clergy are drifting towards Rome. They are assuming more and more the character of a priestly caste; and just so far they are sundering themselves and the Church in which they minister from the great body of the English people. . . . What is the cause of the newly-revived bitterness of Dissent towards the Church? Why is it that the education question is being hopelessly embroiled? Why has religion so little outward hold upon the body of all classes of the people? Why is the principle of authority everywhere discredited? It is because priestly ascendancy is abhorrent to Englishmen."

The Marquis of Cholmondeley conducts religious services in his private church at the priory, St. Helen's, during the summer months. Lord Radstock has been delivering "Gospel addresses" at Nottingham.

The autumnal meetings of the Baptist Union will be held this year at Nottingham, in the week beginning October 13. The lace metropolis abounds in Baptist memorials of an inspiring character. One of the early Baptist preachers in the town was the venerable Abraham Booth, who, while he was yet a framework knitter at Sutton-in-Ashfield, was in the habit of performing his periodic journeys to Nottingham on foot. A Baptist church existed in the town as early as the seventeenth century. On no religious society did the hand of persecution press so heavily. Denied the rights of Christian burial, many of the early Baptists were interred in private gardens; and the curious fact is recorded by the local historians, that when a church was founded, its members sought a place of interment before

they proceeded to build a chapel. The society of General Baptists was formed in Nottingham a hundred years ago. Park-street Chapel, erected in 1724, was the third dissenting chapel built in the town; and it was within its walls, on the 31st of May, 1792, that Carey preached the famous sermon which led to the formation of the Baptist Missionary Society. It was in that discourse he embodied his thoughts in two mottoes which have been the watchwords of the missionary movement ever since:—"Expect great things from God." "Attempt great things for God." The *genius loci* ought to make the autumnal congress of the Baptist Union this year one of the most interesting and successful that has been seen since the institution of these gatherings.

The Rev. John Pillans, President of the Surrey Congregational Union for the current year, has accompanied the Rev. Dr. Mullens on a prolonged visit to Madagascar. Before leaving England his late church at Camberwell presented him with a sum of nearly £600.

"We have," says a contemporary, "absolutely trustworthy information of a case in which, in a wretched locality in London, some poor children were taught by one or two benevolent ladies. These never asked whether they were Protestant or Popish, but let them kneel side by side to say, "Our Father who art in Heaven." Of this Archbishop Manning heard, and he gave command that the Roman Catholic children should be withdrawn. Roman Catholics, he declared, would pray for, but could not pray with, Protestants."

During the last four months the Borough-road Congregational Church has been undergoing alterations, and has also been quite renovated, at a cost of £1500.—The memorial stone of a new Church at Aylesbury has been laid by Mr. John Kemp Welch. After the ceremony, purses to the amount of £419 were laid upon the stone.—The Rev. George Allen has resigned his position as pastor of the Wesley-place Church, Great Horton, Bradford, over which church he settled about eight months ago, and has accepted the pastorate of the church at Leith, vacant by the removal of Rev. W. J. Cox to Panmure Chapel, Dundee.—The Rev. Geo. L. Herman, of Chatham, has accepted a unanimous invitation to become the pastor of the church at Princes-street, Gravesend.—The Rev. E. S. Bayliffe, B.A., has, after nearly twelve years' ministry at Marlborough, accepted a unanimous invitation from the Congregational Church, Tiverton, Devon.

AUNT FANNY'S TALES.

NO. III.—THE POST-OFFICE IN THE AIR.

LITTLE Effie's birthday, is it? Well, I suppose she has had lots of presents, a party of friends to spend the day, and real tea out of the doll's tea-things! And now she wants to choose her story! What is it to be?"

"A fairy story." "Something strange." "Something that happened when you were a little girl." These suggestions and many more came quickly from the lips of my little niece and of the party of little people who had assembled to celebrate her seventh birthday.

"A fairy tale, and about me!" I cried, laughing. "Why poor old Auntie knows no fairies."

"Oh, doesn't she, though!" exclaimed saucy Jack. "I believe they tell her some of her stories."

"Besides," remarked Nelly, wisely, "there are other wonderful things besides fairies."

"Most true, Nelly; and half the real things that happen every day are as curious as any fairy tale that was ever written; but we do not think about it, because they are so common. It is so, Willie, so you needn't look so unbelieving. However," I continued, "this time what I shall tell you will be uncommon. We could not have anything common for Effie's birthday story, could we? It shall be wonderful, it shall be true. Something that really happened to a little girl I knew, and as strange as if it had happened in fairyland, and the name shall be 'The Post-office in the Air.'"

Quick as thought they all grouped themselves round me, under the old tree that overshadowed the smooth lawn, and with Effie, as their queen, in the place of honour, announced themselves as ready for my story. So I began.

"A year or two ago, at the window of a large house in a strange city, a disconsolate little face might be seen looking out with earnest eyes. The city was Paris, the house was a French school, and the face belonged to a little girl, nine years old, named Eva Stanley. She was naturally a very merry girl, but just then there was scarcely a face in that house that did not look grave, except the very little ones, who laughed and played as usual. It was during the siege of Paris that my story took place. You can, some of you, remember hearing about the war between the French and Germans. Your

papa showed you the places on the map, and read you accounts of it in the newspapers."

"And we made bandages and shirts, Auntie," said Alice.

"Yes; every one in England did what they could to help the poor wounded soldiers. Well, you know too what a siege means, so I need only tell the very little ones that for months no one could get in or out of Paris. No one could bring food or help of any sort to those who were shut up within its walls. And what some found harder to bear than almost anything else, no letters could come, no news of their friends outside, nor could they send news of themselves. A great many sad stories could be told of that sad time; but I must return to little Eva, and tell you how it happened that she, an English girl, should have been left in the French city. She was the only child of parents in London, and had been sent to a friend of her mamma's, a lady who kept a school in Paris, that she might learn the French language perfectly. When older she would probably travel with her father and mother, and you know if you travel in countries where they do not speak English, it is very necessary for your comfort, and for the comfort of those with you, that you should understand what people say and be able to answer them. Think of this, Alice and Arthur, when you are sighing over French verbs and German exercises! I think you would have been amused to hear all the little girls in Madame Rivière's school chattering away in French, which you find so difficult, but then they would be equally astonished to hear your English talk. Arrangements had been made for Eva to be brought home by an old servant, but her sudden illness had delayed it, and Mr. Stanley could not possibly leave home himself. Other friends promised to take charge of the child, but every one had their own affairs to think of, and it was put off too long. The gates were shut, and Eva was left in the school. Madame Rivière was a good woman, very kind to all her pupils, and she loved Eva for her mother's sake. So at first the little English girl was very well off; she had plenty of companions, for the school was not broken up; but as weeks went by and nothing was heard from the beloved friends who used to write so regularly, her heart sank. Her good governess too was very anxious. Who could tell what might happen before she and all the pupils could be restored to their homes.

"However, there was nothing to be done. Nothing but patience and trust in God for any one during that gloomy time of waiting. Madame Rivière wisely continued daily school work, thinking it best

to employ the children's minds as much as possible ; but when the time of liberty came, which used to be so longed for, it was sad to see the grave little group that wandered about the old garden, trying to amuse themselves, as of old, with their pets and playthings. Eva's special pet was a beautiful pigeon. It had been given her by the old French gardener, who took a fancy to the pretty little English girl, who used to try and talk to him. 'Bluebell,' as she called it, from its beautiful blue plumage, soon became quite tame, and so fond of her little mistress, that she would fly to her and perch on her shoulder as soon as she saw her, and would often wake her in the morning by pecking at the window. Out of school hours they were always together, and even in school hours sometimes a tapping would be heard, and all the little heads turned round, and voices would cry, "Look, it is Eva's pigeon ;" till the governesses were obliged to request that Mademoiselle Eva would shut up her pet till lessons were over.

"Meanwhile news came up from the city that endeavours were being made to communicate with the outside world by means of balloons and of carrier pigeons, and large sums were being offered for the latter birds. Great excitement was caused by this hope, however small, of hearing from friends once more, and crowds besieged the post-office daily. There was excitement, too, in little Eva's mind. Her beautiful Bluebell, she felt sure, was a carrier pigeon—the old man had told her so—but she would never let it go, whatever they offered for it, so she exclaimed, as she stroked its soft feathers. 'But it might bring you a message from your mamma,' suggested her friend Louise. This idea made Eva very thoughtful, and she asked Madame Rivière about it. The result was that the good schoolmistress made several expeditions into the town, had consultations with those in authority, and then it was decided that Eva's pigeon must go with some more to be packed in a basket, well supplied with food and water, and sent off, with many more such baskets, in a balloon. Some were directed to London, some to other places. Important despatches and news of all sorts was sent with them, and it was hoped that answers would be brought back by these wonderful little messengers. Eva's name was mentioned as one of those wanting news, and it required all her faith and all her hopes to enable her to bear the parting with her favourite.

"And now a dreary time of waiting had to be borne, and other troubles came to make it worse. Food became scarce, and consequently very dear. The poor suffered most, but all felt it. Poor

Madame Rivière's daily marketing for her numerous household became a more and more anxious journey. The poor children had to restrain their youthful healthy appetites, and by degrees they became languid and pale, and even the little ones left off playing.

"Oh, my children, that was indeed a terrible time! Had it not been for faith in Providence, the stoutest heart would have despaired. Kind Madame Rivière tried to be cheerful, that she might cheer those around her; but it was a very difficult matter, with such dreadful stories of suffering that came pouring in on all sides. Cats, dogs, and rats were now sold in the markets as food; and many a tear was shed over some petted favourite which had to be sacrificed to satisfy the pangs of hunger. Autumn, too, was changing into winter; and cold came to add to the misery. Meanwhile poor little Eva had got tired of asking if her pigeon was likely to come back, and of watching for it. At first she used to spend almost all her time in the garden, her eyes fixed on the sky, till they were dazzled, the cage kept ready for its former inmate; and it was not till many days of disappointment had passed by that the child gave up hope. When one thought of the many chances the bird would have to encounter, the danger of getting lost in the fogs and mists, and of getting shot by the enemy's guns, it did seem too probable that Eva would never see her pet again. She cried bitterly when she thought of it, and of the anxiety and grief her parents must be suffering. Poor child, she became paler and thinner every day. Want of good food, and anxiety, were telling upon her. Only one comfort little Eva had left, and you can guess perhaps what that was. In her own room, by her little white bed, she used to kneel and ask God to keep her safe till her papa could come and fetch her away, and to take care of her papa and mamma, and after this she would feel better and braver. And, indeed, prayer was the only real comfort left to any one in that unhappy city.

"A day came when little Eva Stanley could not sit up; she was too weak and ill. She was dressed, and laid on a couch near the window in her room. It was a bright November day, and the sun shone upon the withering trees in the old garden. Madame Rivière came in and looked at her and went out again. Her kind heart ached to see the bright, merry, healthy child so altered; but, alas! heartaches were common things, and there were many more, besides Eva, who required attention. A picture-book had fallen from the little wasted hand, and lay upon the floor. The eyes were

closed, and tears stood on the long lashes. Hark! what sound was that? Tap, tap, tap! Eva knew it well, and, forgetting her weakness, sprang to the window, to see her old favourite fluttering and trying to get in. In another moment the window was open, and the friends reunited, and very soon all the household came crowding in to see the wonderful sight. The pigeon looked thin, and her glossy feathers were shabby and dirty, but it was Bluebell herself, showing by every means in her power her joy at getting home. Beneath her wing was a quill, containing, no doubt, important tidings. This Madame Rivière at once took charge of, and conveyed to the authorities. The writing contained in that quill had been, by what is called microscopic photography, reduced till it could not be read by the naked eye, but required to be enlarged by a magnifying magic-lantern against a large screen, to be read and copied. You will understand, children, that this was necessary to enable a little pigeon to carry so much news. Well, a message had come for Eva, among the many messages brought by Bluebell—a message that did her almost as much good as food and medicine would have done. It said that her father and mother were alive and well, and that very soon they believed they would all meet again. It told the little daughter to keep up her courage, to trust still in God and in them, and wait patiently a little longer.

“Oh, wonderful little bird! to come all alone, with no one to show the way, high up in the air, so many many miles, carrying messages of comfort and hope to those who needed them. Beautiful little messenger! No wonder your mistress caresses you and will not let you out of her sight; no wonder all the family unite in denying themselves, that Bluebell may be fed. Fresh hope had indeed been brought into that house. Faces looked brighter, voices sounded more cheerful, and if any felt inclined to despair, the sight of Eva's pigeon would serve as a cure. Little Eva's prayers had been heard; why should not theirs? Soon after this the siege came to an end, and Eva Stanley was clasped in her parents' arms. They travelled home a very happy party, and I need not say how, next to Eva, Bluebell was petted and cared for. Health and spirits gradually returned to the pale, languid child, but she never forgot, and never will forget, the unhappiness or the happiness of those months spent in Paris.”

“Now, is not my story as wonderful as a fairy tale? and have I not kept my promise?”

Plenty of voices were ready to answer, "Yes," for I never had to complain of an inattentive or an unappreciative audience. But it must be confessed that the queen of the day, she for whose special benefit the story had been told, was peacefully unconscious of stories and everything else in the outer world. Whether it was the birthday pudding, the fatigue of a whole summer day of birthday pleasures, or the burden of birthday honour, I do not know, but little Effie was discovered sound asleep on the grass, and was carried off to bed.

THE BROKEN MANGLE.

THE nearest way from Stanton Street to Warwick Street is by way of Crown Court, and that is the reason why, from morning until night, for six days in the week, so many passengers are constantly passing through it. All of them are on business, therefore none of them loiter or tarry. Not one of them all is pursuing merely a walk of pleasure. Necessity alone selects this path as the shortest cut from the one street to the other; and consequently its unattractive sights and sounds and smells are regarded and endured as the cost of the time and labour saved.

Each house in Crown Court is occupied by several families, and nearly all the dwellings bear a general appearance indicative of poverty, dissipation, and wretchedness, the principal exception being found on the ground floor of No. 5, which, at the time the circumstances narrated here commenced, was occupied by the Widow Norton. And any one passing through the court might see that occasionally the dust and cobwebs were removed from her window; and as hers was the only window in the court behind which anything in the shape of a blind could be detected, it offered a rather pleasing contrast to the dirty, dingy windows of all the other houses.

Mrs. Norton's income was derived from her labours in connection with the rickety old mangle which stood at one end of her room, where it partly hid and partly held up her dilapidated bedstead, which, but for the support of the mangle, could not have stood upon its own legs. Affixed to one of the shutters of her window might be seen every day, Sundays not excepted, a small board, on which the picture of a mangle was painted, in yellow and brown colours upon a green ground, beneath which were the words, "Mangling done here."

It was not from the dwellers in the court that her employers were found, for if "washing-day" did occasionally occur in Crown Court, mangling never followed. Her patronage and support were secured principally from the inhabitants of the streets which the court connected. This was very limited, however; for other mangles were to be found as convenient to the streets aforesaid as Mrs. Norton's, some of which were of patent construction, and gloried in large cog fly-wheels, requiring less labour to perform the work more quickly than the widow's mangle, which was of the old-fashioned rope and roller kind. It is in consequence of this fact that we record this narrative, or have anything in it worth recording.

The widow was about sixty-five years of age at the time the writer first became acquainted with her. She was about the average height; her visage sharp, and of that kind which is often termed "acid." She was very clean in her person and appearance, and always endeavoured to make the best of her scanty wardrobe.

My introduction to Mrs. Norton on one fine spring morning was accomplished thus. I knocked at her door, for the purpose of entering into a religious conversation with her, if convenient. Immediately upon my doing so, a cheerful "Come in" gave me permission to open the door and enter her room, which I at once availed myself of. The widow was busily engaged in placing some linen in a basket which stood upon the floor; and as her back was toward me, she did not at first see who her visitor was, but evidently supposed it was some one who had called on business pertaining to the mangle. I bade her "Good-morning," and expressed a hope that she was in good health, when suddenly she looked at me very indignantly, and said, with great emphasis, "I wish you'd shut that door!"

I acted according to her wishes, and uttered an apology for having left the door open; and then said, "I have taken the liberty of calling upon you, Mrs. Norton, for the purpose of speaking to you a few kind and friendly words about your——"

"I wish you'd hold your tongue," she said.

I instantly obeyed, and at once discovered that she was counting back into the basket the number of pieces she had been mangling; and as she performed her labours at a certain price per dozen, it was of importance both to herself and her employers that she should be correct as to the number for which she charged. I therefore stood as still as a statue until she had finished her task and had packed the linen ready for delivery.

As soon as this was done I expressed my sorrow that I had interrupted her, and hoped she would pardon what had in some measure caused her annoyance, when she replied, "You have no business here."

I said, "I should not have taken the liberty to enter your room if you had not invited me to do so."

"I invite you to come into my room?"

"Yes. When I knocked at your door you said, 'Come in,' and I did so."

"But," said she, "didn't I tell you to shut the door as soon as I saw who you were?"

"You did; but as you did not say on which side of the door you wished me to remain when I had shut it, I naturally enough kept on this side, as I wanted to speak with you." I then assured her that my motives were of the kindest nature, and that it was in reference to her highest interests that I had called upon her.

She replied, "I don't want anybody to talk to me about religion. I am a poor woman, and have to work hard for the bare crust I get. I have no time for religion. Religion won't pay my rent when the collector comes next Monday morning."

I said, "Mrs. Norton, you have, or had, a mother?"

"Of course I had," she replied.

"Did you not love her?"

"Why do you ask me that?"

"Because," said I, "I think you did; and I think if she is or was living now, you could love her very much without leaving off your mangling to do so. And whilst God desires that you should love Him, He does not demand the neglect of a single duty; nor does the supreme love of God in the heart hinder the pursuit of any lawful occupation, but rather helps in the performance of everything that duty demands."

Mrs. Norton only became more displeased, and although I tried in every possible way to pacify and soften her, I found I could not; therefore, laying on the table the tract she refused to take in her hand, I bade her "Good-morning," and said, "I will call upon you some other time, when, perhaps, you will not be so busy."

Her reply was, "You wait till I send for you."

Time passed on, and occasionally, as I went through the court and saw her door open, I inquired as to her health, made a remark about the weather, and when I could I left a tract upon the chair by the

door, without ever manifesting the least desire to stay or enter into further conversation with her; believing that if I could only thus speak with her, I might in due time find an open way to the purpose I had in view respecting her soul.

After a very long time had elapsed since my first visit to her, I called as usual, and asked her how she was, when she replied, "Much better in health than I am in temper." I said, "I am glad you are pretty well in health, but sorry that anything should vex you." Then, to my surprise, she related to me the cause of her displeasure. Her mangle had been for a long time sadly out of order, and she had saved up all the pence she could to have it repaired. Suddenly a weak part gave way; the mangle was broken, and she must have it repaired at once. She bargained with a man who undertook to repair it properly for the sum agreed upon, and he professed to have completed his work. She therefore paid him, and he departed. Applying herself to her work, she found, to her dismay, that the mangle would not act so well as it had done before. I fully and sincerely sympathised with her; when she said, "Just come and look at it, and see how I have been cheated."

I went in and saw what she pointed out, and discovered where the mischief lay, and also saw that with a very little trouble I could put it right. I asked if she could furnish me with a hammer. She produced one, and I attempted to do what I thought necessary, and in a few minutes was so successful that I had arranged the parts that were out of place. She turned the handle, and pronounced my success to be perfect. She put some rollers of linen into the mangle, and presently was able to take them out smoothed and properly done. A gleam of satisfaction lighted up her countenance, and an expression of gratitude fell from her lips. I gave utterance to my own gladness that I had been able to assist her, and bidding her "Good-morning," left her and pursued my way, thinking it best to avoid at present taking the advantage the opportunity afforded.

Shortly after this I saw her at the door, and stopped to speak to her. A cheerful smile and a hearty "Walk in, sir," declared that I now stood in the character and relation of friend. "Sit down, sir," gave me the opportunity of free conversation with her. So, after inquiring particularly as to the state of the mangle, and finding all was well and satisfactory, I had to receive a hearty expression of thankfulness mingled with surprise; first, that I could mend a mangle; secondly, that I would do such a thing; and lastly and

especially, that I should have done it for her, seeing how angrily she had met me when I first spoke to her, and how sternly she had ever behaved towards me.

I assured her that I had not treasured up any unpleasant memories, and therefore she needed not to cherish any unhappy ones. I further said, "I will, if you please, call upon you as usual, and leave a tract with you; and if at any time, when you are not very busy, you would like me to converse with and read a portion of God's word to you, I shall be very pleased to do so. I was very sorry that I so interrupted you on the first occasion of my speaking to you. You were then counting the linen, and I interrupted you sadly; but you have forgiven me for that, I know."

She said, "But I have not forgiven myself for my treatment to you, nor do I think I ever shall. You know, sir, my temper is rather peppery, and sometimes it travels fast and far in a little time, when once set moving. I knew well enough you meant to speak for my good; but you see, sir, when one doesn't want to talk about the things you wanted to talk about, and yet knows at the same time that they ought to be spoken of, it is a very easy thing to put in a spice of temper, and upset the whole. But never again, sir, will you find me peppery, say what you will."

I said, "I thank you for saying this, and I think we now fully understand each other, and therefore henceforth I feel you will regard me as I shall you, in the character of a friend."

I then spoke a few more kind words to her, and left her. From that time I was ever a welcome visitor, and found in her a very attentive listener to the story of the Cross.

Not long after I saw her one Sunday evening in my congregation, and during the week learned from her that it was the first time she had attended a place of worship for many years, but that having once again begun, she meant to be regular in her attendance. And she was so.

Eventually she attended the week-day evening services as regularly as those of the Lord's day; and, as the result, received the truth as it is in Jesus, was enabled to rest by faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ, and to give a reason for the hope that was in her. Several years passed away, and I became sincerely attached to her, for her plain, simple trust in the Saviour. She was poor as ever, as to this world's goods, but rich indeed in Christ as her portion and her all. She never murmured, but was always content to rest in the assurance

that Jesus was working all things together for her good. Her health gave way, till at length she had hardly strength enough to turn her mangle, yet she had spiritual strength. She said, "I have not much on earth to attract me, and when Jesus sees fit to remove me I shall gladly go."

At length the day came when she and her mangle must no longer work together. She felt conscious that her end was near. A sort of instinctive affection for her mangle was ever exhibited. She seemed to regard it as a twin companion, spoke of it as the most valuable piece of this world's material good she possessed, and doubtless regarded it as an old friend, which she hoped might fall into such hands as would estimate its worth; and somehow I felt certain she would like to have left it as a legacy to me. She rapidly sank, until, after a few days of severe illness, she fell into the arms of death, whom she regarded not as the king of terrors, but as the angel of life, sent to conduct her to the realms where death is unknown. She was conscious that she was a great sinner, but she had found a great Saviour. In Him she fully trusted. By Him she felt she was fully accepted. Her repentance was sincere, her faith was simple, yet strong; and without a doubt or fear she passed away into the unseen but eternal and glorious inheritance of the saints in light.

Her gratitude to me was great, and whilst she attributed her salvation to my instrumentality, she gave all the glory to Divine grace; while I could rejoice that He had permitted me to be useful to a soul that had lived for sixty-five years in darkness.

Let us work on amid all discouragements, assured that in due time we shall reap if we faint not.

J. BIRDSEYE.

Cranbrook, Kent.

CHRISTIAN JOY.

IT ought to be the effort of Christians to pass through the world so happily as to light up and fill it with joy. They ought to sing in the midst of judgments, and to sing loudly and cheerily and constantly amid their marvellous benefits. We pass to a kingdom, out of sadness and sorrow, where there will be no sorrowing nor sighing. Passing to that place, let us cultivate the spirit that is to distinguish us when we arrive there, and show that we do really begin our heaven on the earth.

CHILD FANCIES.

Katie. I think the clouds are angels !
 Look how they're flying, Maud ;
 One has long streaming snowy hair,
 And one a shining sword.

And some are resting on a bank
 That looks like dazzling snow ;
 And some are sailing far away :
 I wish they would not go.

Papa says when the little clouds
 Melt in the azure blue,
 It will be fine ; and so it is.
 I know the reason, too !

The kind and lovely angels
 See that we want to play,
 And so they go far out of sight,
 To send a cloudless day.

Maud. I see some *little* angels !
 Katie, is baby there ?
 Nurse said bright angels took her
 Up in the sunny air.

Katie. I cannot see her, Maud ; perhaps
 She is too young to fly,
 And so they took her further on,
 Beyond the deep blue sky.

Maud. What do the angels do up there ?
 If I'd their shining wings
 I'd fly down here ; I wish they would,
 The pretty, wondrous things !

Katie. They can't come here, they're up too high.
 I think we'd hear them singing,
 If we could hush the birds and bees,
 And little sheep-bells ringing.

Maud. Does papa know they're angels ?
 And can he hear them sing ?

Katie. We'll run and ask ; he's sure to know :
 Papa knows everything.

 WILLIAM  COWPER.

ON the new line of the Midland Railway Company, running from Northampton to Bedford, lies the famous parish of Olney, and an easy journey now takes the poet's friends to the scenes amid which he spent his most peaceful days.

It was in the year 1767 when Cowper settled at Olney. He was then in mid-life, and had not long recovered from the first great outbreak of that affliction which cast such a deep shadow over his whole career. Our illustration gives a view of the house in which, with his widowed friend, Mrs. Unwin, he lived. In that house the happiest years of his life were spent: there his friendship with the famous John Newton, clergyman at Olney, ripened: there he exerted himself in those benevolent works which so often drew his mind from despondency: and there also he wrote the first, and perhaps the most widely-known of all his compositions—his "Olney Hymns."

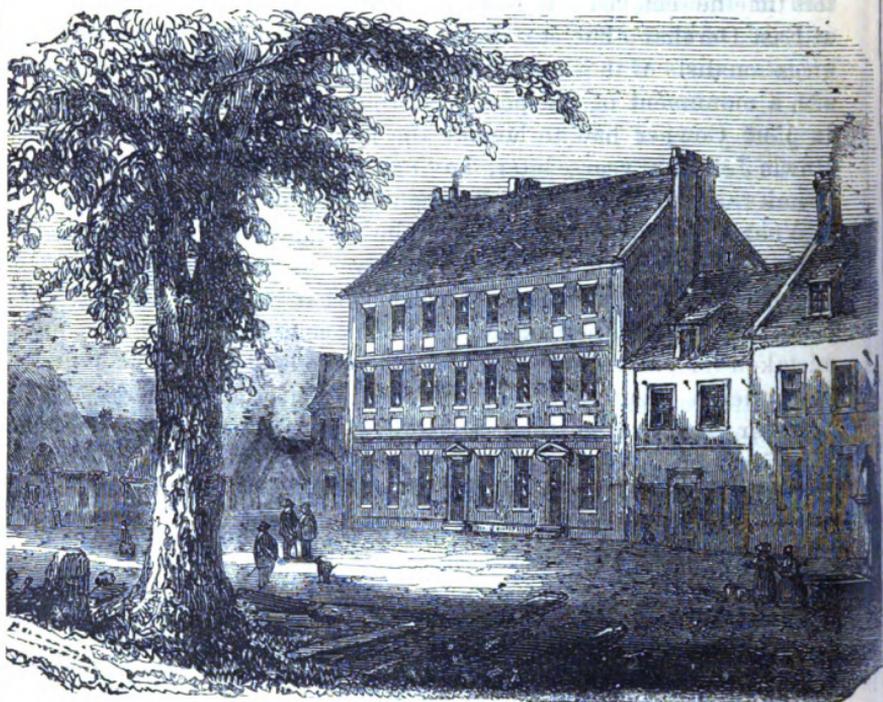
In the New Congregational Hymn Book there are eighteen hymns from the pen of Cowper. The hymn commencing,

"God moves in a mysterious way,"

was written under circumstances which lend to it a deep, almost awful, interest. The Rev. Josiah Miller, M.A., in his admirable work, "Our Hymns: their Authors and Origin," tells us, "The title of this hymn is 'Light shining out of Darkness.' It is said that on one occasion Cowper thought it was the Divine will that he should go to a particular part of the river Ouse and drown himself; but the driver of the post-chaise lost his way, and on the poet's return home in safety he wrote this hymn. By others it is said to have been written during a solitary walk in the fields, when he had a presentiment of the gloom that would soon fall again on him, but was still cleaving to God, in whom he trusted. Montgomery says, 'It is a lyric of high tone and character, and rendered awfully interesting by the circumstances under which it was written—in the twilight of departing reason.'"

All the hymns of Cowper which appear in the "New Congregational" were composed for the "Olney Collection." This collection, which contains about three hundred and fifty hymns, was the joint production of Cowper and Newton, the former contributing sixty-two, and the latter two hundred and eighty-six. Why was Cowper's share in the work, comparatively, so small? This question is

touchingly answered by Newton in his preface to the original edition. "The book would have appeared much sooner," he says, "and in a very different form, if the wise, though mysterious providence of God, had not seen fit to cross my wishes. We had not proceeded far upon our proposed plan, before my dear friend was prevented, by a long and affecting indisposition, from affording me any farther assistance. My grief and disappointment were great; I hung my harp upon the



COWPER'S HOUSE AT OLNEY.

willows, and for some time thought myself determined to proceed no further without him." This was written in 1779.

It is singular that, up to this period of Cowper's life, when he was nearly fifty years of age, he had written nothing besides his "Olney Hymns." If, however, the tree was late before it bore fruit, it nevertheless bore plenteously. "At fifty years of age," he said of himself, "I commenced as an author: it is a whim that has served me longest and best, and will probably be my last." His first volume of poetry appeared in 1782, his second volume in 1785, and his translation of

Homer six years later. The germ of his poem "Retirement" will be found in the hymn commencing,

"Far from the world, O Lord, I flee,"

being No. 679 in the "New Congregational." His humorous poem, "John Gilpin," was suggested by a story related to him by a lady. In addition to poetical works, the translations by Cowper were numerous. In 1795 he was granted a pension of £300 a year, and about this time he removed into Norfolk. The house known as "Cowper's," at East Dereham, has just been purchased, we believe, by the Congregationalists of that town, and a new chapel is to be erected on the site, a monument of the poet to be placed in front of the building. In 1796 Cowper had to lament the death of his good friend Mrs. Unwin. Four years later, having been again on the verge of insanity, he himself died at the age of sixty-nine.

What position, according to public estimation, do the writings of Cowper occupy? In his own day they were not ranked highly, chiefly because they were not marked, either by that glitter which is so often mistaken for brilliancy, or by that pompous diction which is so often mistaken for profundity. They could be understood—quite sufficient to condemn them in the eyes of a large class of readers! Time, however, has proved their sterling worth. They tell of a deep, sometimes of a dark, spiritual experience. At one time the writer, to quote his own words, appears

"Tempest-toss'd,

Sails ripp'd, seams opening wide, and compass lost:"

at another time he is serenely resting upon that inspired statement which so often calmed and comforted his soul: "Him God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past." The widest range of spiritual experience is consequently mirrored in his works. Whatever be the appearance of the sky—clearest blue, or covered with the blackest clouds—it is faithfully imaged in the lake below; and so, whatever be the tendency of the Christian's mind—hopeful and trusting, or troubled and doubting—turning to the works of Cowper, he finds that experience is reflected there. Amongst the highly-valued literary treasures of the Christian Church are many of Cowper's works. As the love of the pure and of the truly noble grows deeper and wider, so the rank assigned to his writings by the public will be raised higher and higher.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT ELDERS.

"WHAT do we want with Elders?" perhaps some one may say to himself, as his eye catches sight of the title of this paper. Be not alarmed or impatient, good reader. I am not going to plead for Mormonite Elders, to some of whom Artemus Ward has introduced us, nor for the appointment of a body of old men or women in our Churches to manage all the rest. But if it will not weary you too much to follow me throughout, I will try to show you what, notwithstanding, we do want with Elders.

Possibly you may not know that the words *Episcopacy*, *Presbytery*, and *Eldership* are, according to the New Testament, but different names for one and the same office in the Christian Church.* This is not a mere opinion, but a fact acknowledged by theologians of all shades of opinion. The title "*Presbyter*," or "*Elder*," being a familiar one to the Jews as the name of a leader or ruler of the Synagogue, very naturally came to be transferred from the Jewish Synagogue to the Christian Church.

"*Bishop*" was first applied in Gentile Churches, where the word *Presbyter* would not have been sufficiently significant, as it would be in Churches composed of Jews. But throughout the first Christian century there was no more distinction between the two names than there is between an edifice and a building. Well, from the identity of Elders and Bishops in the apostolic age, it follows, you will see, that New Testament Bishops were not such as modern or diocesan ones. Being one with the Presbyters, they could not hold a separate office above them. And they presided over one Church or community, not over many.

Modern Bishops have assumed apostolic functions, whether rightly or wrongly, I do not attempt here to decide. But something else follows, as I think you must have seen,—that the ministerial office must not be regarded as distinct from the Eldership. The minister is one of the Elders of the Church. He is chosen by the Church, indeed, as its president and leading teacher, and thus occupies a more prominent position than his brother Elders; but that position does not constitute a separate office. There is nothing which a minister may do that any of the Elders may not do, provided they possess the personal qualifications that are requisite. He holds

* Acts xx. 17, 28; Titus i. 5, 7; 1 Tim. v. 1, 2. Of course every one knows that "overseer" is simply the English for "*Bishop*," and "*Elder*" for "*Presbyter*."

precisely the same office as they do, and possesses no more authority than what character, education, or talents may naturally and fitly give him.

The duties of the Eldership we find to be twofold—oversight and teaching.* With modern Churches, a good pastor commonly means a good visitor, but the essential idea in the New Testament is one who can guide and govern well. There can be no doubt, I think, that Elders were chosen in the first instance mainly for government. The word “bishop” or overseer implies this. Teaching would naturally grow out of oversight, although while the apostles were alive the Churches would look to them as their principal instructors. St. Paul, in specifying the qualifications for the Episcopacy or Eldership, certainly refers to the faculty of teaching as one of them.† Yet, from what he says elsewhere, it plainly appears that all holding this office did not take part directly in the work of teaching.‡ But the reader may ask, What kind of rule and what measure of authority was conferred on these officers? Their government by no means prevented the participation of the whole Church in the management of its own affairs. Holding their power as overseers directly from the Church, and expressly for the Church, they were accordingly responsible to the Church for its use. The exercising a lordship over God’s heritage was distinctly forbidden them. While they were the Church’s executive, the supreme power unquestionably belonged to the Church at large in its collective character.

I pass over the qualifications for the Eldership, since the reader can study them for himself in St. Paul’s Epistles to Timothy and Titus,§ and shall now endeavour to show the scripturalness and vast importance of a plurality of Elders in our Congregational Churches.

As our Churches are at present constituted (almost without exception), we have, strictly speaking, only one Elder in each—viz., the minister, although practically, indeed, the minister and deacons form a kind of Eldership. Yet the minister is the only one to whom the name of Elder would be conceded. But if, in our common practice, we thus bear witness to the need of an Eldership in every Church—in other words, of co-pastors in the broadest sense—why should we

* Eph. iv. 11: “He gave . . . some pastors and teachers,” where—as the form of the original seems to show—the two words describe the same office under different aspects.

† 1 Tim. iii. 2: “A bishop must be . . . apt to teach.” Titus i. 9: “Able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.”

‡ 1 Tim. v. 17: “Let the elders that rule well be accounted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.” § 1 Tim. iii. 2-7; Titus i. 6-9.

not, instead of confounding functions which are separate by making our Deacons half Deacons and half Elders, give the name of Elder to such as are now often called to discharge the duties of that office, and who may have proved themselves well fitted for it? This would not in the least degree interfere with the Diaconate, as the office concerned with the finances of the Church, but it would give definiteness and reality to the Eldership, and relieve the Deacons of responsibility which ought not to be imposed on them.

Let me draw especial attention to the fact that "wherever the apostles formed Churches, many of which at first must have been very small, we invariably find that over every Church they appointed Elders and Deacons." Observe, not an Elder and some Deacons, but Elders as well as Deacons. The number, doubtless, varied, but there were always a number of men (instead of a single man) "consecrated in the Church to be the guardians of its spiritual life—the shepherds and helpers of their brethren."* Now on what ground have we departed from apostolic precedent? Though I firmly believe that we may be most strictly carrying out the spirit of the apostles' teaching when we deviate from their actual footprints, yet I maintain that we must have substantial and sufficient reasons for departing from plain precedents set by them. And in the case before us, it appears to me, as it does to many others, that in the alteration we have made (and made only since the beginning of last century, for until then there were Elders in our Independent Churches), we have gained nothing and lost much. If a plurality of officers is needed to serve the Church in matters more secular and temporal—and it is regarded anomalous where there chances to be one solitary deacon—surely a plurality of officers over the more directly spiritual work of the Church can be needed no less. No one Elder can have either the time or the qualifications necessary. So manifold are the spiritual offices or services belonging to a Christian Church, that unless a minister possess the inspiration of an apostle, or at least the versatility of genius, it is difficult to conceive him competent for all. He may be specially qualified to expound God's Word to the Church, and to preach the Gospel to the world, but yet may not have the same power of practical oversight and guidance which some of his fellow-members may possess. Even if fully qualified and competent in all respects, he has not the time. For, although it is true that he is commonly released from secular engagements,

* See Acts xiv. 23, xv. 4, vi. 23, xvi. 4, xx. 17; Titus i. 5; James v. 4; Phil. i. 1.

that he may devote himself entirely to such work, yet, "having to take part in denominational action in his town, and in public movements generally; having to attend innumerable committees and public meetings," and being expected "to keep himself abreast of the current information of the day;" he cannot, thus involved, at the same time perform all the spiritual work in his own Church.

Now, with a plurality of Elders, the evangelistic work devolving on a Church might be carried on far more extensively and successfully than is too often the case at present. But unless a Church can afford specially to engage a man as an Evangelist, this most important work is generally neglected or irregularly done; while, with a staff of Elders, every Church might have its mission station or stations attached to it, over which an Elder might be directly appointed by the Church. Other Elders might render most important help in visitation, especially of the sick, the poor, young converts, and inquirers. I believe in pastoral visitation. Without personal sympathy, appeal, and counsel, preaching will largely fail. But of this I am certain, that as it is simply impossible, so it never could have been intended, for any one man to give that individual attention to the care of men's souls that is needed. With a plurality of Elders, however, the work might be done.

In conclusion, let the reader clearly understand that the Presbytery I have been advocating would in no way interfere with our freedom as Independent Churches. In ordinary "Presbyterianism," the officers and not the Church have the virtual power in all ecclesiastical matters, and the Presbytery exercises authority over the Churches generally. According to the New Testament, however, each Church should have its own Presbytery or Eldership; but the Presbyters have no authority over other Churches—no office even outside their particular Church—and possess by no means absolute power within it, but act as the Church's representative, and are responsible to it as a whole. There is nothing whatever in the Eldership rightly understood and carried out which violates in the least degree the glorious fundamental principle of our Congregational Churches. "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren."

C. S. S.

Nottingham.

SORROWS are loathsome things, but they are necessary. They are leeches that suck out the hot inflammation from the soul.

THE SACRAMENT AND THE SAVIOUR.

"DEAD! You don't say General Orton is dead?"
"He is indeed. He died two years ago."

Captain Irwin fixed a look of painful interest on the speaker. Memory was swiftly retracing bygone scenes. He recalled the time when, after a long furlough, he returned with his young bride to India. He remembered the friendly letter which awaited him at Calcutta from Major Orton, courteously offering hospitality. The kindly welcome they had received, and the prolonged stay which they had been persuaded to make—all rushed to his remembrance. But there followed recollections of darker shadows. Fuller acquaintance had taught him that Major Orton's temper was violent; the slightest provocation from a subordinate called forth torrents of abuse. Friendship with a passionate man commonly gives more pain than pleasure, and such had been Captain Irwin's experience. Differences arose between them, their intercourse ceased, and years passed without their meeting. Major Orton rose to be a general officer, and left India for his native land.

The friends were then not only severed in heart, but sundered by thousands of miles; and subsequently a still deeper separation had come between them—Captain Irwin had been converted to God. Thus there was a further hindrance to fellowship with his former friend. How could it be otherwise? For what fellowship could there be between a believer and an unbeliever? Was General Orton, then, an unbeliever? Not in the ordinary sense of the word, but in the Bible sense he was. In his own way he was very religious. But religious unbelief will no more save a man's soul than impious atheism.

Captain Irwin had never heard that his old friend had been converted. So it was with a sudden pang he heard that the old general had passed into the eternal world.

His friend, Mr. Edwards, probably perceived this; for he said, "Yes; for two years he has been absent from the body, and, I trust, present with the Lord."

"What," said Captain Irwin, quickly, "was there hope in his death?"

"Oh, yes; like the dying thief, he found mercy at the last; he fell asleep in Jesus."

"Is it possible? God be praised! Dear General Orton! I'm so thankful! Do give me some particulars of his last days."

"I can tell you all about him. We were neighbours, although we had not been in the habit of meeting frequently. But a short time before his death, his legal adviser happened to call, and told me that the general seemed very composed, and had just taken the sacrament. He seemed to regard this as obtaining a passport for heaven, for, added he, 'I shall not go to see him again; better not disturb him after this.'

"'Composed!' thought I, as we parted. 'I wish he was anything but that.' I resolved to lose no time in seeing him, but on reaching the house, I was assured by his friends that all was well; he had taken the sacrament, and was very comfortable.

"I could not rest, however, without seeing him. He received me calmly, and said, 'You will be glad to know I've settled all my affairs, and taken the sacrament. I have nothing now on my mind. I am very comfortable.' But his looks belied his words. I hesitated what to say. He repeated, with ill-assumed calmness, 'Yes, I have done justice to every one. I have arranged for my children, and where they are to go after my death. I am quite comfortable.'

"Deeply moved, I took his thin, transparent hand in mine, and said earnestly, 'And you, dear General, what of yourself? Where are you going?' A shadow crossed his face, but he repeated, with an effort, 'Mr. Ewing has given me the sacrament, and seems quite satisfied.' Oh, what a thrill of anguish! I felt at that moment that my friend should have fallen into the hands of a blind leader of the blind! I felt I dared not trifle with an immortal soul on the verge of eternity. 'Dear General,' I said, 'you know the life you have led. You will pardon me for speaking plainly; I do so in love. How can you feel comfortable? You know you have never been "born again," or changed in heart and life, and Christ says, without that change, you "cannot see the kingdom of God."' An expression of intense and painful disappointment was on his countenance when I paused. But he only repeated, with an anxious sigh, 'Well, but I have taken the sacrament.'

"'And what good can that do you, dear friend? You want salvation. Salvation comes only through sacrifice. It comes through faith in Him who gave Himself a sacrifice for sin; but a sacrament is not a sacrifice. The sacrament is a sign of something which God has given to us—a memorial of Christ's gift of Himself to purge our

sins; but a sacrifice is something rendered as an atonement for all our many sins. We take the bread and the wine in remembrance of Him who has saved us. But to trust in the sacrament, instead of in the Saviour whom it commemorates, is a fearful mistake. Suppose that, when you were in India, you had risked your life to save a Sepoy, and that you had subsequently shown him all manner of kindness. Suppose you gave him your own photograph, saying, "Look at it from time to time, and remember me." That man joins the mutineers; fires your house, hunts your servants, murders your children, tortures your wife. At last he is taken, brought before you, tried, and condemned. Hark! he is going to plead. What has he to say? "Oh, sir, it's all true, but you ought to pardon me, for I looked last night at the token of your kindness. I did remember you." Dear General, will you urge a similar plea at the bar of God? Will you say, "It is true, I have lived as a rebel against Him who died for me; but, O God, on my deathbed I took the sacrament"?

"He felt the force of this, and said, 'Oh, no, no! but what more can I do?'

"Do? You can plead that 'Christ died for the ungodly,' and seek mercy 'for His sake.'" And then I tried to lead him to think of Jesus. He was deeply attentive, but no light seemed to break in upon his mind.

"A day or two later I received a telegram, begging me to go to him immediately. He greeted me, as I entered, with 'Oh, how long you have been! You have made me miserable. I was so comfortable! Kneel down. Pray. You can. I can't. Get the Bible. Read—read something. Oh, I'm so miserable—so wretched!'

"Taking the Word of God, and slowly reading some of its simplest statements, I tried to lead the trembling soul to that scene where 'the Lord laid upon Christ the iniquity of us all.' I sought to show him that through Jesus, and for His sake, forgiveness was waiting for him. I tried to prompt the cry, 'Lord, help me.' I read to him passage after passage, lingered with him, prayed with him, but left him at night, for a few hours' rest, dark as ever.

"Early next morning I was summoned again to his bedside. Well do I remember praying, before entering his room, that God would speak, through me, to this poor troubled soul 'words whereby he might be saved.' His cry was still 'Read; oh, read.' And I read of the brazen serpent and of the life-giving look of the bitten Israelites, and then I read our Lord's comment on it in John iii.

Suddenly, as I read, he raised his poor emaciated hands, clasped them convulsively together, and with a shout exclaimed, 'O God! I understand it now! Jesus, Saviour, I look to Thee! Is that all? Wonderful! Everlasting life mine, and for a look! Lord, I believe!' In an instant the light had shone into his soul. Under the Spirit's teaching, he had grasped the truth that he had nothing to do but to look in faith, that Jesus had done it all; that salvation was 'not of works,' and not by sacraments, but 'by grace through faith' in Christ.*

"Oh, the tears of joy and gratitude he shed! Oh, the deep, contrite grief that accompanied his repentance! The proud lion had become a lamb. So real and rapid a change I never saw. He often exclaimed, 'Thank God I did not die a fortnight ago!'

"He never once doubted his own acceptance for Jesus' sake. He grasped the gospel of God, and grasped it strongly. 'I believe in Thee, Lord Jesus! I shall never perish, for Thou sayest so.' These were his words. Peace, calm, real rest, seemed to reign undisturbed to the end.

"Fruits meet for repentance! Yes; even a deathbed conversion leaves room for them. The fruits of the Spirit are found when once the Spirit dwells within. Oh, how mighty He is to change both heart and life! Sacraments will never do that. It needs the Almighty power of God Himself."

"And so I trust I shall meet my old friend above!" said Captain Irwin. "Well, God be praised! It is just like His grace. I wish I had prayed and hoped for him more. I am afraid I fancied his case too hard even for the grace that saved me; but God does exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think."

This narrative furnishes by no means a solitary instance of the pernicious effects wrought by the doctrine of "Sacramental Grace." Many a soul in its last hours on earth is turned from Christ, believing itself, through the sacrament, to be "quite comfortable." And this doctrine is boldly proclaimed by hundreds of clergymen who belong to a so-called "Protestant" Church, and who are supported by a Protestant State. We trust that the people of England are awakening to the hazards of their case, and will refuse to accept a creed which makes them the slaves of priestcraft in this life, and teaches them to build their hopes for the life to come upon the vainest follies of men, instead of upon the only sure foundation—Jesus Christ the Righteous.

* Ephesians ii. 8, 9.

THOUGHTS—GRAVE AND GAY.

A SHORT time ago the Bishop of Lichfield, while walking in the Black Country, saw a number of miners seated on the ground, and went towards them with the object of saying a "word in season." He asked them what they were doing, and was told by one of the men that they had been "loynin'." The bishop evinced some astonishment, and asked for an explanation. "Why, yer see," said one of the men, "one on us has fun' a kettle, and we been a trying who can tell the biggest lie, to ha' it." His lordship was shocked, and proceeded to read the men a lecture, telling them, among other things, that he had always been taught that lying was an awful offence; and that, in fact, so strongly had this been impressed upon him, that he had never told a lie in the whole course of his life. His lordship had barely finished when one of the men, who had previously remained silent, exclaimed, "Gie the governor the kettle; gie the governor the kettle."

A recent writer expresses his opinion of old maids in the following manner:—"I am inclined to think that many of the satirical aspersions cast upon old maids tell more to their credit than is generally imagined. Is a young woman remarkably neat in her person? 'She will certainly be an old maid.' Is she particularly reserved toward the other sex? 'She has all the squeamishness of an old maid.' Is she frugal in her expenses and exact in her domestic concerns? 'She is cut out for an old maid.' And if she is kindly humane to the animals about her, nothing can save her from the appellation of an 'old maid.' In short, I have always found that neatness, modesty, economy, and humanity, are the never-failing characteristics of that terrible creature—an 'old maid.'"

The peculiarities of great men are like suits of clothes, which hang not well on any but the man who was measured for them, not to say that the misfortune of imitators often lies in this: That, in copying the lisp, the bur, the shrug, the broad accent, the ungainly and ungraceful attitude, they forget that their idol is not great by these, but in spite of them.—*Guthrie.*

Every one knows that the last few words which Goethe uttered were truly memorable. "Draw back the curtains," said he, "and let in more light."

By keeping the mouth shut more than it is, fewer disagreeable things will be said, and will make us more healthful and less unhappy. People should cultivate the habit of breathing through the nose more than they do. Man's nostrils were not intended for the sole purpose of distinguishing odours, but were put in his head to filter and purify the air he breathes before it enters his lungs, and to soften and warm it when chilled, damp, and unhealthy from the influence of a variable climate; and he who breathes through his mouth will always find himself more or less in trouble with pulmonary or bronchial difficulties.

The only preaching which truly strengthens us on our weary life journey is the preaching of Christ, and of Him alone. It is strange how, when ready to let everything else go, we still cling to that Divine life, and feel that its purity, its graciousness, its strength, its love, have an influence over us when all other influences fail.

Prayer is the child of faith; praise, of love. Prayer is prospective; prayer takes in, in its wide range, enjoyment of present, remembrance of past, and anticipation of future blessings. Prayer points the only way to heaven; praise is already there.

There are Christians not strong in affection who are, nevertheless, not to be judged weak in grace. What is thus wanting, God often makes up in solidity of judgment, clearness of knowledge, abundance of experience, and stableness in the faith.

At the time of Humboldt's death the sun was shining brilliantly into the room in which he was lying, and it is stated that his last words, addressed to his niece, were these: "How grand these rays; they seem to beckon earth to heaven!"

Dr. Johnson's last words, addressed to a young lady standing by his bedside, were—"God bless you, my dear." And "God bless you!"

Life has no wretchedness equal to an ill-assorted marriage. It is the sepulchre of the heart haunted by the ghost of past affections, and hope is gone for ever.

The great secret of success in life is for a man to be ready when his opportunity comes.—*Disraeli*.

A man who gives his children habits of industry, provides for them better than by giving them a fortune.—*Whately*.

CHURCH NEWS OF THE MONTH.

WHILE we are writing, the air is thick with rumours as to the ecclesiastical and political causes and bearings of the recent "reconstruction" of the Ministry. It is whispered that the world has been mistaken with regard to the Education Department—that the fountain-head of sectarian bitterness and party confusion is not, after all, to be traced to Mr. Forster, but to Lord Ripon, and that, instead of "urgent private affairs" having led to his withdrawal from office, he has been got out of the way in order to inaugurate an era of peace in educational affairs.

The fact that Mr. Bright has consented again to take office lends corroboration to these rumours. "Birmingham," it has been remarked, "is the stronghold of that Nonconformist opposition to the Government scheme of education which stood so much in the way of Mr. Forster. Mr. Bright himself only the other day condemned the Education measure in very strong language, although he was not willing, because of its defects, to sanction any policy of opposition to the Government. When, however, Mr. Bright makes his appearance as a candidate for re-election, on the ground that he has consented to take office in the Government, Birmingham is almost certain to believe that he must have received from Mr. Gladstone a promise that the conscientious principles of the Nonconformists are to be satisfied by some broader and better modification of the measure than was accomplished in the past session. . . . Mr. Bright is not the man to compromise any of his own convictions, even for the sake of helping his friends, and there will therefore be a general expectation that his candidature in Birmingham is to be accompanied by some assurances satisfactory and encouraging to the Nonconformist section of the Liberal party." If so, there may be hope for the Liberal Government yet, that, if they die, they will die with honour. To be for the moment overthrown, while labouring to extend the great principles which have been the glory of the Liberal party, would be distinction: to perish, as it has been feared they would perish, because they had become retrogressive and reactionary, would be disaster and disgrace.

The Protestant sentiment of the Evangelicals is now thoroughly aroused. In addition to a great anti-confessional meeting in Exeter

Hall, there has been another meeting having much greater significance. A conference at the National Club was convened by an Episcopalian, the Rev. E. Bligh, of Birling, and a Presbyterian, the Rev. Donald Fraser, to advocate revision of the Prayer-book in a Protestant sense. Some Nonconformists were invited, and it soon became evident why. For the first resolution declared "That Nonconformists, as well as Churchmen, have the right to insist that the Church of England, while it exists as an Establishment, shall exist only as a Protestant institution." Some of our brethren who were invited stayed away, and those who were present and spoke gave no sign of hope that their zeal for Protestantism would induce them to aid in bolstering up a moribund Establishment. Surely the day has gone by for calling our Episcopal Church "the bulwark of Protestantism." Thoughtful men have long seen that, but for the free Churches of this land, our country would by this time have been bound hand and foot by Romanism. Let the Evangelicals but brace their minds to the sacrifice of disestablishment, and their fears for the future of Protestantism will make to themselves wings and fly away. They are but wasting breath in their hysterical declaration, that "something must be done."

The Bishop of Lincoln has addressed a pastoral letter to the Wesleyan Methodists in his diocese. It is chiefly taken up with a statement of the sin of schism, with which he charges them. He warns them, by the example of Korah and his company, who usurped the priests' office, against "setting up altar against altar, and priesthood against priesthood; and in assuming a right to minister in holy things, such as the sacraments of the Church, without a due call and mission." The Bishop tells their ministers that not even the undeniable tokens of God's approval of their work will secure their safety. "The Israelites were refreshed by the water flowing from the rock struck by Moses, but he was excluded from Canaan for striking it." The good man expresses himself willing to "ordain" the Wesleyan ministers, for he doubts if they can "rightly minister the sacraments," or if their people "can safely" receive the sacraments. No wonder that our long-enduring Wesleyan friends feel aggrieved. The Congregational Churches have long learned to hold cheaply the taunt of schism, and to turn lightly away from the brand of "Korah, Dathan, and Abiram." But our Wesleyan brethren have not gone through our experience, and we fancy they will be ready to say, "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, hath lifted

up his heel against me." We hope the Wesleyans will carry their consistent and steady Protestantism to its proper issues, and resist in England, no less than at Rome, all priestly presumption and sanctimonious arrogance.

It is pleasant to turn from these controversial matters to the practical work of the Christian Church. It would be difficult to find in all England a more complete instance of the truth and power of the Christian religion than is to be found in the Church founded by Rowland Hill, in 1782. Surrey Chapel is a household word amongst us, and its praise is in all the Churches; for it rests its claim to honour, not so much on the character of the great men who have ministered within its walls, as on the fact that it has been for so long a centre of self-denying, holy, loving, well conceived, well directed, and untiring Christian labours. It is a well-head of living water, and a centre of living light, in a dark and desert part of London. It is, therefore, with peculiar satisfaction we learn that, whilst the old octagon building where the fathers worshipped must needs be sold, all the true life of the place is to live on. Surrey Chapel is to be perpetuated in Christ Church. In laying the foundation stone, Mr. Morley very properly claimed the church for the Nonconformists.

Most of our colleges have been holding their anniversary gatherings. There is a great deal in their reports that is very gratifying, but it is hardly pleasant to learn that every effort towards amalgamation is fruitless. Airedale and Rotherham have definitely given up the scheme, and both have purchased land for new buildings. New College and Spring-hill cannot at present agree upon a basis for united action and life, but they hope to reopen the question some time.

Two presentations of some value have lately been made. Mr. Edward Miall, M.P., has received from his friends the magnificent sum of ten thousand guineas. The Rev. J. C. Gallaway, M.A., was presented with a cheque for £925. He has for years worked so intelligently and indefatigably in connection with the "Chapel Building Society," that everybody feels he deserves all he has got, and more.

The following ministers have changed pastorates:—Rev. E. H. Reynolds, of Armagh, to Lichfield; J. M. F. Menmuir, of Flushdye, to Leyburn, Yorks; S. Slater, of Tetbury, to Leominster; E. D. Solomon, of Felling, to Tillicaultry, near Dollar; D. W. Evans, of Stansfield, Suffolk, to Harwich, Essex.

AUNT FANNY'S TALES.

No. IV.—A BRAVE BOY.

AMONG the various remarks called forth by my last story, there was a complaint from my nephew Jack, a sturdy young urchin lately invested with the dignity of knickerbockers, emancipation from the nursery, and the prospect of going to a boys' school "next half," and possessing in consequence a slight general contempt for girls.

"Auntie," he said, "you don't give us enough boys' stories."

I urged in self-defence that boys wanted accounts of adventures and travels, and that I had lived such a quiet life at home.

"No," he persisted, "I don't care for that. I only want something about boys, and you must have known lots. You see there are so many."

This statement I did not attempt to contradict, and I began with my accustomed obedience to think over my boy acquaintance, both past and present. Jack kindly helped me.

"Who was the bravest boy you ever knew, Auntie? Tell us about him."

"And you must have a nice name, Jack," said his little sister Lily.

"Bother fine names!" said downright Jack. "If the story is about a brave boy, it can be called a brave boy, can't it, Auntie?" And so therefore I have called it.

Soon after this request, which was seconded by several more of my nephews, I told it to them in the playroom, where an arm-chair was provided for me, and the little girls took possession of my footstool, while the boys perched indiscriminately on table, window-sill, or the back of my chair. "Well, children," I began, "I do not know that I ever met a braver boy than little Hugh Percival, and I think you will say so too, when I tell you of an adventure he once had when he was only seven years old. He was the youngest but one of a large family. For a long time he had been the youngest—the baby in fact—but a year before my story begins, a little sister had arrived to take a great deal of the petting that used to fall to Hugh's share. But Hugh helped to pet her. Next to his mother he loved this little helpless baby better than anything in the world, and she soon learned to know him, and to hold out her little arms when

he appeared. Hugh was naturally a fearless, independent little fellow, and as bright and happy as a boy could be. It was a treat to see him tearing over the fields, followed by his constant companion, the big dog, Hector, or climbing trees or jumping ditches—not bird-nesting, Jack. Hugh would never take a nest, and if he collected eggs, he made a point of leaving several for the mother-bird, for he was tender-hearted as well as brave, and, remember, the two qualities generally go together. Only cowards are cruel.

“I have spoken of the boy’s activity, fearlessness, and indifference to danger, but there is a higher kind of courage still. What I have described is called physical courage. What I now mean is moral courage, and this better, nobler kind, little Hugh possessed. I do not think anything in the world would have tempted him to tell a lie, or to break his word, or to do anything that his conscience told him was wrong. He had been a great deal with his mother, the other children being older and more away from home. And let me tell you, boys, that instead of this making him a ‘milk-sop’ or a ‘Molly-coddle,’ as I have heard some foolish lads say it would, Hugh got all his brave, manly ideas from this same good mother.

“On one occasion Hugh was left alone with his mamma and the baby. His father was away on a visit, the elder boys at school, and the little fellow felt quite proud of being left in charge. All day it had been hot and sultry, for it was just about Midsummer. Hugh had helped his mother, played with the baby, and had gone to bed tired, and was soon sound asleep. Soon afterwards the whole house was quiet. It was roused by unusual sounds between two and three o’clock the next morning.

“The baby had been taken suddenly ill, and all was commotion. Old nurse must help poor ‘Missis’—there was hot water to get, fires to light—the errand boy had only the day before gone home ill. The frightened servant girl, who was told to run for the doctor, lost all her wits, and could only cry and groan, and said she didn’t know the way. Nurse was distracted. She could not go herself, and to go to the gardener’s cottage and rouse him, would cause delay. Meanwhile little Hugh had quietly dressed himself, and made up his mind what to do.

“‘I am going, mamma—the doctor shall be here soon,’ he called out, putting his head for a moment in at her door.

“Without waiting for a reply he was off, and presently running along the road that led to the village, two miles off. Hugh had

never been out so early before. Many a time he had woken and seen the sky from his little window, all streaked, and painted crimson and green and gold, before the sun had risen, and longed to be out in the garden. But he knew he must not get up. It would disturb old nurse, who slept next door, and the hall door was locked, and had a noisy chain to be unfastened. He had had various schemes for getting from his window into the garden, by sliding down an old iron pipe that ran up the wall, or by jumping into a cherry tree that stood conveniently near—but he had never yet done so—indeed, to tell the truth, he had generally gone to sleep again while thinking about it. Now he was out of doors all by himself in the stillness and solitude of early dawn in the country. The birds were only just beginning to twitter a prelude to their morning concert. There were the distant crimson and golden clouds waiting to receive the sun. A heavy dew was on the grass, and the air felt fresh and chilly. A grey look was over everything, and the stillness was almost unbroken. Little Hugh felt very strange and lonely, but he did not notice these things as he would have done at another time. He had even forgotten to bring his dog, Hector, an omission he had reason soon to repent. But his mind was full of the glimpse he had caught of his mother's alarmed face, and of the thought of the bright, merry little sister ill and suffering. 'The doctor will cure her,' he kept saying to himself, and then he ran faster along the road. Presently he would come to the common, and once across that he would be in sight of the village, and soon reach it and the doctor's house. But first he must pass a narrow lane shaded by tall trees, and leading down to a little wood, and as he approached it, he saw a rough-looking dark man, who called out—

"'Not so fast, my little master; you are wanted.' And as he spoke, he seized the boy, who struggled and called out in vain.

"'Stop that noise, will you?' said the man; 'no one is going to hurt you, but you must come along with me.' So saying, he dragged the child roughly down the lane, till, turning a corner, a gipsy encampment appeared at the edge of the common. Several men now joined them, also some women, who looked not unkindly at Hugh, who was quiet now, for he saw that his cries would bring no help, and only make the men angry, but he listened eagerly to their whispered consultation. 'It's the Squire's boy.' 'The Squire's away.' 'Let's keep him a day or two.' 'There'll be a reward.'

"Hugh did not half understand the scraps he heard, but the idea of

being kept, and all its consequences, made him call out piteously, 'Oh, let me go! do let me go!'

"'No,' said the man, 'you've got to come with us a bit, but you sha'n't be hurt.'

"'No, dearie,' added a woman. 'I'll see to that.'

"'No, no, no,' cried the boy, 'I can't go with you—I must go for the doctor—baby's ill;' and at the thought, he burst into a fit of sobbing. Then stopping, with an effort, he said, 'Only let me go and send the doctor—it isn't far, and I'll come back. I will indeed,' he added, looking up with his honest blue eyes into their faces.

"'A likely story: how do we know that?' the man asked, contemptuously.

"'Because I promise,' said little Hugh.

"'Meanwhile a little dark-eyed curly-headed girl had come near, and stood clutching her mother's gown, from which refuge she peeped shyly at the stranger. 'Let him go, father dear; he'll come back, I know,' she whispered.

"'Yes,' added the woman, 'if the baby's ill, I'd let him go.'

"'You're a goose, Elsie,' said the man to the little girl; but he added, 'Be o', boy.' And in a moment Hugh disappeared, and was flying over the common to make up for lost time.

"'You have lost us this chance,' muttered the gipsy, sulkily; 'and I can tell you we can't afford it—we're hard up. There'd have been no harm in keeping the youngster a day or two, and the Squire's lady would have given us something handsome for taking him back.'

"'But he was such a pretty little fellow, and so fond of the baby,' said the woman.

"'You're such fools, you women,' was all his reply.

"'But, father,' said the little girl, 'he'll come back—you'll see.'

"'Nonsense, and if he did, I'd not take him; he shouldn't be punished for his pluck. But he won't come—more likely he'll tell the doctor about our game. I say, we'd best be clearing off—it ain't safe here now.'" So saying, the gipsy turned in to a tent to consult the rest, and the result was, that in a wonderfully short time the camp was broken up, dogs, horses, and children collected together, and the whole party on the move.

"'Elsie had lingered to the last, watching for the pretty fair boy who had promised to come back, and was with difficulty coaxed away by her mother.

"'Meanwhile Hugh had reached the good doctor's, delivered his

message, refused his offer of driving him home, and was on his way back to the gipsy camp. The idea of breaking his word had never once entered into his head—but it must be confessed that his heart beat quicker than usual as he drew near the narrow lane, and he thought with some trepidation of the rough men, and wondered what would happen to him, and if he should ever get home again to his mother and the baby. 'God will take care of me,' said little Hugh to himself as he trudged manfully down the lane, and turned the dreaded corner.

"And lo! no encampment met his eyes—no gipsies, nothing but the wide deserted common, bathed in the light of the newly-risen sun, the dew glittering like millions of diamonds scattered over the grass. Astonished and relieved, Hugh looked round to find that he was not quite alone. From behind the hedge appeared the little gipsy maiden. She had watched her opportunity, and, when unobserved, had sped with the swiftness of a fawn back to the spot they had left. She felt that she must see if that strange boy had kept his promise. Yes, there he was, staring at her as she stared at him. It would have made a pretty picture if an artist could have been there to see it—the blue-eyed, fair-haired, rosy-cheeked boy, and the sunburnt face of the gipsy, her large black eyes peeping out from a tangled mass of dark glossy hair.

"'Why, where are they all?' cried Hugh, recovering his voice first.

"'Gone away,' said Elsie.

"'And have they left you here all alone?'

"'Oh, no,' replied the girl. 'I ran back. I wanted to see if you would come.'

"'Of course I came,' said Hugh. 'You know I had promised I would.'

"'You are a brave boy,' said little Elsie, 'and when I am old, like mother, I'll come again and tell your fortune.'

"'So you shall,' replied Hugh, laughing; 'but come before that. I should like to see you again.'

"'I will,' Elsie promised. 'But I must go now. Good-bye.'

"'Good-bye, little gipsy girl,' said Hugh. 'Stop, here's a little present for you;' for Hugh, fumbling in his pocket, found to his delight that he had in it a five-shilling piece that his father had given him before he left home. 'Good-bye;' and off he ran, glad enough to be on his way back once more. And off ran Elsie, too, when she

had done staring at the great shining piece of money her new friend had placed on her little dusky palm.

"You will be glad to hear that Hugh found the baby better. His mother received him with kisses and praises, and listened with interest and some anxiety to his story. Inquiries were made for the gipsies, but they had utterly disappeared from that part of the country, and I do not think Hugh has ever seen his pretty little gipsy girl again."

There was some discussion among the children when my story was finished, as to whether they could have done what Hugh did. Little Lily thought she would have "just run home first." But Jack decided that Hugh was a plucky fellow; that if ever such a thing happened to him he meant to do just the same; and that "Auntie's" story was first-rate.

THE PROTESTANT CONFSSIONAL: ITS SUPPOSED ANTIQUITY.

BY REV. H. T. ROBJOHN, B.A.

AM I dreaming? I fancy I must be. I live in the *Low Countries*. No! I do not mean the Netherlands. I am using the phrase in an ecclesiastical sense, though my ecclesiastical home, in one respect, is not unlike the home of the Dutchman. A mighty dam has been constructed to keep out the overwhelming flood of Popery. It is considered by a great number of people to be most efficient to this end. I have heard it called again and again "The National Bulwark against Popery." No doubt it was constructed with much skill by many able spiritual engineers some three hundred years ago. But time tries all things, and the sea has had ample opportunity in these centuries to find out all the crevices and loosely-constructed parts, and for forty years has been coming through the bulwark, and lately with something like a rush, so that a good part of the country is under water. Some folk are getting into a sort of panic, believing that we shall soon be all sea together, and that there will be nothing left above water. But somehow, so infatuated are the people in their belief that this "Bulwark," which really lets the water in keeps the sea out, that they cannot and will not see the true remedy which I fancy would be to construct a dam upon altogether different principles, and sweep the old piece of antiquated engineering entirely away.

If any one, dear reader, had told you ten years ago that scholars and ministers of a Protestant Church were trying, not only to commend the practice of auricular confession, but actually to prove that this was a part of the acknowledged doctrine of the Church, and always had been, what would you have said or done? I fancy the announcement would have taken your very breath away. But now we hear of four hundred and seventy-five "priests" of the Church of England asking the bishops quietly to make arrangements for confessing English Protestant people, and we take it quite as a matter of course; and if one speaks strongly about it in private, print, or pulpit, Christian people—yea, indeed, Christian people—get very angry, and say: "Charity, charity, brother! These priests are very good and earnest persons, do a great deal of good, mean well, have very much to say for themselves—more than you think, perhaps. Antiquity is with them; Scripture, too; the Book of Common Prayer, and opinions of many eminent Protestant Divines—at least, so they say—and even if they are in error, the error is not so grievous, and there ought to be room for them in a National Church. Peace, brother, peace!" And the brother holds his tongue, and spiritual lazybones goes fast to sleep once more, saying: "You have waked me too soon. I must slumber again."

"Said I then to my heart, 'Here's a lesson for me;
This man's but a picture of what I might be;
But thanks to my friends for their care in my breeding,
Who taught me betimes to hate Rome and like leading.'"

I am now about to go on the assumption that you, whose eye lights on this page, do not belong to this indolent brotherhood, but are of altogether different sympathies. The shade of the author will forgive me adapting once more his "Moral Song."

"I pay you a visit, believing to find
That you take better care for improving your mind;
You tell me no dreams, nought of eating or drinking;
But you mark well your Bible, and ever love thinking."

And so I am inclined with you to have a few simple, earnest, direct words on this dread subject of confession, called "auricular"—that is, confession into the ear of a human priest. I sometimes think what an ear it must be! The knowledge and memory of my own sins, alas! is quite enough for me; and would be, I think, for most other sinners, albeit, trusting in "the blood that cleanseth from all sin."

Much is made of the argument of antiquity for confession. A few plain statements will soon settle that. Mind you, I am not objecting to the argument from antiquity, if people would only deal with it fairly, and apply it properly; but my chief complaint here is, that the advocates of confession do not go back far enough: they will not go back to the New Testament nor to New Testament times. Oh, yes! I know they make a show of argument from the New Testament, but it is only a show and a sham. The doctrine of confession which some in the Church of England advocate is this. I am bent on putting it quite fairly. It is not absolutely necessary to salvation, but it is highly expedient that a sinner should confess sin to God in the presence of a priest, and that the priest, as for God and on behalf of God, should absolve him from his sin. I defy any one to prove that validly from either practice or precept contained in either the Old or New Testament. Many precepts there are about confessing to God. One passage there is about "confessing faults one to another, and praying one for another, that ye may be healed," and a very beautiful Scripture it is; but not a word about confession to a priest, and absolution by a priest. No. I have not forgotten John xx. 23; it has been in my mind from the first word of this paragraph. No doubt it is a difficult passage, but there is not a word in it which can legitimately help the priestling who passes my door every morning, in long coat and ecclesiastical collar, on his way to cottages and chambers, where he dares daily to drape himself in the prerogative of Deity. "He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." Now, this text need not here be discussed at any length. One word is enough. No Romanist or Ritualist believes for one moment that these words were addressed to the Church. They were spoken to the apostles—at least to ten of them—not to Judas, and Thomas was away. How can the passage then apply to my neighbour? I'd better ask him. I do ask him. Here is his answer: "Don't you know that I am a successor of the apostles, and that all Christ said of them pertains to me?" I meekly answer, "I am sure I don't." On thinking of it, I get bolder, and say straight out: "Friend, it's a foolish and wicked fiction; you can't prove it from Holy Scripture, and all history stamps it as a lie." My neighbour goes on confessing folk and absolving them; but I have my own thoughts about his blasphemous

presumption. I am not anxious over much to know the meaning of this passage, though I think I do understand it; * but this I know, that the passage is not for my neighbour in his daringly impious work. I look at him as he passes. Successor of the apostles! I would laugh if I were not so inclined to cry.

But antiquity? Yes. I had forgotten for a moment. Well, how old is confession? As we have just seen, it is not in the New Testament. Nor is there anything to favour private confession into the ear of a priest in the works of the early fathers. It grew up little by little, from small beginnings, like much else in the Roman Church. At first there was public confession for those who had fallen into open sin. These stood in the entrance of the church, covered with sackcloth and ashes, confessing, praying, and imploring others to pray for them. But even this was a forsaking "the simplicity that is in Christ." Many evils followed, and the practice had to be given up.

Confessing into the priest's ear began in the ninth century, but was not common for a long time after that. In the thirteenth century Rome insisted upon it as essential to salvation. Just then priests began blasphemously to say, "I absolve thee." Till then the absolution had been only a prayer that God would forgive. Here, then, is an answer to the question, How old is this thing? About six hundred years. For just this period this deadly poison plant has been growing in the rank corruptions of the Papacy. The argument from antiquity, indeed! It is about as strong as the sham proof from the Word of God.

The practice is one of considerable advantage to the Church of Rome in magnifying the priestly office. The head must bow, the knee bend before him who claims to have the power of handing over souls to eternal torture, or opening to them the gates of Paradise. The priests have found, too, that in the confessional they can dictate both opinion and command. It is, besides, a source of great wealth. "The custom of paying for confessions is still practised in Ireland, and is a source of vast gain to the priesthood. When the priest attends on the sick and dying on the continent, and pronounces the final absolution, a charge is made, though not, we believe, for ordinary confessions."

THE best way to carry crosses is to consecrate them all in silence to God.

* See Alford *in loco*.

CHURCH COUNCILS OF ADVICE.

NINETEEN centuries ago, in a famous Eastern city, there was gathered one day a little band of men earnestly debating some question which evidently moved all their deepest convictions. Two of them seemed to have come from a distance, and to have introduced a matter on which they desired advice. Presently the debate was ended, and the decision of the whole meeting given in writing. The city was Jerusalem. The two who came for advice were Paul and Barnabas, then ministers of the Church at Antioch. The assembly which considered their question was made up of apostles and the elders of the Church at Jerusalem. Peter was chairman of the assembly; and there can be no better description of the whole gathering than the few words standing for the title of this paper: it was a "Church Council of Advice." What was the subject of debate is immaterial at present; but the fact that in apostolic times one Church sought help from another, and considered itself bound by the decision of the sister Church, is a very material fact. For it is the earnest wish of many hearts, who long for the highest good of our denomination, to see established amongst us some conciliar system such as is found to-day among the New England Churches, and existed in the early days of Independency, both in Holland and in England, and may be traced in rudimentary form so far back as the apostolical Church. What we desire is to open to our Churches the way of obtaining friendly counsel in any time of anxiety or distress; and this, not in a hap-hazard manner, but according to rule, and method, and well-regulated order. We desire to provide some means by which our interdependence shall be expressed and realised.

This is no unimportant matter, but one touching the most secret springs of our life; and this is one reason why there has been so much discussion on it, both in our County Associations and in the Congregational Union. It will be fresh in the recollection of our readers that the subject was brought before the Union in May, 1872, and again last October, at Nottingham, and was further adjourned until the Union meet again, as it will in a few days, at Ipswich. We cannot think that these delays are an occasion for pure regret. For there is health in discussion, and a little delay is not always dangerous. We may as well hasten slowly, believing, as we do, that

if a thing be right, and rooted in great principles, there can be little doubt that it will ultimately commend itself to our Churches. But we do hope that the discussion expected to take place at Ipswich this very month, will be a complete one. There will then have been enough said, and it will be time for our ministers and deacons to go home and affirm, "The principle of Church Councils is right. We are to 'bear each other's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.' We are to 'love one another, not in word only, but in deed and in truth. We see now that the strong can no more live without the weak, than the weak can stand without the strong. We share one Divine life, and therefore should share each other's joys, and duties, and difficulties."

Of course there are many prejudices, and some real difficulties in the way of the establishment of such councils as we desire; and some have opposed them as neither lawful nor expedient—as neither warranted by our principles, nor called for by our circumstances. But no one can become acquainted with the inner life of some of our Churches without being painfully aware that they are suffering from evils which might have been prevented by good advice timely taken. Churches have received unsuitable ministers; ministers have found unsuitable Churches; deacons have been unable to gain the confidence of the minister, and the Church has resented the legitimate exercise of the deacon's office; family jars have been allowed to make yet greater discords in Church life, and neighbours' differences have become roots of bitterness to trouble all good men. There has been no oil of Christian forbearance and self-repression poured into the fine gear of our Church order, and so the wheels within wheels have worked together only to make confusion worse confounded.

Yet all this might have been avoided if the beginnings of difficulty had been watched, and Christian advice given and received. This stands to common sense. It is the manly, as well as the Christian way of settling a difference, or of deciding on a course of united action. How many a Church, now in the depths of a great darkness, almost a despair, might have lived and worked in light and joy, if some slight misconception, or unconscious suspicion, or incipient jealousy, had been candidly expressed before an impartial friend, and his calm judgment allowed to clear away the mists. Our Church machinery is not coarse and clumsy; it is fine, quick, sensitive, and needs every sort of skill to keep it working smoothly; and if, sometimes, those who have it in charge are baffled by an unexpected hitch,

why may they not send for some experienced machinist, who can detect the jarring hinge, and apply the lubricating oil? Surely, on the ground of expedience, we should heartily welcome whatever will aid the orderly progress of our work.

But some have said, and it was very strongly said at Nottingham last October, that any system of Church Councils is contrary to the liberty and Independency of our Churches. Well, it seems like a truism to say that we have always been on the side of liberty. Our very existence is an assertion of liberty. We have claimed freedom, and to keep it have suffered ecclesiastical persecutions, and civil disabilities, and social contempt and reproach. When we refuse to speak for liberty we shall give the lie to our noblest traditions, and shall cut away the very root idea of our life. We are bound by all sacred ties to maintain the freedom of the individual soul in all its spiritual experiences, and no less to guard the freedom of the individual Church in all its varied life. All this is a twice-told tale, and to write about it seems like threshing straw or fighting smoke.

But what is liberty in Church life? It is not lawlessness. What is Independency? It is not separatism. Liberty should be guarded by sacred sanctions, and founded on laws whose majesty is inviolable. The blind hysterics of Fenianism were not liberty. The blood-red frenzies of the first French Revolution, and the chaotic fiery tumult of the more recent Commune, were not liberty. They were outrages on the name, done in the name, of liberty. Of course, these illustrations are extreme, and the strongest we could find, and must not be applied to our subject too literally. But in many of our Churches much has been called liberty which was nothing but schoolboy heat, and supercilious contempt for all the teaching of experience, and the force of public opinion. Some Independents seem to think that freedom means a self-willed persistence in meaningless opposition, and in erratic courses of action, and in irrational methods of work. But liberty grows best in the soil of law; and it is none the less liberty when it yields to the pressure of maturer thought, or takes the counsel gathered from experience, or gives up its self-will for the benefit of others. We are partakers of a common life, and are bound to live in one another and for one another. The words of Paul are still radiant with beautiful meaning: "We are members one of another." The fellowship of our Churches is as precious as their freedom; their community is as sacred as their liberty; their mutuality is as real as their independence;

and while Church Councils will help us to realise this oneness in our life, it is difficult to see how they will interfere with our true liberty.

It has been said that these Councils will act on our Churches like a standing menace, producing a chronic irritation : they are supposed to be like a red flag waved before a bull, or like the coat-tail on which the Donnybrook Irishman invites his neighbours to tread, so that he may have some pretext for a fight. If this objection had not been seriously put, it would hardly need a serious answer. Surely nobody supposes that as soon as it becomes possible for a Church to settle any difficulty by an appeal to a Council, the Church will instantly rake up some occasion of quarrel. Why, the very existence of the conciliar system will tend to repress bitter feeling, and self-seeking, and unseemly speech. Men will be anxious not to place themselves in a false position. Indeed, we do not want to quarrel. Good men love peace, and are pained by finding themselves in any opposition. But the whole objection proceeds on a false conception of the province of Church Councils, and the matters of which they are to take cognizance. We do not desire to call them into existence merely to settle petty disputes or contemptible acrimonies. We desire them to aid the development of our highest life, and by holy stimulus, and wise organisation, to build up the body of Christ. They must touch and control the best things. The mission work of a district; the intercommunion of Churches; the choice, invitation, or settlement of ministers; the ordination of pastors; the encouragement of discouraged Churches; the more systematic support of our colleges; the supply and recommendation of students to fill our colleges; the happy retirement of those who have worked long, and deserved well of the Churches: these, and other high matters, parts of our best life, should come under their notice; and thus they would help us to "grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ, making increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

It is very gratifying to see that several County Associations have already taken action in this matter. Hampshire, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, and the West Riding of Yorkshire, have formulated their schemes. They are not identical, and this is good; for there are many kinds of life in England, and the order suitable for one district might not be the best for another. If we may single out one for commendation, that of Lincolnshire seems to have in it a happy

elasticity and facility of adaptation to varying needs. The Association provides a committee of selection, consisting of three persons only; and upon the application of any Church or Churches for the aid of a Council, this committee selects the men and the number most suitable for the case. When the decision is given, the Council expires, thus avoiding even the appearance of a permanent and irresponsible central authority.

We therefore plead for the general use of Church Councils on every ground. They are manly; they are expedient; they will conserve our liberty; they will give shape and strength to our highest life; they will bring peace to the people; they will give harmony, as well as volume, to the voice with which we publish salvation, and bring good tidings of good; they will carry us back to apostolical precedent; and they will embody, in strength and beauty, that spirit of holy love which burned in the heart, and breathed in the teachings, of our Divine Master. May He send out His light and truth to lead us, that so our Churches may rise into the fulness of His life, and stand before the world "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners!"

HATFIELD HOUSE.

ONE remarkable feature of English history is the way in which important events and influences cluster round some great house; and there are few things which so vividly bring before us the fulness of English life as the associations belonging to such princely residences as Chatsworth, Trentham, Belvoir, and Walmer: they are a part of our national life we shall not willingly let die.

Hatfield House, represented in our engraving, has a history reaching back to the times of the Saxon kings, when Hatfield Manor was a royal property. But its early honours fade before its later glories, when, in Tudor times, it was associated with one of the crises of our history. In the eleventh century the Manor was granted by the Crown to Ely Abbey; and in 1108 passed into the hands of the Bishop of Ely, who built a substantial and beautiful palace, of which some remains stand to this day. When Henry VIII. laid his hands right and left on church property and monastic hoards, Hatfield Manor and Palace came again to the Crown, and the Palace was assigned as the peculiar residence of Henry's son Edward.

Here the delicate, consumptive boy pursued those quiet studies he loved so well ; and here he was living when his father died, and he was called, in troublous times, to wear a crown.

¶ After the untimely death of Edward, the Princess Elizabeth was



HATFIELD HOUSE.

sent to Hatfield Palace, where she was really a prisoner, during the strange, dark days of Mary's reign. Then England seemed to struggle as men struggle in a horrid dream ; and if she woke, it was not to the peaceful light of dawn, but to the darkness of a night

wherein neither moon nor stars appeared. "That fierce light which beats upon a throne" seemed to reveal in Mary Tudor nothing but a moral deformity, relieved only by that love for her husband which the historian Motley has depicted in a few graphic sentences: "Tyrant, bigot, murderess though she was, she was still woman; and she lavished upon her husband all that was not ferocious in her nature. Forbidding prayers to be said for the soul of her father, hating her sister and her people, burning bishops, bathing herself in the blood of heretics, to Philip she was all submissiveness and feminine devotion. It was a most singular contrast, Mary the Queen of England, and Mary the wife of Philip. Small, lean, and sickly; painfully near-sighted, yet with an eye of fierceness and fire; her face wrinkled by care and evil passions, still more than by time; with a big man's voice, whose harshness made those in the next room tremble; yet feminine in her tastes, skilful with her needle, fond of embroidery work, striking the lute with a touch remarkable for its science and feeling, speaking many languages, including Latin, with fluency and grace; most feminine, too, in her constitutional sufferings, hysterical of habit, shedding floods of tears daily at Philip's coldness, undisguised infidelity, and frequent absences from England—she almost awakens compassion, and causes a momentary oblivion of her identity."

But "the darkest hour is just before the dawn," and "man's extremity is God's opportunity;" and God had not forgotten England, nor overlooked the blood of martyrs which reddened English ground, nor shut His ears to the cries of martyrs which rose from English lips. In Hatfield Palace God was training a woman for His right hand. Elizabeth was living there when the news came to her of Mary's death and England's freedom. There is still standing a majestic oak tree, under which the young queen sat while awaiting a military escort to London. The Palace has gone, but the tree remains, a symbol, in its vigorous life and green beauty, of that national life which, in Elizabeth's reign, "burst the enfolding gloom" with more than youthful vigour, and crowned itself with the imperishable beauties of poetry, heroism, and wisdom. Never since then have the English people touched a higher point; but although the descendants of the men of that day may not inherit their genius, let us hope they will never fail of their faith and courage.

James I. sold the Palace and Manor to the Cecils; and Sir Robert Cecil, afterwards first Earl of Salisbury, took down the old building,

and erected Hatfield House, much as it stands at present. It is a large brick structure, enriched with stone, and consists of a centre and projecting wings, with turrets at the angles. The most striking features are the rich Grecian colonnade in the centre, and the lofty surmounting tower. It contains a valuable collection of pictures and curiosities. In 1835 it suffered considerable damage by fire, and a tragic importance was given to the event by the death, in the fire, of the Dowager Marchioness of Salisbury. After that it was restored and beautified, at a cost of £50,000, and was visited in 1846 by Queen Victoria.

CORAL ISLANDS.

BUT how does the coral ever rise above the surface of the water, and turn into hard stone? Of course the coral polypes cannot build above the high tide mark; but the surf which beats upon them piles up their broken fragments, just as a sea beach is piled up, and hammers them together with that water hammer which is heavier and stronger than any you have ever seen in a smith's forge. And then, as is the fashion of lime, the whole mass sets and becomes hard, as you may see mortar set; and so you have a low island a few feet above the sea. Then sea birds come to it, and rest and build; and seeds are floated thither from far lands; and among them almost always the cocoa-nut, who loves to grow by the sea shore, and groves of cocoa palms grow up upon the lonely isle. Then, perhaps, trees and bushes are drifted thither before the trade-wind; and entangled in their roots are seeds of other plants, and eggs or cocoons of insects; and so a few flowers and a few butterflies and beetles set up for themselves upon the new land. And then a bird or two, caught in a storm and blown away to sea, finds shelter in the cocoa-grove; and so a little world is set up in which (you must remember always) there are no four-footed beasts, nor snakes, nor lizards, nor frogs, nor any animals that cannot cross the sea.

And on some of these islands they may live (indeed there is reason to believe they have lived) so long, that some of them have changed their forms, according to the laws of Madam How, who sooner or later fits each thing exactly for the place in which it is meant to live, till upon some of them you may find such strange and unique

forms as the famous cocoa-nut crab, which learned men call *Bergus latro*. A great crab he is, who walks upon the tips of his toes a foot high above the ground. And because he has often nothing to eat but cocoa-nuts, or at least they are the best things he can find, cocoa-nuts he has learnt to eat, and after a fashion which it would puzzle you to imitate. The sailors used to say that he climbed up the stems of the cocoa-nut trees, and pulled the fruit down for himself, but that, it seems, is not quite true.

What he really does is this. When he finds a fallen cocoa-nut, he begins tearing away the thick husk and fibre with his strong claws, and he knows perfectly well which end to tear it from, namely, from the end where the three eyeholes are, which you call the monkey's face, out of one of which, you know, the young cocoa-nut tree would burst forth. And when he has got to the eye-holes, he hammers through one of them with the point of his heavy claw. So far, so good: but how is our friend to get the meat out? He cannot put his claw in. He has no proboscis like a butterfly, to insert and suck with. He is as far off from his dinner as the fox was when the stork offered him a feast in a long-necked jar.

What, then, do you think he does? He turns himself round, puts in a pair of his hind pincers, which are very thin, and with them scoops the meat out of the cocoa-nut, and so puts his dinner into his mouth with his hind feet. And even the cocoa-nut husk he does not waste; for he lives in deep burrows which he makes like a rabbit, and being a luxurious crab, and liking to sleep soft in spite of his hard shell, he lines them with a quantity of cocoa-nut fibre, picked out clean and fine, just as if he was going to make cocoa-nut matting of it. And being also a clean crab, as I hope you are a clean little boy, he goes down to the sea every night to have his bath and moisten his gills, and so lives happy all his days, and gets so fat in his old age, that he carries about his body nearly a quart of pure oil.—*Charles Kingsley*.

VOLUNTARYISM, created by a passionate love for Jesus Christ, had been the means of evangelising Wales, which owed very little to the parochial system. The parish churches have answered much the same purposes as were served by our ancient castles—levying black mail, and adding a little to the picturesqueness of the scenery.—*Rev. J. Morlais Jones*.

THE BISHOP AND THE METHODISTS.

THE Bishop of Lincoln has—to use an elegant expression—“put his foot into it.” That right reverend gentleman is an able, earnest, and conscientious prelate; but withal, as “The Times” expresses it, full of all that is “curious, quaint, and exploded.” Among other “exploded” fables to which he clings with soul-consuming devotion, is this: that the test and touchstone of the true Church is to be found in episcopal church government and “apostolical succession.” He might just as well affirm that the sole and infallible test of a Christian is, that he has red hair and only one eye. But for the present we let that pass.

Not content, however, with holding these fictions for himself, he is eagerly desirous of converting all the world to the same belief, and in his diocese, unfortunately for him, there is a very large number of Methodists, on whom the bishop has, doubtless, cast a compassionate gaze, and whom he has often longed to gather into the fold of Anglican orders and apostolical succession. A favourable opportunity—so the bishop thought—for the gratification of this benevolent wish, recently presented itself. A clergyman in the diocese, it appears, was horrified to find that a tombstone had been erected in the churchyard, which bore an epitaph that it was in commemoration of the worth of “a happy labourer in the Wesleyan Methodist Church.” This stone became to the incumbent “a stone of offence,” and he applied to his diocesan for advice as to how he was to proceed. Should he efface the memorial, or should he remove the gravestone? After grave consideration of the momentous alternative, the bishop advised the clergyman, that “to remove a gravestone once placed in a churchyard, in the presence of the sexton, would require a faculty, and might lead to a legal process, of which it is not easy to foresee the issue.” But, in order that so stupendous an offence might not pass without a fitting rebuke, the bishop further instructed the incumbent as follows:—“Liberate,” he said, “your conscience. Disabuse your people of erroneous notions. Imitate the Apostle Paul, who saw a heathen altar at Athens, and took a text from it, and preached a sermon upon it. Use that inscription in your churchyard as a subject for one or more sermons to your people on the present relation of Wesleyanism to the Church, and on the sin and unhappiness of schism.” And the bishop himself

uses the opportunity for telling Methodists in general, and those of Lincolnshire in particular, that they are guilty of the sin of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, in their separation from the Established Church.

Even the proverbial meekness of our long-enduring Wesleyan Methodist friends was not proof against such an assault, and more than half-a-dozen replies have been issued. One of the ablest of these is by the Rev. John Brewster, of Sleaford, and is characteristically entitled, "Advice to the Bishop of Lincoln, in his trouble over a Methodist Tombstone,"* and some extracts from it we leave to speak for themselves:—

"My lord, it is unfortunate that your pastoral should have been conceived in a grave-yard, and meditated over a tombstone! It smells of the dead. The dust of dead theories lies thick upon it. Its wail is for the departed age. Its grief is for the living present. It sounds like a funeral dirge over days never to return. . . .

"The counsel of your lordship over the gravestone to the incumbent, was insulting to us, whom you style 'Brethren beloved in the Lord.' 'The Scribes, Pharisees, and hypocrites,' so dreadfully denounced by our Lord, in Matt. xxiii. 29, for building the tombs of the prophets, 'whom their fathers slew;' and 'garnishing the sepulchres of the righteous,' whom their fathers persecuted, were moderate and gracious compared with your lordship. You will not even 'garnish the sepulchre of a righteous man.' That which we esteem as an appropriate memorial of our brother departed in the Lord, you have seized and shaped into a tool to dig up the dead to denounce the living. And standing in the grave, with uplifted hands, defiled by the touch, you call to us, 'Come back, brethren, beloved in the Lord.' What! exchange the green pastures of Methodism for a grave-yard! . . .

"You ask, 'Would John Wesley acknowledge Wesleyanism as his own work?' No, my lord. Most certainly he would not. But lifting up his hands, as he did when he surveyed Methodism a short time before he died, he would exclaim, 'What hath God wrought!'

"You ask, 'Would John Wesley be a Wesleyan?' Most certainly! And would give vent to the out-gushing of his own devout feelings, similar to those of that bright moment when his spirit took its flight to glory, and exclaimed, 'The best of all is God is with us!'

* London: Whittaker & Co., Ave Maria Lane. Price Threepence. Fourth edition.

“My lord, that great moralist, Dr. Johnson, observes, ‘When there is yet shame there may in time be virtue.’ It refreshes me exceedingly to find indications of a virtuous shame in your pastoral. It must have cost you a great effort to make the admission against your own Church, as she was in the days of Wesley. It is also a sign of returning life to hear you say, ‘Let me add, in Christian truth and love, that we ourselves in the Church of England have need of you, and that you have need of us.’ Most heartily as I believe in the sincerity of your heart when you uttered these words, yet I cannot respond to them in the affirmative. It gives me pain to say in reply, ‘My lord, we have no need of you; we are better without you than with you.’ Methodism did without you in the days of infancy; she can dispense with your presence in the might of her mature age. With his pastoral crook John Wesley went over the brook alone, but now he is spread into bands. His flocks and his herds and little ones have become innumerable. And now that the prelates advance to meet us with offers of their help to drive the flocks, we must, like Jacob to his brother Esau, decline with thanks, lest my lord should ‘overdrive.’”

In drawing to a conclusion, Mr. Brewster says: “You ask, ‘May I not venture to inquire whether even in secular respects your present position is secure?’ Secure as the Bank of England, my lord, or as Her Majesty’s Three per Cent. Consols! We may venture to suggest that this is not a good time to risk our property on board your state craft. We thank you for the hint; but now the policy of your insurance is high, and we are cautious. A short time ago we saw your ship labouring dreadfully in the storm on the Irish sea. It grieved us much to see so much rich cargo cast overboard, and your Irish crew and passengers put adrift. We ‘stood off and on,’ as the sailors say, in our good gallant ship, ‘The John Wesley,’ well found, well manned, well rigged, and well commanded, but we could not render you any help. To ask us now about the safety of our cargo is not opportune. Signs of a coming storm nearer home are gathering over you. Clouds and darkness are covering the heaven. We hear the first faint roar of a mighty tempest. Your ship does not obey her helm. There is the lee shore of Rome, and you are drifting. On the other tack there are breakers, of which we see the angry foam. And, worse than all, there is mutiny on board. But, as your kind inquiries after the safety of our property demand reciprocity of feeling, I assure you, my lord,

that when the crisis comes, whether the old ship founder amidst the storm, or go down in a calm, 'The John Wesley' shall be as near as possible, to drop a boat and render you all the assistance in her power."

We can only hope that the good and great bishop (and we believe him to be both), as he drives through the villages of his diocese, and sees everywhere the walls placarded with bills announcing the offer of "Advice in his trouble over a Methodist Tombstone," may be awakened from his mediæval dreams, and learn that he is living not in a world of such dead shams as those on which he builds his Church, but of living and Divine realities; and may find that while figments of ecclesiasticism will fade away and die, the grace of Christian charity must last for ever.

THOUGHTS—GRAVE AND GAY.

AN old farmer said to his sons: "Boys, don't you ever spekerlate or wait for something to turn up. You might just as well go an' sit down on a stone, in the middle of a medder, with a pail atwixt your legs, an' wait for a cow to back to you to be milked."

He who takes an eel by the tail, or a woman by the tongue, is sure to come off empty-handed.

The Liberals, when in power, live upon a policy; the Tories, when in power, live upon exigencies; and the latter, so far as the national interests are concerned, are often quite equal to the former.

A correspondent of the "Gardener's Magazine" writes as follows:—"On the 15th of April last, a young man, employed near bees, had the misfortune of being stung. No remedy being near at hand, I remembered Mr. Gordon's note on the cure of bee-stings, at page 461 of the 'Gardener's Magazine' for 1872. I recommended him to apply the common soil to the wound, as described by Mr. Gordon, and it immediately relieved the pain and prevented the swelling. Such a receipt is of more value than gold to all who have anything to do with bees. I formerly used common blue for bee-stings, but common soil is preferable."

Castor-oil applied to the corn, after paring closely, each night before going to bed, softens the corn, and it becomes as the other flesh. It will cure every time.—*Medical Press and Circular.*

The effect of any truth on our lives will be in proportion to the faith by which it is received in the heart.

Our value in the sight of God is not according to our own worth, but according to the price He has paid for us.

Multitudes of hearts are like unto the inn at Bethlehem: there is room for much store and many people, but no place for the infant Christ Jesus.

The child is often most strongly tempted to open gates which have been specially interdicted. If nothing had been said about them, probably he would not have cared to open them. "Thou shalt not" often quickens what it was meant to allay or restrain; so that, again and again we are thrown upon the expression—"What the law could not do in that it was weak."

What contributed the most powerfully to the propagation of the Christian Church, was not so much the miracles the early saints performed, as the holy lives they led. They were angels upon earth. If we lived as they did we should bring the whole world into the faith of Jesus Christ by the force of our example alone.—*Chrysostom*.

No man is sorry for his sins, unless he desires mercy.—*Greek Proverb*.

An immoral life is the greatest obstacle to the attainment of Divine truth.—*Chrysostom*.

Death is the last line in the chapter of life.—*Horace*.

When God turns the bottom of the bag upward, all will out. Sin not, therefore, in hope of secrecy; at the last day all packs shall be opened.

Praises of the unworthy are felt by ardent minds as robberies of the deserving.

The wisest habit of all is the habit of care in the formation of good habits.

Let prayer be the key of the morning and the bolt of the evening.

Lies are hiltless swords, which cut the hands that wield them.

Thanksgiving is good—thanksgiving better.

Anyhow, it is certain the [disestablishment] question will never slumber. It belongs to the progress of humanity, and must be determined.—*Prebendary Irons*.

When Jesus Christ came into the world, the Divine ideal became a human reality.—*Neander*.

Practice is the incarnation of faith.—*Donne*.

God often leaves the brightest men in an eclipse, to show that they do but borrow their lustre from His reflection.—*Fuller*.

The golden beams of truth, and the silken cords of love, twisted together, will draw men on with a sweet violence, whether they will or no.—*Cudworth*.

Words cut deeper than swords.—*Old Proverb*.

Love in this world is like seed taken from the tropics, and planted where the winter comes too soon, and it cannot spread itself in flower-clusters and wide twining vines, so that the whole air is filled with the perfume thereof. But there is to be another summer for it yet. Care for the root now, and God will care for the top by-and-by.—*Beecher*.

CHURCH NEWS OF THE MONTH.

THE political Englishman in general (and what Englishman is not political?), and the "political Dissenter" in particular (and what Dissenter is not political?), is living just now in an attitude of expectation. And his expectation may have for a while to wait. The present is, for Parliament and for the Government, holiday time. The issues that spring from a reconstruction of a Cabinet cannot all be developed in a moment or seen at a glance; and there must be a careful adjustment of forces before so vast and complicated a fabric can be made to move safely and well.

True, there are some among us whose faith has been so rudely shaken, that they will believe only what they see; and so long as Mr. Forster remains at the head of a department that is manned by Conservative subordinates, who are only too delighted if they can sow disaffection between Liberals and a Liberal Government, nothing is really secure. To find some dignified position, as the ruler of Ireland or India, where his abilities would find a suitable arena, and where, relieved from his long attack of the "25th clause on the brain," his mental equilibrium would be restored; and then to stir up with a ruthless hand his Tory myrmidons who have cared only how they could plot for the advancement of their sectarian preferences, and how they could arrest national education; then we

might confidently believe that the miserable reaction of the past was to be finally abandoned, and that a policy worthy of a great nation and of an advancing age was about to be inaugurated.

But though till then nothing is sure, we have hope. The accession of Mr. Bright to the ministry is a fact of the highest significance. It is true, as our contemporary, the "Congregationalist," remarks, that "to ask the Government for an immediate explanation of the concessions they are ready to make, would be unreasonable. They have had a worrying and wearing session, and if all the members of the Cabinet have not earned a holiday, they all need it. In November, when Cabinet meetings are resumed, we trust that the future education policy of the Liberal party will receive early and careful attention, and that such conclusions may be reached as will enable the advanced Liberals in the House of Commons, whose confidence in the Government has been shaken, if not destroyed, to return to their allegiance."

"It is incredible," Mr. Dale confidently exclaims in the "Contemporary," "that a Ministry of which Mr. Gladstone is the chief, and Mr. Bright an important member, should continue to pursue the disastrous policy of the last three years. They will not, through fear of the Conservatives and the clergy, perpetuate the injuries which the legislation of 1870 has inflicted on the Nonconformists, impede the development of an effective system of national education, and destroy all hope of reconciliation between themselves and their most loyal and trustworthy supporters."

The organ of the Labourers' Union has been expressing itself with regard to the relation of the clergy to the labourer:—"The charge," it says, "we make against the clergy is that they have been content to live in luxury while the poor around them were living in wretchedness, privation, and misery. And they have but aided their demoralisation, by their capricious distribution of petty charities, when they should have raised a voice against the social iniquity which condemned them to a life of hopeless and ill-paid, and incessant and slavish toil. They have taught the labourers to order themselves lowly and reverently to all their betters, to bow or curtsy to the upper classes, but they have never held forth to them the hope of emancipation from the degradation in which, by virtue of low wages, they were forced to live. The present uprising of the serfs to reach a nobler manhood has not only been almost wholly unaided by the Church, but it has been met by the clergy with

coldness and opposition. . . . A time is coming when men will cast out with scorn a clergy who pander to class prejudices, and have no voice to protest against political injustice and social wrong—who have neither heart nor desire to follow the footsteps of the greatest social Reformer the world has known—One who came to bring light to them that sit in darkness, to put down the oppressor from his seat, and to exalt the humble and meek—One who, with the first words of His Gospel, pronounced a blessing for the poor." Surely such a charge is—in the measure of its truth—deplorable.

The following is an advertisement from the "Church Times":—"Wanted, at once, £50, to rescue 200 souls from Dissent. Of your charity help!" The two hundred souls were those of children attending a Dissenting school!

With all its pretension and arrogance, the "S.P.G." does not appear to flourish in the capital of Madagascar. The Rev. Mr. Pool, of Antananarivo, says: "I do not think success has attended that mission in this capital hitherto, notwithstanding that two 'outings' have been given, headed by military bands, and the most strenuous efforts used. I have good reason to conclude that the average attendance (not including the opening day) has scarcely reached thirty persons."

It is expected that in Tahiti there will be several new churches opened this year. The people in one of the districts on the Peninsula (Puen), are now paying for a new church—even before it is commenced. It is to be built of American wood, by European builders. It will cost them at least £1000, and they do not ask for any assistance from the Government or from any other source. A noble example for home Christians under similar circumstances. It is true that they pay for the building in oranges, but then they could sell their oranges for clothing and for cash, but they forego these advantages for the sake of the cause which many of the people hold dear.

We are glad to learn that Isaac Holden, Esq., has just presented the sum of £660 in aid of the erection of the new church, schools, and residence at Naples, being one-tenth of the estimated cost.

Of the results of the Rev. George Müller's work at Bristol, we may mention that some 33,000 children and adults have been educated; over a quarter of a million of Bibles and Testaments have been

circulated, besides one hundred and sixty-nine thousand smaller portions of the Holy Scriptures. Forty-six millions of tracts and books in various languages have been distributed. As an illustration of the spirit of the contributors to the work, we may mention that one sends a cheque for five hundred pounds, saying:—"I well remember some years ago sending you five shillings, which at the time was a great sum for me. Since then, by God's grace, I have sought to act as a steward, and now I can with more freedom, send you five hundred pounds."

One of the handsomest Congregational churches in the west of England has recently been opened at Tavistock. The architecture is Gothic. There is a tower and spire 133 feet high, a lecture-hall, affording school accommodation for 500 children, an infant-school, and eight commodious class-rooms. The Duke of Bedford grants the site at a nominal rent. The gross cost is rather above £6,000. To meet this the Duke of Bedford gave £2,800, as an equivalent for the old chapel, which his grace required for town improvements. The congregation raised among themselves and friends £1,800, leaving about £1,400 to be raised on the opening day; and by the evening of that day nearly £1,000 of it had been subscribed, the Duke of Bedford, who was much pleased with the church, presenting £500 as a personal gift.

The annual statement of Queen Street Chapel, Wolverhampton, erected in 1866, at a cost of £12,000, the whole of which has been defrayed, shows that this congregation contributes to the maintenance of eight village stations, and during the last year these contributions amounted to more than £900.

The foundation-stone of the Ellington (Union) Chapel, at Ramsgate, was laid on the 19th of August, a large number of people being present. The Rev. F. S. W. Wood, minister of the chapel, gave a statement to the effect that the contract had been entered into for £860, which, with the cost of ground and other expenses, involved them in an outlay of £1,060.

In a populous and busy district called Brampton, situated near Chesterfield, a new church has been erected for evangelistic work, in the midst of a working-class population of 5,000 colliers, miners, and mill-hands. It is a neat and effective Gothic structure, and will seat 300 persons.

A new chapel is now in course of erection at Greasborough, at a

cost of £1,600, exclusive of site. The building will be in the Early English style, and will be capable of seating 500 persons.—The new Congregational chapel at Brightside, Sheffield, has been opened for public worship. This building will seat 700 people. Its style is Italian; its cost, £2,200, the whole of which will be cleared off at once, leaving no burden of debt.—The Church and congregation at Linden Grove, Peckham Rye, have during the past year removed a debt of £500—about £100 of the amount being the product of the labours of the Young Ladies' Working Society.—The Mountpleasant Chapel, Falfield, Gloucestershire, has recently been renovated throughout, at an outlay of £120.—The church at Cheltenham, which was erected twenty-one years ago, has been closed for some weeks for cleaning and alterations. The expenditure amounted to £454, and it was announced at the public tea-meeting, which was held to celebrate the event, that the whole amount had been subscribed. The Rev. Dr. Brown has completed thirty years of his ministry, twenty-three of which have been spent in Cheltenham.

A testimonial has been presented to the Rev. John Browne, B.A., of Wrentham. The annual meeting of the Suffolk Ministers' Benevolent Society was held at Stowmarket, June 20, 1873. After the business of the society was transacted, the chairman, Edward Grimwade, Esq., called upon the Rev. George Snashall to make a statement as to the way in which the testimonial originated. The chairman then presented the Rev. John Browne with two hundred guineas, subscribed chiefly by the Nonconformists of the eastern counties, and a few gentlemen at a distance, as a slight acknowledgment of his persistent and invaluable services to the cause of religious equality for the past twenty-five years.—The Rev. Nicholas Hurry, of Sevenoaks, formerly of Bournemouth and Torquay, has accepted a cordial invitation from the Congregational Church in Wanstead.—The Rev. Halley Stuart has resigned his ministry at the Croft Chapel, Hastings, after a pastorate of ten years, and has accepted the unanimous call to the pastorate of the Caledonian Road Chapel, Islington, vacant by the resignation of the Rev. E. Davies.—The Rev. G. Shaw has terminated his ministry at Brook Street Independent Chapel, Warwick.—The Rev. S. Kennedy, who has relinquished the pastorate of the Church at Dock Street, Newport, has been presented by his friends there with a certificate of life-membership in the Pastors' Retiring Fund, and a purse containing £66.

AUNT FANNY'S TALES.

NO. V.—MY WATER-BABY.

WHAT can be pleasanter than to sit under a sheltering rock, on soft dry sand, with a book beside you that you are too lazy to read, and the mellow glow of a September afternoon all around you; while you watch, alternately, the great masses of white clouds as they roll past, casting beautiful violet shadows over the heaving expanse of blue-green sea; the waves dashing white foam over distant rocks; and a group of children paddling in the wet sand from which you are comfortably protected, but which they enjoy like so many amphibious animals?

With inconvenient clothing tucked up out of the way, the little brown bare legs carry their owners in and out of the sea, and ingeniously-contrived ponds or rivers; while equally brown hands wield spades, bear tin pails containing wonderful sea-monsters, launch wooden boats, or grub in the moist sand for crabs and shells; and the prettiest murmur of happy children's voices mingles with the voice of the sea, and fills the soft autumnal air. When is childhood more completely contented than at the sea-side, where mammas and nurses agree for the time to give up, as impossible, all attempt at "keeping in order," and leave it in a great measure to its own devices, where it may dig without doing mischief, and spoil its clothes to its heart's content? I enjoy watching the graceful little figures, every fresh attitude charming to an artistic eye. Perhaps I do not enjoy it quite so much when they come nearer, and my nephew Charlie begins to dig vigorously, sending a spadeful of fine dry sand into my eyes, and down the back of my neck, while little Polly empties a pailful of small crabs, wet shells, and seaweeds in my lap, with the remark, "They're *curiosities*, Auntie;" followed by Tom, who deposits in the same receptacle a large jelly-fish, and my remonstrances are stopped by loud cries of "Auntie, come—my spade is going out to sea!"

I submit to it all, for I am, as I observed before, an obedient and tractable aunt: there is one thing, however, that I do resist. I will *not* be buried in the sand! though I am informed by my young persecutors that "it is most delightful," and certainly they seem to like the operation.

On this particular afternoon, I was surrounded and called upon for

a story about the sea. I was not unprepared, for a little episode in my past life, which had given me much pleasure and some pain, had been in my mind all that morning. "Yes," I said, "when you are all ready I'll begin; but first, Alice, put on Polly's socks—there they are, under the sand. Tom, let that little crab go; he likes the sea better than your pail. Mab, don't sit on the jelly-fish. Put all the live things back into the sea, and then come and sit still, and I will tell you about my Water-Baby.

"Well, I was once staying at a sea-side place—very much like this, only with higher rocks and larger waves; and it was later in the year, when storms come oftener. That year was a particularly stormy one, and there had been a great many wrecks.

"I could tell you a great many sad and terrible stories about these wrecks. As I used to sit in my little room and listen to the howling wind that shook the windows, and screamed as if it wanted to come in, and to the deep roar of the sea, which I knew was raging and beating against the rocks, I thought of the poor things who were out in it all, and at the mercy of the wind and waves. No; not at their mercy—for, at such times, I used to comfort myself and the sailor's wife, in whose house I lodged, by going for my Bible and reading such words as these: 'Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, Thou stillest them.' And I remembered that our Lord is as kind and loving now as He was when, a man in our world, He stood in the little boat, hushing alike the stormy waves and the fears of His disciples. In the morning I often saw traces on the beach of what had happened in the night—planks, and pieces of wood thrown up on to the rocks, and groups of sailors talking over some fresh disaster. Sometimes I could not sit quietly indoors at night, knowing that there was trouble abroad, and feeling that possibly I might help.

"On one of these occasions I had thrown on a large cloak which covered my head, and wrapping it closely round me, I followed the safflor's wife down to the beach, where crowds were gathered, for a large ship was said to have struck upon the rocks about half a mile off.

"It was dark as pitch, and impossible to hear what any one said, or to make oneself heard; the wind and sea had it all to themselves, and a deafening noise they made. It was almost impossible to walk, but we struggled on down the cliff. We found the beach more sheltered, and lights were flashing here and there upon pale anxious

faces. The great guns, which had been sounding through the storm, were silent, and it was feared that all was over with the gallant ship and her living crew. As we stood, the moon appeared between hurrying clouds, and confirmed our fears. No ship was seen: nothing but rocks and surging waves where she was last seen. An hour passed, but I could not go home, cold as I was, for thinking of the poor drowned or drowning creatures. A boat or raft might yet be washed up, and some of them be saved. Presently a strange-looking object was seen upon the waves, and the incoming tide soon brought it near enough to be caught by the sailors, who eagerly gathered round it. It seemed to be a sort of box, or covered child's cradle, and upon opening it, sure enough there was a baby wrapped in shawls and blankets! alive, but cold and soaked with wet. It was touching to see the tears running down the cheeks of the brave sailors, as they looked at the little living child which the sea had spared and cast ashore. As for the women, they cried and laughed at once, and all wanted to take it. But I pressed forward, crying, 'Give it to me,' and other voices said, 'Give it to the lady.' So it was handed across to me, and I took the little creature in my arms, and pressing it to my heart, covered it with my cloak and ran home, never heeding the sharp rocks and stones over which I stumbled in my haste. My little servant made up the fire and heated the kettle, procuring milk and warm blankets as quickly as I could desire, and then we examined the baby. It was a lovely little girl, apparently about three years old, with thick, curly brown hair and large blue eyes. When it opened them and looked at me, I loved it as if it had been my own; and I determined that it should be my own, if God had seen fit to take away its parents. It had only a little nightgown on, having evidently been taken from its bed.

"'Poor mother!' I said to myself, and tears blinded me as I imagined her anguish as she gave up her baby to the cold night and cold sea, and perhaps died with the sight of the little floating cradle before her eyes. Well, it was a little Ark, and God had mercifully watched over it, and I wiped away my tears to look again at my treasure, for she was cooing to herself in the warmth of the fire, and smiling as if she had never been in danger or trouble. She slept with me that night, and woke well and rosy.

"For the first few days she looked about as if missing some one, and would now and then burst into a fit of crying, calling 'Mamma,' in a piteous manner. But childhood's memory is short, and very

soon my new pet became as happy as a little bird, trotting by my side wherever I went, and prattling in a clear, distinct voice about all she saw. In answer to the question, 'What is baby's name?' she replied readily, 'May.' The servant, however, had already given her the name of 'Little Missy,' and as for me, I had lately been reading a beautiful story, written by Mr. Kingsley, called 'A Water-Baby,' which you shall read some day, and the name seemed exactly to suit this little sea-nymph. For, curiously enough, from the first time that I took her down to the beach, she seemed fascinated by the great waves that had so nearly drowned her. 'Auntie,' she would call, in her little bird-like voice (I wouldn't let her call me Mamma), 'Auntie, come!' and down she would toddle close to the sea, and there she was perfectly happy.

"My Water-baby! how pretty she looked with her little bare feet, and hair blowing in the wind, and how blue her eyes as they sparkled and danced with glee when a wave covered her with foam. She made great friends with the sailors, and they followed her about and did her bidding as if she were a little queen. 'Poor lassie,' they would say, 'it's queer, her being so fond of the sea, when it has been so unkind to her.' But it turned out that it had not been unkind to her at all, but her very good friend. And certainly she loved it. I believe she would have liked to live on the beach. It was, 'Auntie, me want to dig,' or, 'May me sail my boat?' or, 'Me want some shells,' directly she got up; and in the house she covered everything with pebbles, shells, and seaweed.

"My sweet little Water-baby! We were very happy together for two whole months—months much too short. And then, one day, I lost her! She didn't slip into the sea, and disappear like a mermaid, Tom, so you needn't open your eyes so wide; but she went away very properly by the railway, with her own mamma, who wasn't drowned at all. But I must tell you how it happened. You must not think that all this time, because I had been so happy with my darling, that I had not been making inquiries in all directions for her poor mother, or other relatives. I wrote to all my friends. I advertised, and I stayed on at the sea-side, because I thought she would be sought near the scene of the wreck. I had ascertained the name of the ship, and found that it was returning from India, and was lost with most of the passengers and crew. I had even heard from a rescued sailor that a lady and child had been on board, and were both supposed to be drowned.

"One morning, however, as my Water-baby and I were comfortably established on the sands, I observed my little servant, with an agitated face, running down the cliff towards me, and following her a lady—a pretty, fair, delicate-looking young lady. There was no need to tell me who she was, for she had the same blue eyes, the same curly brown hair, the same expression even, as the little three-year-old child, who, turning at the sound of voices, stood staring at us, dragging a piece of seaweed as big as herself. I went forward, and the lady seized my hands; then, without a word hurried on to where the child stood, while I watched them. It was pretty to see how memory gradually returned to the little brain. A rosy colour overspread her face, and the shells and seaweed dropped from her hands; then she held out her arms, and cried 'Mamma!' and in an instant was clasped to the mother's heart.

"So I left them, and returned to my house to prepare for my new guest, and also to hide my own grief at the thought of losing my little baby behind my joy at being able to restore her to her own mother. Soon they came in together, and I heard Mrs. Vyvian's story, and received her warm thanks for my care of her child. Indeed, her gratitude and happiness overcame us both, and it was some time before I could understand her account; especially as May kept interrupting us with remarks about her 'new frock,' her 'ittle crabs,' and her 'sea-nemonies. She by no means approved of sentiment, and with a child's absence of surprise and pretty confidence, she evidently took her mother's presence after the first half-hour as naturally as if she had never left it. She submitted willingly enough to the kisses showered upon her, but presently remarked, 'Me want to dig now,' adding, to my inward delight, 'Come, Auntie.' But Mrs. Vyvian was not jealous; she knew she should soon have her little daughter all to herself, and that I should be left alone, and I'm sure she pitied poor 'Auntie.'

"When the child was in bed, I heard Mrs. Vyvian's story. She was returning from India on account of her ill-health, leaving her husband (a captain in the army) with his regiment, and bringing her child with her. The ill-fated vessel had struck on the rocks suddenly, and the mother, expecting death for herself every instant, had made a last attempt to save her little one. However, Mrs. Vyvian with some more were subsequently put into a boat, and after many hours of danger were picked up by an outward-bound ship. Every

attention was paid them, but the cold and fatigue and fear of that terrible night, acting upon a delicate frame, brought on, in Mrs. Vyvian's case, a severe illness. For weeks she was delirious, and could give no account of herself, but at last she had been left, feeble and exhausted, in her husband's care once more in India. Together they returned to England as soon as she was fit to travel, and they soon found out my whereabouts.

"Next day Captain Vyvian came, and they both stayed with me a week, gave substantial gifts to the sailors, and to all who had been kind to their little girl, and then they all went away, and I was left alone.

"They went back to India before long; I often heard from them, and they would have overwhelmed me with presents in their gratitude, but I would accept nothing but a locket containing a little lock of curly brown hair, and a miniature picture of my 'Water-Baby.'"

THE PROTESTANT CONFSSIONAL:

ITS MORAL FOULNESS.

BY REV. H. T. ROBJOHNS, B.A.

BUT we have now to deal with this hateful thing, not only in connection with open Popery, but it has, like a disgusting toad, squatted itself within the precincts of the English Church. For years confession has been, with some amount of privacy, practised and commended within the Protestant pale. Now it marches out unblushingly to the light of day, and has appeared with its manifesto in the Court of Convocation, asking by no means for life—since life it has—but demanding greater power and prevalence. Are English Christians going to stand it? True, in the Established Church confession is not made compulsory, nor is habitual confession considered desirable; but there, in the English Church, is this detestable and impious thing. The question for us is not how much of it we will have, how often we will have it, but whether we will have it at all. What do you say, dear reader, so far as your influence extends?

One of the difficulties of dealing with this subject is, that it is so loathsome in itself that we cannot speak of it, according to its dread demerits, without defiling our page and lowering our own self-respect. Some who, for the sake of truth and ultimate purity, have dared to stand before English audiences and tell what they know to be within the fearful reality, have been persecuted unto death by people who would not, perhaps could not, believe their words. It is vain that advocates of confession say that these "unfruitful works of darkness," "these things which are done of them in secret," of which "it is a shame even to speak," are the fictions of a wicked Protestant imagination; for they are branded on the pages of history, and are to be read in the inhuman, devilish volumes, which have been written to guide the priests in the discharge of their shameless and shameful functions—I was going to say duties! I have, lying before me now, facts which I dare not set down here, for if I did, this magazine would be given that moment to the burning.

But let any one consider a moment what the effect on the mind of the priest must be. Unhappily there are occasionally in the newspapers accounts of gross scandals—details have been allowed to creep in. Before we are aware, we find ourselves reading. Sometimes curiosity tempts us on. We rise from the reading tainted; the good order and balance of the mind disturbed; the evil in human nature inflamed; soon to regret, and that perhaps for days, that, being off our guard, we did read this demoralising and degrading episode of depraved life. This will enable us to understand what must be the effect of the confessional on the priest. Where we inadvertently read one such scandal he hears hundreds; told in all their disgusting details, for confession of sins must be with all the circumstances attending them; told into his ear closeted alone with the sinner—female it may be—and he instructed to ask questions, with the view of getting out the uttermost truth, which search the most remote mysteries of human life as with an infernal dissecting knife, and which make the reader of them—and we have read them—creep with horror. Is it any wonder that priests, in those countries where priestcraft has full swing, are the most depraved of human beings? We know enough of their vices and crimes, but not a hundredth part is ever told to the world; for families wronged, the Church disgraced, governments imperilled, combine to bury villainies in eternal silence.—No, not eternal!

The grace of God is equal to protect the priest in the discharge of

his duty? Does any one assert that? The grace of God is almighty—but is surely not available for men who deliberately plant themselves on the edge of this yawning abyss, not in the fulfilment of duty, but in violation of all the healthy instincts of human nature, in contradiction to the law of God, and in a relentless antagonism to His blessed Gospel.

If the effects upon the priest are such as I describe, what must be the results in the experience of the people? Disastrous in the extreme. To begin at the beginning: such arguments as are adduced to persuade into the confessional are lowering to the authority of the Word of God, and tend to the exalting of human opinion and tradition: The doctrine at the back of the practice is flatly contradictory of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The New Testament reveals to sinful man forgiveness of sins—full, free, perfect—through the blood of the Lamb, on the condition of “repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ;” but here we have absolution at the lips of a human priest on condition of confession into his ear. The two cannot stand together for an hour. Nothing can be more opposed, moreover, than the simplicity of the Gospel and the complexity of this new-made system. The Gospel is so simple that a child may understand its elements; but this runs up into the involved fooleries of soul regeneration by water through the priest, confirmation by the priest, the eating and drinking Christ literally through the jugglery of the priest, and introduction to immortality by extreme unction at the hands of the priest. Priest first, priest last, and priest everywhere!

But the moral effects of the confessional must ever seal its fate in the esteem of all the intelligent and good. The results must be evil. We have already seen that there is required “a minute and circumstantial disclosure of all the circumstances of sin, without which the sacred physician cannot be qualified to apply the remedy.” The penitent is likely enough to omit this; and so forms of question have been drawn up, for the use of confessors, of the vilest character. The frightful result of such a procedure may be more easily imagined than described. The knowledge of sin in its most loathsome forms is given to thousands, who, ere they approach the confessional, are comparatively innocent. Nor is this all. In time the penitent becomes familiar with these atrocities, till all virgin purity of soul is gone. The knowledge of vice is bad enough, but familiarity with it is ten thousand times worse.

I am far from exhausting the argument against the confessional. All that can here be done is to bring to the front these two indisputable facts, viz., that the confessional is the enemy of the Gospel, and the ruin of the morals of any people. Much, however, might be said of the way in which it breaks down all independence of mind; of the certainty with which it would produce the sickliest and most miserable piety, in those cases in which worse results did not appear; of its dangerous interference with the privacy and sanctity of domestic life; and of its fearful character as an engine of political and ecclesiastical despotism. But, enough! I repeat my question:—Are we English Christians going to stand it? I hope not. I pray not. But, unless I am much mistaken, we can not only rebel against this foul foreign importation, we can purge it from our midst, certainly out of the bosom of the English Church. I will tell you how.

First, let every English Christian set his face against the confessional, like a flint. Let him mount guard over his household, and allow no black priest prowling about the premises, with a view to entrapping wife, child, or servant into the confessional den. A friend of mine says he will horsewhip the very first that comes within reach of a splendid hunting-whip that hangs ever ready in his hall. I would not, myself, advise this course; but a hint may be taken from the conduct of the grand old Quaker in "Uncle Tom's Cabin." The emergency was critical. "Friend," said Phineas, suddenly stepping to the front, and meeting him with a push from his long arms, "thee isn't wanted here." Further, let every man who has a well-grounded horror of the confessional, denounce it in private and in public, in pulpit and on platform, until people are awakened out of their perilous sleep of mistaken charity, and rise in the greatness of English might to stamp the practice out once and for ever.

One way there is of ending the mischief, and a thousand kindred mischiefs. Go straight for the disestablishment of the English Church. When once the day of self-government dawns, the members will no longer be at the mercy of priests and priestlings, will be able to check their folly, and enforce conformity to the English mind and will. Priests hanker after the confessional, and are able at present to toy with the pernicious thing; but the heart of the English people is sound, and, had they the power, they would soon stay this dreadful plague.

BEGIN SOMEWHERE.

SOMEWHERE in a charming little story called "What Katy Did," a queer little boy tries keeping a journal. His courage held out until he had made ten entries, of which these are the last :

"March 24.—This is Sunday. Corn befe for dinnir. Studded my Bible lesson. Aunt Issy said I was gredy. Have resollved not to think so much about things to ete. Wish I was a beter boy. Nothing pertickler for tea.

"March 25.—Forgit what did.

"March 27.—Forgit what did.

"March 29.—Played.

"March 31.—Forgit what did.

"April 1.—Have dissided not to kepe a jurnal enny more."

This is New Year's Day—I mean the day on which I write, not the day on which you will read ; and though so far as we can see, the old earth lumbers along just the same as before, without any jars to signify the switching on to a new track, yet we all of us have a very strong feeling that something old comes to an end, and something new begins. And nearly all of us, I suppose, feel like hoping the new will be better than the old ; and in some shape or other most of us resolve to make it better. Dorry's Sunday entry in his journal, "Wish I was a beter boy," was a good one so far as it went, even if he did follow it for several days with nothing but "Forgit what did ;" and at the end of the week wrote, "Dissided not to keep a jurnal."

I hope we have all of us resolved to be better boys ; and lest we forget it by the first of February, suppose we stir up each other's minds a little. For one great trouble with us when we resolve to be good, is that we only enlist as soldiers, and then go home and take our ease, instead of saying, "Now I am a soldier, I must begin at once to fight." Or as if the farmer, who finds himself in possession of a poor, rocky farm, should be contented with simply talking of what he meant to do to improve it, without really beginning the work. The farmer, if he is a sensible man, looks over his land carefully, and says, "The greatest trouble with my farm is the stones ; I'll give my attention principally to getting rid of them." And so he does ; he does not forget to cut down the thistles and pull out the weeds, and keep up his fences ; but he gives his main force to his most important work. So don't let us be satisfied with talking

about being good, or even trying it in a general sort of way. Let us look fairly over and through these characters of ours, and see what are the worst faults in them, and then turn our trying in that direction. I have known a girl who had, from unfortunate circumstances, been almost constantly found fault with, and never really helped to do better. She had to make her fight, when she finally began it, all by herself.

"Oh dear!" she said in despair; "I don't know where to begin; it seems to me everything is wrong, from the time I get up in the morning until the time I go to bed at night; and the getting up is as bad as the rest, for I hate it so; I'm always late."

"Very well," said a wise friend, "then I would begin right there, and correct that one fault; you'll be surprised to see how many weeds grow from one seed."

The girl tried it, for she was really in earnest, and to make sure of waking in season, she put away an interesting book and went to bed in season. Not being cross and sleepy, she found time to pray in good earnest, and I think this helped her to awake, sunny and refreshed in the morning. It was a little hard to obey the rising bell directly, and to go straight through her toilet without delay; but she did it, and had time for her morning prayer, and the little golden text to carry in her heart all day.

"Most everything went right," she said to her friend at night. "It seemed as if just getting up in the morning gave me time to get hold of the right end of everything."

And I could tell you of a boy, an honest little Christian, who came to the conclusion, all by himself, that he made other people more trouble by leaving doors open than in any other way; so he set himself at work to overcome that fault. And lo! the little fellow discovered that the thoughtlessness which occasioned his fault came of selfishness; and thinking of the comforts and wishes of others in this one small thing, made him so thoughtful, so generous, and unselfish in many others, that every one in the household saw how he grew in grace.

So let us make a beginning somewhere; at the great things if we can, but by all means let us begin.—*Little Corporal.*

THINK upon sin and repent; think upon God and return; think upon grace and hope; think upon glory and press forward.

JUBILEE HALL.

IN our July number we gave some account of the Jubilee Singers of Fisk University, but were prevented, by want of space, from saying anything about the buildings which are proposed to be erected. Our engraving represents the first portion of an extensive scheme, to be carried out in due time. This building is to be called Jubilee Hall, and will be opened before the close of the present year. It is to cost forty-five thousand dollars, and will contain class-rooms and sleeping apartments for females, and dining-halls for males and females. A second building, with dormitories and class-rooms for young men, will follow; and, in time, all the class-rooms and the library will be transferred to a third building. The enterprise is a right noble one, and reveals a faith and courage we cannot fail to admire. Nor will our admiration be lessened by the fact that in the Southern States there are now no fewer than seven institutions whose aims are identical with those of Fisk University. But the freedmen number 4,000,000, and seven training colleges might provoke the inquiry, "What are they among so many?" especially when we remember the degradation and brutal ignorance in which the negroes lay so long. They have no vantage ground to stand on, but rather seem to be just struggling out of "a horrible pit and a miry clay," and are only beginning to feel their strength after the cramp and exhaustion produced by ages of suffering and bondage.

The ideas of the founders of this institution are well expressed in a letter written by them in the year 1867. They say: "The education of the coloured people is of more importance just now than any other matters pertaining to the political and social relations of the people in the Southern States; and we believe that the best way to permanently establish schools among the coloured people at the south is to establish good normal or training colleges for the education of teachers. . . . Another peculiar object of this school is to illustrate in practice what most educators are willing to admit in theory, that conversion is the proper door into the kingdom of science, as well as into the kingdom of heaven; that those who climb up some other way may add to their weakness and wickedness more frequently than they do to their power or goodness; that

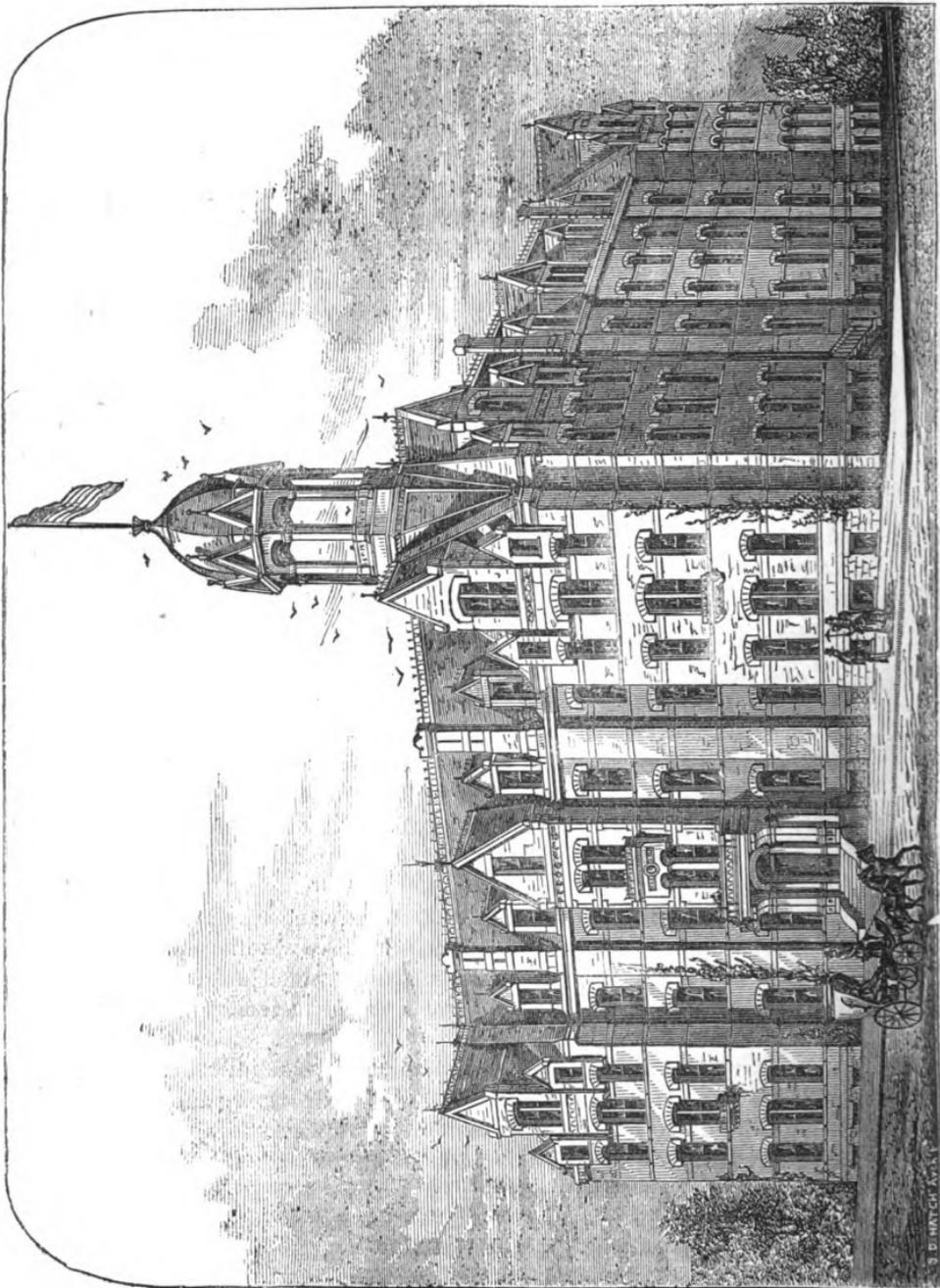
religion can be taught without teaching sectarianism ; that science and religion were made to go hand in hand ; that the two joined are the heaven-appointed means of lighting humanity to its proper standing and true dignity."

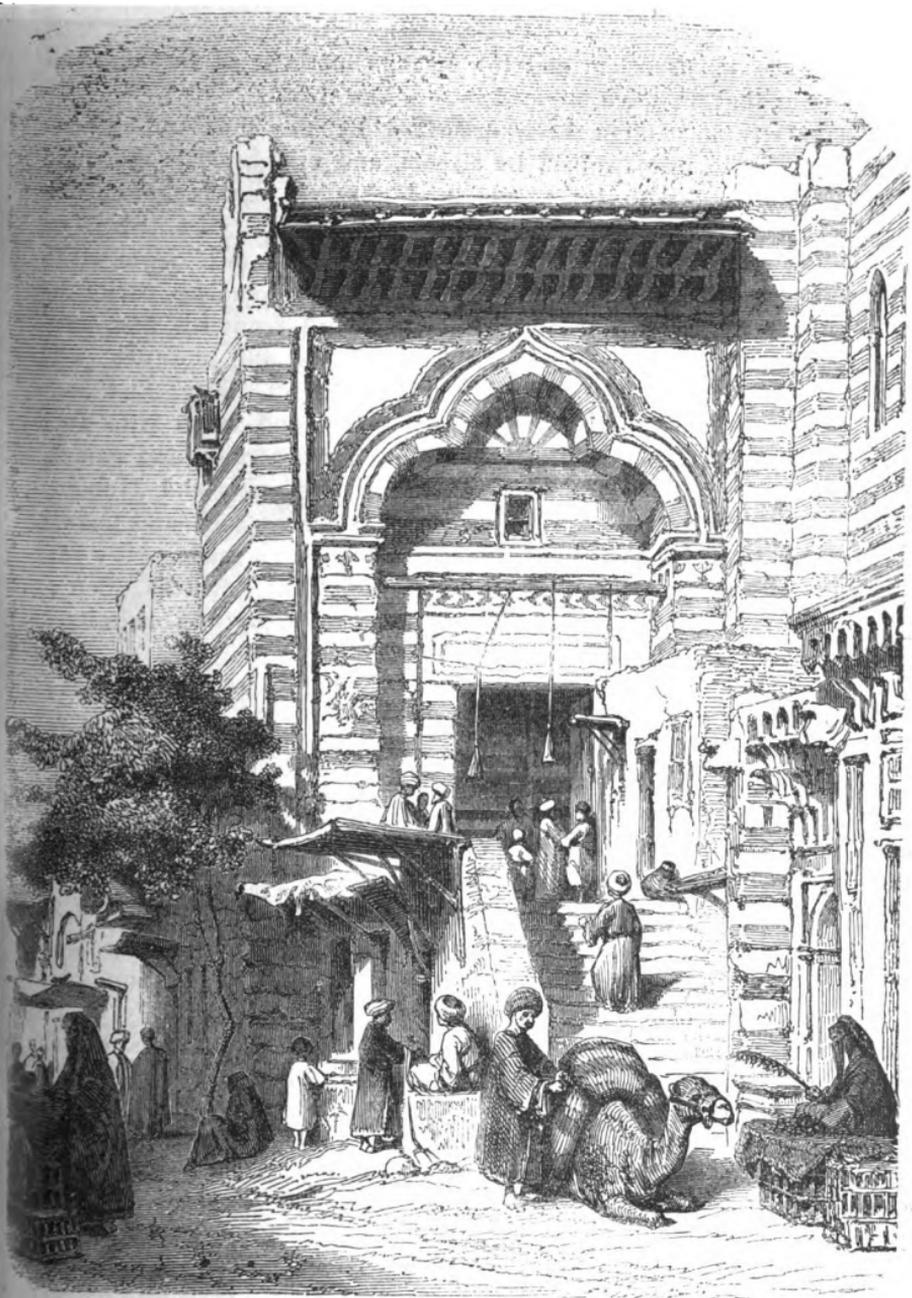
The landscapes on which the windows of Jubilee Hall open are of the fairest kind. Tennessee is said to be more healthful in climate and more various in scenery than most of the other Southern States. It is a fruitful and well-watered garden. Let us hope that the moral wastes created by the blight of slavery will soon blossom with a beauty fairer than the beauty of the woods and hills, and that the millions of negroes waiting for instruction will ever turn towards Tennessee and say, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of them that bring good tidings, that bring good tidings of good!"

LIFE IN CAIRO.

THE city of Cairo touches in many ways both the extreme past and the near present. It is a link between two civilisations, the oldest and the newest. Clustered thickly around it are the same Nile on whose waters Moses was laid ; the same Pyramids whose huge masses greeted the eyes of the captive Joseph ; the few remnants of that city of Or from which Joseph the statesman married his wife ; the same desert trodden by the Israelites in their first day's journey ; and the same sea which opened its waters to give them free passage from the land of bondage.

But the city has connections with more modern days because of its peculiar situation, which makes it a meeting-point for the east and the west. It is the place at which most travellers to Sinai and Palestine make their final arrangements, and definitely exchange western for eastern customs. The city and people are therefore touched by many European influences ; and there is not that complete congruity with their ancient life which would be found in some other eastern cities. Still, we must be struck with the many differences which sharply divide life in Cairo from life in an English town. The architecture, the street groups, the peoples' dresses and attitudes, the rarity of horses, the common sight of asses and camels as beasts of burden,





MOSQUE OF MOYED.

the habits of devotion, and the strange methods of business, all proclaim that we have stepped into a new world.

The city has often been described by the thousand-and-one travellers who have walked its streets, and criticised its mosques, and bargained with its people, and observed its Mohammedan devotions. For a pleasant, racy narrative of a visit there, we would recommend Dr. Norman Macleod's "Eastward," from which we give the following extracts :—"There is an endless variety of quaint tumble-down bits of architecture, with fountains and gateways shutting in the different quarters, while the mosques, with their high walls and airy minarets, overlook all. Ever and anon we saw vistas along narrow crowded lanes, and views into back courts and caravanserais, with such groupings of men and camels, merchants and slaves, horses and donkeys, Bedouins and Nubians, mingled with such brilliant colours from Persian carpets and shawls, such bright lights and sharply-defined shadows, as made every yard in our progress exciting, and tempted us to sit down as often as possible on some bench or shop-front, to enjoy the inimitable picturesqueness of the scene."

Our engraving represents the exterior of the Mosque of Moyed; and, speaking of mosques, Dr. Macleod says: "I need not attempt to describe their external appearance, as illustrations will give a better idea of this than any words could do. In its interior the mosque always struck me as a most impressive place of worship. Perhaps my Presbyterian prejudices dispose me to acquiesce in its perfect simplicity. No statues or pictures are permitted in it; and no seats of any kind are required for people who prefer the floor, which is invariably matted or carpeted, thus giving it, to a European, an air of comfort. Almost the only sign of furniture in it is a pulpit or two, from which the people are addressed occasionally by the Mollah. The mosque is always open, I believe, and is seldom without some worshippers, while at stated times during the day it is well attended. There is the utmost decorum and reverence everywhere visible; no hum of voices is heard, nor even footsteps, nor is there anything visible which can distract or arrest the attention of the worshippers. People of every class scatter themselves throughout the vast area, each man selecting a spot for himself where he can kneel towards the 'Murbah,' or niche which indicates the direction of Mecca, and seems as much absorbed in his duty as if he were in a desert island. Some are sitting cross-legged

and engaged in grave conversation ; while others walk soberly up and down. The whole service, judging of it only by what one sees, gives the impression of worship to an unseen God, which must, when first established, have presented a remarkable contrast to that of the Christian Church as it then was ; and it certainly is a very different thing from that which at Luxor or Karnac once reigned supreme, with a bull or a beetle for its god ! Mohammedanism owes its origin to Judaism and Christianity ; and we, who live in the full blaze of the true light, are apt to undervalue the good obtained from its dimly-reflected beams, which, nevertheless, irradiate spots that otherwise would be outer darkness."

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A PRESCRIBED MEDICINE FOR A COMMON
COMPLAINT.

No. I.

"GOOD evening, Mrs. Arnold."

"Good evening, Miss Hale ;" and the two ladies, whose road lay in the same direction, walked on together, remarking on the beauty of the evening, and the exceeding pleasantness of returning summer.

Mrs. Arnold and Miss Hale were both members of the Church assembling in High Street Chapel, in the town of C——, and were returning from the week-night service. Mrs. Arnold had been a member of that Church for many years. Miss Hale, who was much younger, had been but recently transferred to its fellowship, upon coming to reside in C——.

"What an uncomfortable affair this is between Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Smith," said Miss Hale, lowering her voice. "Do you not think Mrs. Smith is very much in the wrong?"

"If I must give an opinion, I think Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Brown have both been wrong."

"Well, perhaps so—faults on both sides ; it is very generally the case," said Miss Hale.

"It was not of faults on both sides, I was thinking, but of a fault, one and the same fault, into which both of our friends have fallen."

"What might you mean, Mrs. Arnold? I do not quite understand."

"My dear Miss Hale, I mean just this. Our Lord Jesus Christ has given us directions how we are to act in case of offence or injury received: 'If thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone.' This is the first step. 'If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother; but if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church; but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican.' Now, I do not happen to know all the particulars of this unhappy misunderstanding, but I do know that neither Mrs. Brown nor Mrs. Smith attended to this direction. When Mrs. Brown conceived herself injured by Mrs. Smith, she did not go to Mrs. Smith herself to remonstrate, but went to this friend and that, with complaints and accusations. Then Mrs. Smith, when these accusations came to her ears, did not seek explanation from Mrs. Brown, but hurried with her side of the story to minister and deacons. Surely such disregard to a plain direction of our Lord must be wrong!"

"But——" hesitated Miss Hale.

"But what?" inquired Mrs. Arnold.

"Well, you know scarcely any one ever does take that way."

"I am afraid what you say is true; but is not that the strange and evil thing? We call Christ Master and Lord, and yet in this matter, wherein He has given us directions so distinct and explicit, we just take our own way, as though He had never spoken at all."

"But, Mrs. Arnold, many of our Lord's sayings are not to be taken literally."

"Granted. Our Lord taught many things by parables and in proverbs, and doubtless the mere form and letter of His teaching was in a measure moulded by existing circumstances and modes of acting and speaking. But the words He spoke are, as the Lord said Himself, when certain figurative expressions He had used were cavilled against, 'Spirit and life'—true and authoritative in their essential meaning for all times and under all conditions; and woe to us, if we find in the form of the command an excuse for disobedience to its spirit. In this particular instance, however, a literal meaning seems the only one admissible. The words, 'Go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone,' can scarcely mean anything but

simply what they say. At any rate, the most ingenious adept at non-natural interpretations could scarcely discover that they were intended to convey, 'Studiously avoid all communication with the person trespassing against you, and tell the offence to every one you can get to listen to the tale.'

"Well, no," said Miss Hale, "I suppose not. But then you see, Mrs. Arnold, a good many offences arise which are really not worth calling trespasses, or complaining of to the offender."

"True, verily! One scarcely knows whether to laugh or cry because of the utter trivialities in which quarrels will originate, and that amongst us, too, who profess to have been redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, forgiven the ten thousand talents, who call ourselves the children of one Father, say we are looking forward to one home. But, I think, here would be one advantage of a resolute determination to abide by our Saviour's rule. If, on feeling ourselves aggrieved, we went in the first place to the offender, or even seriously thought of so doing, we should be compelled to look at the matter with some measure of fairness, to state the facts as they really occurred, without exaggeration or distortion. Not seldom just doing this might convince us that there had been no trespass after all, only something misunderstood, some unintentional slight, a matter to be passed by and forgotten, not allowed by any means to lessen our charity of feeling and act. On the other hand, if the too common practice is followed, keeping aloof from the offender and talking of the offence to one and another, there is danger on each repetition of little unconscious exaggerations and additions, and a certainty of reawakening feelings of irritation and annoyance. Then some of those who have heard the story are sure to repeat it with additions and misstatements of their own, until—'Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth.' To this one thing we must make up our minds: if an offence is not worth speaking of to the offender, it is not worth speaking of to any one else, and *must not* be so spoken of."

"No doubt you are right, Mrs. Arnold, and it would be much better for the peace of the Church if this rule were observed. I wish it had been in this case. I am so tired of the whole affair, I feel half inclined to leave the chapel, and so hear no more about it."

"My dear friend, you must needs go out of the world if you would escape altogether the strife of tongues. Far better remain where God has placed you, and try, as far as in you lies, to gain the blessedness of the peacemakers."

"A very difficult office, I am thinking. I should ask how such a work is to be set about, had our walk been a longer one," for at this moment Mrs. Arnold's gate was reached.

"Nay, if our walk is ended our conversation need not be. Pray favour me with your company a little longer, I am all alone to-night," said Mrs. Arnold, opening the garden gate.

How the conversation was continued, we will tell in our next.

THE NOTTINGHAM CONFERENCES.

A SERIES of Conferences has recently been held at Nottingham which are likely to lead to important results in that town and elsewhere. The first meetings were connected with the Congregational Institute, and especially with its Annual Assembly and its Triennial Conference of Old Students. At the second, the representatives of the four counties of Nottingham, Leicester, Derby, and Lincoln, met for special prayer and deliberation with regard to a revival of religion in their midst. Representatives of upwards of forty Churches were present; and, after lengthened consideration, various resolutions were adopted, of which the most important were the following:—

"1. That the meeting requests the ministers and deacons of each Church in the counties of Nottingham, Derby, Leicester, and Lincoln, to invite its most earnest members to an early conference to consider how their Church, in all its members, can fulfil the great object for which it was instituted and organised—namely, to make known, privately and publicly, the redeeming truth of Christ, and also to make known His love to the poor, the sick, and the lost in its neighbourhood.

"2. That the Churches in these four midland counties be requested, after due preparation by prayer, to arrange for a series of special evangelistic services during the coming winter, and that the ministers of the four counties be requested to hold themselves ready to respond to any invitations to take part in these services."

It was also decided that similar Conferences should be held in the towns of Derby, Leicester, and Lincoln.

These meetings had scarcely closed when a third series commenced, and the clergy and laity of Christian denominations met, on the

invitation of the Revs. Canon Morse and J. B. Paton, to consider the relation of Christianity to the wants of the people. The room in which the deliberations were to have taken place would not contain the audience, and an adjournment had to be made to the largest hall of the Mechanics' Institute, where the proceedings continued during the remainder of the day, some 500 persons being present in the morning, and more than 1,000 at night. Papers were read and discussions taken on the care of discharged female prisoners, the nursing of the sick, and especially of the sick poor in large towns, on neglected and criminal children, the Inner Mission of Germany and its lessons for us, our workhouse children, &c.; and the following resolutions were enthusiastically adopted:—

“That a union be formed in the town, consisting of the representatives of all existing Christian charities and Christian societies working for social ends, and all representatives of the Church of Christ in this town. Its objects shall be—

“First, to strengthen by such union the several societies and charities, and make them acquainted with each other's work, and to manifest the unity of the Christian spirit that inspires them all.

“Secondly, to collate and study facts connected with the physical, moral, and social condition of the town, and to impress on the public mind the practical relation and study of the Christian Church in view of these facts.

“Thirdly, to take counsel and action with the civil agencies of the town on matters with which they are connected, and which affect the social well-being of the people.

“Fourthly, to incite and direct individual and Church labours so as to relieve distress and save from vice, and to inspire and regulate all social institutions with a Christian spirit.

“Fifthly, where existing agencies are separated from Church action, and do not meet any special and urgent wants of the town, to institute and conduct such agencies as shall; and,

“Sixthly, to exhibit, by such combined action for the well-being of the people, the reality of Christian unity, and the social redemption that is effected by Christian love.”

The week that followed the holding of the above Conferences witnessed the public inauguration of another enterprise that is likely to secure widespread benefits to the people of this country. The Earl of Carnarvon, Lord Belper, and other gentlemen of influence connected with the Universities, were present. It is for the Extension of

University Education; and its aim in a word is, that since everybody cannot go to the Universities, the Universities shall, through some of their ablest representatives, go to everybody. "Our object," said the circular, "is to bring effective and suitable University Education within the reach of all classes of the people, that our sons and daughters who have finished school may continue their education under competent University teachers, and that working men may have systematic and able instruction in subjects that interest them and will profit them. The University of Cambridge has drawn up the course of studies for our town which it will teach through its own authorised teachers, and it now rests with our townsmen so to co-operate with the University as to secure for this noble project of the University a perfect success."

The subjects to be taught are Political Economy, English Literature, Physical Science, Physical Geography, and English Constitutional History; and the persons for whom they are intended are young ladies who have left school, young men in business, and working men. "The University teacher, who gives instruction in the morning to classes composed chiefly of educated young men and women, will give instruction in the evening of the same day to the working men in the town, by a series of lectures and by the careful discussion in class of the questions he has raised. If neighbouring towns be grouped, the teacher might spend one day during the week in each of four or five towns, or two days in each of three towns; and in such a circuit three or four teachers, or more, might be engaged at one time."

[As inquiries are being made in various parts of the country by those who are contemplating similar kinds of work to those to which we have referred, the Editor of THE CHRISTIAN'S PENNY MAGAZINE, Congregational Institute, Nottingham, will be glad to furnish any particulars that may be desired, whether on the Conference on the relation of Christianity to the wants of the times, or on University Extension.]

WHEN you see a man with a great deal of religion displayed in his shop-window, you may depend upon it he keeps a very small stock of it within.

WHATEVER is done by those around you, be yourself fully determined to walk in the most excellent way.

THOUGHTS—GRAVE AND GAY.

AN author says that one of the uses of adversity is to bring us out. That is true—particularly at the knees and elbows.

When is a man nearest related to a fish?—When he has got a good old soul for a mother, and an old crab of a father.

“Mamma,” said a little girl, who was nursing the latest born, “if baby came down from the angels, mustn't they miss him awfully?”

If the Church of Rome be idolatrous, there can be neither calumny nor absurdity in calling her anti-Christian, for nothing can be more anti-Christian than idolatry.—*Bishop Burgess.*

General Washington's last words were firm, cool, and reliant as himself. “I am about to die,” said he, “and I am not afraid to die.”

One of Keats's latest utterances is full of strong pathos. “I feel,” he said, on his death-bed, “I feel the flowers growing over me!”

Let us keep to Christ, and cling to Him, and hang on Him, so that no power can sever us. Then soon we shall see Him with joy at that day.

This world is a world of struggle; but it is not true that to be compelled to struggle is a misfortune. To live is to struggle. Every human being has to struggle, and it is the point of struggle that is the point of vitality and the point of victory.

Some are so generous as to give their old worn-out clothing to the poor, and many propose to treat the Almighty similarly. They intend to wear themselves out in the service of self and sin, and then to offer themselves to Him.

If love and affection could be won with gifts and jewels, then, indeed, love would have its price; but it is not so. Affection springs from the heart only; no gifts can produce it. A child's love is won more truly by a parent's fond embrace and kiss than with glittering toys.

“The Bechuana covers an area of six hundred square miles, the people speaking the same language, but,” says Dr. Moffat, “the people had never seen a sentence written until my fingers wrote it; and they have now the whole of the Scriptures in their own

language. Those who had looked on the Bible as being something approaching to a piece of sorcery, are now able by thousands to read in their own tongue of the wonderful works of God."

Fénélon has given some good advice on the subject of home-training. He says: "Mothers should instruct their children, however young, in household matters. The disinterested affection of mothers often leads them to dispense with all assistance from their daughters in their domestic affairs, so long as they are in daily attendance at school, or, as the common phrase is, whilst they are 'getting their education.' Where the school-hours are diligently employed, and the tasks laborious, and much time is required to prepare lessons at home, it is particularly important that all the leisure a girl has should be wisely disposed of in healthful exercise; but far better would it be for her health that some of her time should be given to the stirring occupations of the household, than that she should be sitting over a frame of worsted or lacework, hurting her eyes, and wasting her time in making bead-bags, or some ornamental article of dress, not worth a tithe of the pains bestowed upon them."

CHURCH NEWS OF THE MONTH.

THE Establishment question is, says the *Pall Mall Gazette*, being pushed "to the front;" and the pushing is just now done more by Churchmen than by Nonconformists. Listen to these words: "The Church of England," says the vicar of St. Saviour's, Chelsea, "must be either mended or ended." "It was once the pride and boast of Churchmen," says Mr. Saltau Symons, "that the Church of England was the great barrier and bulwark against the progress of Romish practices and Romish superstitions; but what is it now? It is the nursery and feeder of Rome. There are," he adds, "only two courses open: one is reformation and the other disestablishment."

The Church-patronage question has lately appeared in a new light to many Churchmen—especially in Liverpool. The purchase, by the Ritualistic party, of the Rectory of Liverpool has created no little excitement. "The cure of souls," says a Church and Tory paper, "has been offered in the market-place to the highest bidder, and sold. It must be a lucrative office, for the

purchase-money was the round sum of £10,000. The traffickers in salvation are two reverend gentlemen, who haggled somewhat about the price, and ultimately struck the bargain. A matter of £10,000 was the one single condition essential to the bargain. It was no question of decency or competency; the propriety of bartering a spiritual charge for gold, or the probable feelings of the parishioners affected by the exchange, formed no element in the compact. It was a simple affair of hard bargaining; as thoroughly a matter of barter as if the transaction related to the goodwill of a gin-palace or the purchase of a flock of sheep—not the metaphorical sheep, but the edible. The rectory of Liverpool has changed owners, and there's an end on't. But did it occur to the ecclesiastical hucksters what they were buying and selling? Nominally it is the advowson of the parish of Liverpool; literally it is the spiritual charge of a multitude of men. By sheer power of money a stranger, who has never spent four-and-twenty hours in the town, has acquired the highest ecclesiastical office in Liverpool; he is arbiter of the religious teaching of a quarter of a million of people, the superior lord over a hundred district incumbents, and the immediate ruler of the two principal churches in the town. The people are never consulted about the affair; their earnest wishes may be—probably will be—violated ruthlessly, and they must remain passive and helpless while their sacrilegious pastors traffic away their spiritual destiny."

Meanwhile, concerning the condition of the Church generally, Canon Ryle declares: "There are hundreds of parishes in this land in which the Church of England is doing nothing, practically, for the souls of the people. In some cases the incumbent is careless, thoughtless, worldly, ignorant of true religion, and profoundly indifferent to spiritual things. . . The Church cannot interfere! The Church of England looks on with folded arms, and does nothing at all. Can any one imagine a more ruinous system?"

The agricultural labourers' movement will not tend to perpetuate the existence of the Establishment. "The Church," says the *Labourers' Chronicle*, "as a whole, is overwhelmingly against" the labourer, "is a lion in his path, and a mountain in his way." These men aim at reforms which "the Church will not lift its little finger to assist. These labourers now lie, as they have lain for years, wounded and helpless by the wayside of life, oppressed and wronged

by society, born to helpless toil, to life-long penury, to social degradation; and the bishops and clergy have, year by year, gone up to the temple to drone out their routine of worship, and have passed the labourers by and left their grievances uncared for, their sorrows unpitied, their lot unchanged."

No wonder that the *Spectator* chides the clergy for the impolicy—"the wretched folly"—of their proceedings. "Nothing can keep the vote from the labourers for five years. They know as well as we do that the only class in England, without enough to eat, without a hope of bettering themselves, and without the possibility of escaping the workhouse in old age, is that of the English labourer; they know that from the year the vote is conceded, all this must end, and yet at this very moment they are turning these very men into close allies of Mr. Chamberlain and the Liberation Society! Take the lowest view of the subject, and can anything more stupid be imagined than this policy of driving the labourers to elect half the county members either from Liberals or from Dissenters, who will pledge themselves to vote for the abolition of the Church of England? Here are 800,000 votes lost to the Church as an institution."

A correspondent of the *John Bull* advocates the abolition of god-fathers and godmothers. The causes which led to the institution of sponsors have, he says, ceased to exist.

The *Ecclesiastical Gazette* for the present month contains sixteen advertisements of sermons for sale. From them we learn the existence of a new literary industrial class, "plain-sermon writers," some of whom, if these advertisements may be trusted, have become "celebrated" in their calling. Thirteen shillings and sixpence, payable quarterly in advance, seems to be the general rate.

It is an interesting sign of the times, that at last—after being three years on the rampage—such journals as the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Spectator* are beginning to reason on the Education Question. The effect is that they do not find Mr. Forster's proceedings so defensible as—when they devoted themselves to blind or passionate eulogy of their pet minister—they used to fancy. Even the *Church Times* is making interesting discoveries on the subject. "We object," they say, "to the Education Act, and to the whole modern theory of national education, because the State cannot educate, and ought not to try; because in a modern State comprising citizens of different creeds only two policies are feasible, that of favouritism and that of

non-recognition. Under the one, a particular religious society is supported by the State, and given as far as possible a monopoly. That was the universal view, except in the United States, till the French Revolution. It is being rapidly abandoned everywhere, and in no place so conspicuously as in England."

Meanwhile, some will read with interest the words of the *Christian Union* of New York with regard to religious training given by Government in national schools. "We congratulate the friends of religious liberty in this city upon the decision of the council of the corporation, that the Board of Education is forbidden by the city charter to make any appropriation of money in aid of any religious or denominational school. It is a pity that such appropriations were allowed in any part of the State, and we hope to see them universally prohibited by law."

The Rev. Newman Hall thus speaks of a visit paid by the Jubilee Singers to the house of the Prime Minister:—"After breakfast he showed to his guests some of the principal objects of interest in his collection of art treasures, explaining them in his own fascinating style. Then, all the party being gathered in the drawing-room, the Jubilee Singers entertained us with their wonderful music. First we had 'John Brown.' I never heard them sing it as they did there. It was not the music alone, but the features of the singers also which made it so impressive. They sung as beings inspired. Their whole forms seemed to dilate. Their eyes flashed; their countenances told of reverence and joy and gratitude to God. Never shall I forget Mr. Gladstone's rapt, enthusiastic attention. His form was bent forward, his eyes were riveted, all the intellect and soul of his great nature seemed expressed in his countenance; and when they finished he kept saying: 'Isn't it wonderful? I never heard anything like it!' After this they gave us that queer medley, 'O them great trials,' with the comical assertion of Baptist, Independent, Presbyterian preferences, and the grand lesson of Christianity *versus* sectarianism. The tender, thrilling words and music of 'Oh, how I love Jesus!' brought tears to the eyes of the listeners; and when they closed with the Lord's Prayer, all the company, led by Mr. Gladstone, reverently stood with bowed heads in worship. Then came many hearty farewells, and some time was taken up by our friends obtaining the autographs of Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone and others. Just before leaving the room they sang,

'Good-bye, brother, good-bye sister,' which went to every heart. As brothers and sisters, the Premier and Mrs. Gladstone, with their guests, bade them one more and last farewell."

A chapel-building society has been formed by the Congregationalists of Birmingham, and the first building to be erected under its auspices has been commenced in Park-road, Aston. Hitherto the chapels of this denomination in the town have been erected by particular congregations for their own use, or have been built in suburban localities through the efforts of persons residing there. It is now proposed to promote the building of such places of worship in parts where religious accommodation is needed, by means of a society, represented and supported by all the congregations in Birmingham. Two thousand pounds have already been promised to the funds of the society.

The Congregational Chapel at Upminster, Essex, has been opened after great alterations. A new pulpit and benches of modern style have been substituted for the old fittings, gas has been introduced, and the building entirely repaired at a total expense of nearly £400.—The debt on the Broad Green Congregational Church, Croydon, has been extinguished.—The Weigh House Chapel has been greatly improved. A handsome stone pulpit, richly carved, occupies the place of the old one, and behind it is a recess where a new organ is about to be placed. The schoolroom adjoining has also been enlarged and completely altered, and class-rooms constructed on the second floor. The cost of the alterations has been about £6,000.—Services in commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the formation of a Congregational Church in Market Harborough, have been held.

The Rev. John Kelly, of Liverpool, has preached his farewell sermon to his congregation. The spacious chapel was well filled with an attentive congregation. No minister has more of the honour of his brethren for long and faithful service than Mr. Kelly.

The Rev. W. Courtnall, of Wellingborough, has accepted an invitation to the pastorate of the Church at Wellington, Somerset.—The Rev. W. B. Macwilliam, late of Ancoats, has accepted a call to the ministry of Albion Chapel, Nottingham.—The Rev. M. Braithwaite, after nearly eleven years' ministry at Theddingworth, Leicestershire, has accepted the pastorate of the Congregational Church at Uppingham, Rutland.

§ SUBJECTS FOR 1874.

The Editor is happy to announce that the following Articles— full of interest and instruction — will appear during the New Year.

1. ORIGINAL AND BEAUTIFUL STORIES :

By Aunt Fanny and Mary Sherwood: New Year's Day. Cissy's First Trouble. A Daisy in London. Winnie's Wish. Betty's Plague. Ruth Tredegar; or, the Orphan's Friend. Etc.

2. CHRISTIAN THOUGHT AND LIFE :

An Old Man's Dream. Christian Children. Children and the Church. The Meeting for Prayer.

3. CHRISTIAN WORKMEN AND THEIR WORK :

By an Ex-Missionary: Not Happy in Heaven. Light at the Lane's End. Coming Down for the Railway. The Marriage Certificate, etc. Shady Walks at Eventide. The Fatherless Boys' Home. An Infidel's Confession. Peter Quick's Lucky Bag. Billy Dawson, the Yorkshire Preacher.

4. HOW TO MEND OUR CHURCH METHODS :

Councils of Advice. Christian Giving. "Church or Chapel?" Children's Services. Christian Psalmody. Our Week-day Services. Plain Talk to Plain People about Church Matters.

5. POPULAR TOPICS OF THE HOUR :

The Relation of the Christian to Politics. "The Claws of the Clause." Disestablishment. National Education.

6. MISCELLANEA :

A Woman's Prison. Two Scenes from the Civil War. Judging by Appearances. A Speechless Reproof.

7. THOUGHTS—GRAVE AND GAY.

8. CHURCH NEWS OF THE MONTH.

AUNT FANNY'S TALES.

No. VI.—AN UNHAPPY CHRISTMAS.

"AUNTIE, were you naughty when you were a little girl?" asked a small niece, one hopelessly wet day.

The question had been no doubt suggested to her by her own experience that morning. It had poured incessantly ever since the children had got up, and they had last night planned a day out of doors. All had been more or less affected in temper and spirits by the disappointment and confinement to the house, and at last "Miss Lizzie," as ringleader of an open rebellion in the nursery, was brought downstairs into my presence, for trial, conviction, and sentence.

I did not feel at all a merciless judge towards the wee culprit who stood staring with great sad eyes at the dripping leaves, wet gravel, soaked lawn, and drooping flowers, and looking as different from my merry little Lizzie, as the gloomy garden did from the sunny Paradise of the day before.

Wet, dark weather always has an effect upon my own spirits, and I soon put away my writing, and called all the children into my room, where, after a good romp, a story was suggested. And then saucy Lizzie, whose face had regained its usual brightness, asked me that question relative to my own early youth.

"Yes, I am sorry to say, I was a very naughty little girl," I answered, feeling conscious, as I said it, that by my confession I immediately acquired a new interest in the eyes of my listeners.

"Tell us about it," they demanded eagerly, forgetting weather and all else in their anticipation of anything so very interesting as Aunt Fanny having been naughty.

"Yes," I repeated, looking back into those past years, which were so long ago, and yet seemed but as yesterday—"I was a particularly troublesome, high-spirited, unmanageable child; so said all who knew me. The servants' verdict was, 'There's no doing anything with the little ones when Miss Fanny is with them. And as for Master Charlie, he'd be a lamb if it wasn't for her!' Whether it was owing to my bad influence, I can't say, but certainly Charlie was not at all like a lamb. Miss Grey, our governess, was indefatigable in her endeavours to instil into me a wish to become wiser and steadier. My elder sisters wondered how I could be

such a baby. My father looked grave, and my dear indulgent mother sighed. But all in vain. Although constantly reminded that I was thirteen, and quite old enough to turn over a new leaf, that leaf had not been turned when my story begins.

"I can't think why I was so naughty. I had every motive for being especially good. I was the eldest in our school-room and in the nursery, and was, in consequence, expected to set a good example to the rest. My two next sisters were quiet, gentle little things, who were not likely to tempt me into mischief. Certainly my brother Charlie had a warm sympathy with my failings, and was my constant companion when at home; but he went to boarding-school. How I wished I could go, too, and share his scrapes! I pitied myself greatly for being a girl. A distaste of all quiet pursuits, a hatred of lessons, a longing to run wild out of doors, and an intense desire for adventure and for fun of all kinds; that was my character at the time of which I write. In the woods with my dog, or riding my pony without saddle round the field, or climbing trees as Charlie had taught me, I was happy. But at home with my sisters, or in the school-room, I was self-willed, careless, and discontented. Moreover, my high spirits and thoughtlessness were always getting me into trouble, and other people too. And this, children, is the worst of letting a love of fun come before everything else. It sounds very innocent in itself, but it leads to what sounds, and is, very ugly—selfishness, inconsiderateness, and disobedience. Well, I had a lesson that did more for me than all the reproof and good advice of my friends.

"It was winter, and Christmas was drawing near. How well I remember it. I need not tell you, little people, with what delight we looked forward to that season of happiness to children all over the world; what secrets we tried to keep on the subject of certain presents that were to be surprises to every one; what mysterious consultations were necessary; what hurrying to finish important pieces of needlework; what preparations for the Christmas-tree; what counting of the days to the holidays! You know it all, don't you? And when I say that to these pleasures there were added the expectation that on Christmas Eve our parents would return from a journey, bringing with them two little cousins to increase our Christmas circle, and that Charlie was coming home from school, you will understand that we were a very happy party just then.

"Alas! I was not deserving my happiness, for I was neglecting

duty; and duty and happiness go together, and will not be separated, however much we may try to do it. And I was breaking my word; for my mother, before leaving home, had talked very seriously to me, and I had made promises by the dozen, and really meant to keep them. Indeed, I had such confidence in my good intentions, and in my power of behaving well if I chose, that I actually bestowed some good advice on my little sisters, and felt in a most virtuous frame of mind. I think this went on for about three days, at the end of which time I must confess I became heartily tired of my goodness. You see it was not the real thing, or I should not have got tired of it, but only a pretence. After this, I was daily more idle and careless. It was splendid weather, and escaping from my lessons as soon and as often as I could, and taking no pains with them, I ran wild about the garden, followed by my little Skye-terrier, who, having no lessons to do, was glad enough of a play-fellow.

"I was startled one day by hearing our governess say, 'I hope you are all ready for your examination to-morrow morning?' I had entirely forgotten a little scheme which had been arranged with regard to our lessons: namely, that the last morning before the holidays began should be devoted by us to answering questions on the various subjects which for the last few weeks we were supposed to have been studying. Both questions and answers were to be in writing, and they were to be placed before our father on his return that evening. Your grandfather was a grave, quiet, learned man, of whom, with all our love for him, we stood considerably in awe. He took great interest in our lessons, and it was at his suggestion that this arrangement had been made.

"Now, I had been the first to agree to this proposal. Though not industrious, like my sisters, I was quick, and fancied myself clever; and with my usual self-confidence, I at once pictured in my imagination a list of successful replies, headed by my name, my father's 'Very good, Fanny,' and the approving smile that we all so valued. But this was before I had broken my resolutions and my promises. It was now with a feeling of utter dismay that I remembered what would be expected of us next day. There was no time to retrieve my character and prepare for the ordeal: my one thought was how to escape it. Defeat I could not bear. My pride, though it did not, you see, prevent my acting like a baby in preferring play to work, could not endure that I should fail where my younger

sisters succeeded. I sat up late that night in my little room, all sorts of plans passing through my mind. If only I could get away just for the morning! In the afternoon Miss Grey would be leaving, and I could be back in time for all the bustle and preparation for our parents' return home on Christmas Eve. 'But you will displease them,' said conscience. I hesitated; but when we *wish* to do wrong, it is wonderful how something is sure to help us. Suddenly an idea came into my head. 'The very thing,' I said to myself. 'I'll go and pay old nurse a visit. She is always so glad to see us, and we haven't been for ages, and mamma likes us to go.'

"I soon succeeded in persuading myself that not only would there be nothing wrong in doing this, but that it would be on the whole rather a self-denying act to go and see the poor old woman; and I fell asleep comfortably.

"Early next morning I awoke, rose noiselessly, and dressed in the dark, waiting in my room till I heard the front door unfastened. I did not want to frighten Miss Grey, so I wrote on a piece of paper, 'I am only going to see nurse, and will be back by tea-time.' This I folded, and pinned on to my pincushion. 'That's the way it's always done,' I said to myself. Then I crept downstairs, feeling delightfully adventurous, and stole unperceived into the garden, from whence I easily made my way into the high road. Our nurse, who had left us the year before, to live with a married son, had been with us since my eldest sister was a baby, and loved us as if we were her own children. And there was always a warm welcome for us at the picturesque little farm where she now lived. It was in a secluded spot at the foot of a hill, and about four miles from our house, across fields, and along narrow country lanes. I knew the way well, for we had spent many a happy day there in the summer time, and I did not mind the long walk.

"It was a perfect winter morning: the sun, shining upon the hoarfrost which clothed every twig and leaf and blade of grass, changed by his magic touch the glistening diamonds into crystal drops; the pure white frosted boughs stood out against the blue cloudless sky; the ground felt crisp and hard; and the fresh, sharp air filled me with delight.

"Old nurse received me joyfully, and I evaded her question as to why I had come alone, and accepted her thanks for my kind thoughtfulness without remark. Soon I was seated by her bright little fire in the homely sanded kitchen, eating cake—which somehow always

appeared when we did, however unexpected our visits—the last litter of kittens on the rug, and the last grandchild brought in for my inspection. Then there were the farm animals to visit, and the cheerful dinner, with the pudding that nurse remembered ‘Miss Fanny’ always liked. But while I was enjoying myself the weather outside was changing. Clouds had appeared in all directions, and as nurse got up to look out of the window, and Bill, her son, remarked, ‘We shall have snow, I’m thinking,’ great white flakes began slowly to descend.

“‘I wish you were home, my dear,’ said nurse, anxiously. ‘But you can’t go yet,’ she added, as I eagerly began to put on my hat.

“‘It won’t be much, will it?’ I appealed to Bill, who, after giving a long look at the sky, said, ‘I think, miss, we’re in for a spell of it. But we’ll wait a bit and see if it clears.’

“I waited, but the short winter day soon began to darken, and the changed weather darkened it still more. My heart sank with the thermometer which Bill at intervals consulted, shaking his head more decidedly each time.

“‘You’ll have to stop all night, dearie,’ said nurse, as it struck four o’clock. ‘If it cleared up it would be too late for you to go home alone, and it don’t look like clearing.’

“‘But it’s Christmas Eve,’ I sobbed, my dignity giving way under my misfortunes. ‘And mamma is coming home, and every one, and I *must* go.’ And again I ran to the window, peering eagerly for a gleam of light. But the sky looked as hopeless as my feelings. A leaden black all over, and the snow falling faster and whitening the ground. Nurse did her best to comfort me, but in vain. You see I had done wrong, which she did not know. Before night, however, I confessed all to her, and felt better. Then I went to bed, but not to sleep. What a night it was! It seemed to me that at least a dozen times I got out of bed and went to the window, pressing my face against the glass, each time to see it snowing, snowing, as if it never would leave off. Would morning never come? Yes, it came at last, Christmas morning; but it brought no comfort with it. It still snowed mercilessly; the air was thick and white with it, and Bill was sweeping a pathway to the little garden gate, through great white drifts that had gathered during the night. ‘I doubt you can’t get home, missy,’ was his remark when he saw me. ‘The snow lays so deep in them fields, it would be over your head, and I couldn’t get a cart along the lane. It may thaw,’ he added,

noticing my miserable face. But it didn't look at all like it; and the possibility that my Christmas Day would have to be spent in nurse's cottage, came through me with a sharp pang. Before long the possibility became a certainty. The weather got worse and worse, making the short four miles of fields and lanes an impervious barrier between me and our house.

"I was a prisoner, and all my own doing! Bursting into an agony of tears, I ran to my bed-room, and refusing all attempts at comfort, I sat for hours gazing at the desolate landscape which separated me from the home I had so wilfully left. What were they doing now? What fun they were having! How Charlie would be rejoicing in the snow that I hated the sight of! What a snow-man he would make! What a game of snowballs they would all have! And my little cousins would have come, and they would all be putting the presents on the Christmas-tree! And then the games of blind-man's buff; the dinner, at which none of us had been absent before; the plum-pudding in flames; the 'loving cup' passed round; and my father's little Christmas speech to us all, and I not there! Every now and then my tears fell faster, as I thought I heard the sound of Christmas bells coming across the white fields, reminding me of the day that ought to have made me so happy.

"I hope my tears were not all idle ones, or my thoughts only useless regrets. After a time I yielded to nurse's entreaties, that I would come down and join in their little festivities. I played with the children, helped to stick holly on the walls, and tried to listen to Bill's Christmas stories after dinner, which, in spite of my grief, I managed to enjoy. But, after all, I was very glad when night came, and put an end to the most miserable day I had ever spent.

"Next morning a thaw set in, and I was speedily conveyed home. I need not say that I had no reproaches to bear; but perhaps my mother's kind look as she said, 'Poor child! she has had punishment enough,' was harder to bear than reproaches. Every one was very kind, and tried to make up to me for what I had lost; but that they could never do. Perhaps, however, I had gained something, too. At any rate, I am sure that neither they nor I ever forgot that unhappy Christmas."

THE rose has its thorns, the diamond its specks, and the best man his failings.

A PRESCRIBED MEDICINE FOR A COMMON COMPLAINT.

No. II.

THE twilight was just falling as Mrs. Arnold and Miss Hale entered the parlour, but had it been an hour later, Mrs. Arnold would scarcely have drawn down the blind and lighted the gas, for it was one of those evenings on which it seems almost a sin to shut out the sweet aspects of nature.

"It does seem a pity," said Mrs. Arnold, as the two ladies seated themselves by the open window, "to talk of agitations and discords in such an evening as this: it is so full of rest and harmony, that it makes one sceptical of their very existence."

"Well, we are going to talk of peace-making, not of peace-breaking, you know. But indeed, Mrs. Arnold, I do not at all see what I can do; I am very slightly acquainted with either Mrs. Smith or Mrs. Brown."

"My dear, I had no thought that you should attempt any direct interference, or offer yourself as arbitrator or reconciler between the offended ladies. If every member of the Church were to attempt that, it would, indeed, be confusion worse confounded. But it is in the power of each to do his own little part, either towards allaying the irritation, and keeping it from extending, or towards increasing and widening it. Do you remember Mr. Morris saying last summer, when preaching on the Beatitudes, that 'Blessed are the peace-workers' would be the more literal rendering of the passage. This certainly gives a wider application to the blessing. Peace-makers, in the more limited sense, we can be only occasionally; peace-workers we may be at all times and in every situation, 'seeking peace, and pursuing it.'"

"That certainly does seem easier; and I should hope most people prefer peace to contention, and that there cannot be many mischief-makers in a Christian Church."

"True. But, remember, a deliberate conscious love of mischief-making is not at all necessary to the making of mischief; nor does a mere sentiment in favour of peace necessarily insure peace-working. To come to our point—very definite and simple—what

an advance some people would make towards being peace-workers if they could just learn *how to be silent*. Many and many a dispute would quickly die out, and be forgotten, if people, whose concern it really in no wise is, would just let the matter alone, and not busy themselves in inquiring about it, commenting upon it, and telling it in new directions. No small service is rendered in any community by a member who simply acts as a non-conductor of all electric currents of discontents and irritations. In this particular instance, I have heard many of our friends say that they are perfectly weary of the whole affair; yet, to tell the truth, I have observed a strange readiness to introduce the subject as a topic of conversation, to continue, and resume it, on occasions convenient and inconvenient. If you permit me, my dear Miss Hale, to offer you advice, I would say, avoid talking upon this subject; do not introduce it yourself; if introduced by others, endeavour to turn the conversation into another channel."

"But, Mrs. Arnold, if we do not hear what is said, how can we judge who is in the right and who is in the wrong?"

"And what absolute need is there that we *should* so judge? If we were appointed arbitrators, or if we were the confidential friends of both the ladies, and referred to by each, it would be our duty to hear both sides, and learn all the facts, and all circumstances bearing upon them; but we are *not* placed in that position. We do not doubt both Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Brown to be Christians; as such, it is our duty to love them. If they have both in this matter proved themselves *imperfect* Christians, as they have, it is our duty, as St. Paul says, to consider ourselves, lest we also be tempted. But, surely, it cannot be a necessity and duty to measure exactly how much farther Mrs. Smith has departed from the rule of right than Mrs. Brown, or Mrs. Brown than Mrs. Smith. If it were, we should be little likely, depend upon it, to gather material for such a judgment by listening to all the statements, counter-statements, mis-statements, rumours, and surmises that may be in circulation; and we should certainly do more harm to ourselves and others, by such a process of investigation, than any conclusions at which we might arrive would do good. I am quite sure there is no need of saying to you that troubles of this kind, occurring within a Church, should never be spoken of outside, and that the proceedings of Church meetings should be regarded as private and confidential. There have been cases—rare, of course—in which Church members

have been so wanting in all instincts of propriety and honour, as to make the affairs of the Church with which they were connected the common gossip of a neighbourhood."

"That, certainly, was very wrong," remarked Miss Hale.

"Do not think, however," resumed Mrs. Arnold, "that I accept the old proverb, 'Speech is silvern, but silence is golden,' as literally and always true. Many occasions in social life will arise in which silence would be mere cowardice or cold selfish prudence; as, for instance, when we hear statements made which we know to be mis-statements, or injurious remarks indulged in which a remonstrance from us might check. Sometimes, too, if contention is only beginning, a few wise words might put out the 'little fire,' and prevent the 'great matter' from being ever kindled. Silence in such cases is anything but golden. 'A word spoken in due season, how good is it!'"

"But it is not easy, Mrs. Arnold, to know where and how to speak these wise words."

"Nor is it possible to give counsel beforehand. The wisdom and fitness depend so much upon the 'due season,' and other conditions not to be anticipated. One thing let us never forget. It is, after all, not so much by rules of conduct anxiously prescribed to ourselves, that we shall be peace-workers, as by having our *hearts* right. The most careful playing cannot bring sweet harmony from an instrument itself quite out of tune. Let *love*—true, living, Christian love—dwell in our hearts; then our influence, conscious and unconscious, will assuredly tend not to disquiet, but to love, peace, and contentment.

"Just think how many little things which now often occasion disputes and heartburnings, would cease so to operate if only there dwelt in us more charity. Possessing the love that 'envieth not, vaunteth not itself, seeketh not her own,' we shall not be disturbed if another should take precedence of us, be placed in office when we are overlooked, receive attentions more than we receive. The charity that 'beareth all things, is not easily provoked, suffers long, and is kind,' will quite enable us to pass by and forget any little slight, inconsiderate act, depreciatory remark,—to forgive freely, for Christ's sake, a real injury; and most certainly the charity that 'thinketh no evil, hopeth all things, rejoiceth not in iniquity,' will ever preserve us from any readiness to believe an injurious report—from any inclination, if obliged to believe, to impute the worst motives, to exaggerate, or to spread the matter. And if we did but love one

another more—loving Christians *as Christians*, not saying merely, but feeling that all we ‘are brethren’—what a clearance there would be from our Churches of that respect of persons, those class feelings, those unworthy admirations and despisings, those exhibitions of petty pride and pretension on the one hand, of petty jealousy and prejudice on the other, so utterly ignoble, so discordant with the whole genius and spirit of Christianity. Yes, without question, charity is the ‘more excellent way.’ I have known persons holding no office in the Church, with no large powers of mind, no power of purse at all, very little leisure, who yet through this one power of love have exerted an influence so attractive, uniting, reuniting, that their removal has been felt as an irreparable loss and a general grief.”

“Ah, but how to get this love!” sighed Miss Hale, rising.

“‘The fruit of the Spirit is love.’ God giveth ‘His Spirit to them that ask Him.’ And then this grace, as every other, grows by exercise. But must you go?”

“Thank you, yes. I must have been expected at home some time ago.”

But at the garden gate, as the ladies were shaking hands, Miss Hale lingered. “Mrs. Arnold,” she said, with a slight trembling in her voice, “I am afraid I am a very poor sort of a Christian. I have never thought much about being of use to others, and making love grow by exercise. Since we came to the chapel, especially, I have been doing nothing, either in the Church or neighbourhood. May I come to you again: perhaps you could give me some advice as to what I could best try to do?”

“Most happy shall I be at any time to see you,” replied Mrs. Arnold, with a loving pressure of the hand she held; “and to any little help I can give, you are more than welcome. But let us never forget one direction and promise: ‘If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, and it shall be given him.’ Good-night.”

ABOLITION OF PURCHASE IN THE CHURCH.

THE more (says the *Pall Mall Gazette*) we consider the effect of Mr. Bright's speech at Birmingham, the more strongly do we feel that the position of the Church of England is very critical, and that the steps which will be taken to disestablish and disendow

it are becoming clear. The first step will obviously be to propose to apply to the sale of livings the principle applied to purchase in the army. Why, it will be asked, if the position of a clergyman of the Church of England is, as it is to some extent, the position of a public servant, should it be the subject of purchase and sale any more than a commission in the army? If this question were raised as a popular question, there would be very great difficulty in defending the existing state of things, and when it was once touched it would be found to be almost equally difficult to put any other state of things in its place. It would be discovered, as the matter was inquired into, that the system of the Church, as it stands at present, can hardly be seriously altered unless the reform is to go the whole length to which it went in Ireland.

The popular argument for the abolition of purchase in the Church—a lucky phrase to begin with, suited pretty accurately to the capacity of those to whom it would be addressed—is so plain and strong that it is needless to insist upon it or even to throw it into form; but let us consider the result. Owners of advowsons would of course require compensation, and their claim to it would be irresistible. The officers of the army were compensated for being prevented from doing an act which, though distinctly illegal in itself, had nevertheless been legalised by usage and connivance. It would be quite out of the question to take away private property enjoyed and disposed of for centuries under the sanction of the law of the land, without giving full value for it. Nobody, indeed, would propose to do so; and if there were any thought of it, the precedent to the contrary of the Irish advowsons would be unanswerable. The result is that all the advowsons now in private patronage would have to be bought up at the public expense.

Whereupon two questions arise which appear to us almost equally difficult in themselves, and almost equally well calculated to lead towards the result of general disestablishment. The first question is, upon what principle can the process of paying a large sum of money out of the taxes for the purpose of carrying out a reform in the constitution of the Church of England be justified? And the second is, that of patronage.

ALL literary works that stimulate unproductive sensibilities may be counted as the gin-palaces of the mind.


 CHRISTMAS
 
 HYMN.

Psalm ii. 12.

“**K**ISS the Son,” God’s well-beloved—
 On the manger-bed He lies;
 In His infant form enshrouded,
 Greet the Godhead of the skies.
 Kiss the Son, kiss the Son;
 Dear is He in angels’ eyes.

Kiss the Son; through Him are given
 Hope and grace and promise great;
 Sons He makes us, heirs of heaven,
 Sharers in His royal state.
 Kiss the Son,
 Every heart with joy elate.

Kiss the Son—the Father speaking—
 All the heavenly host comply;
 Now the glorious rapture breaking,
 Reaches shepherds from the sky.
 Kiss the Son;
 He is born for man to die.

Kiss the Son, O weeping sinner,
 Tears may blend with rapture sweet;
 Clasp Him, pardon’s only winner;
 Fall in wonder at His feet.
 Kiss the Son—
 God and man in Jesus meet.

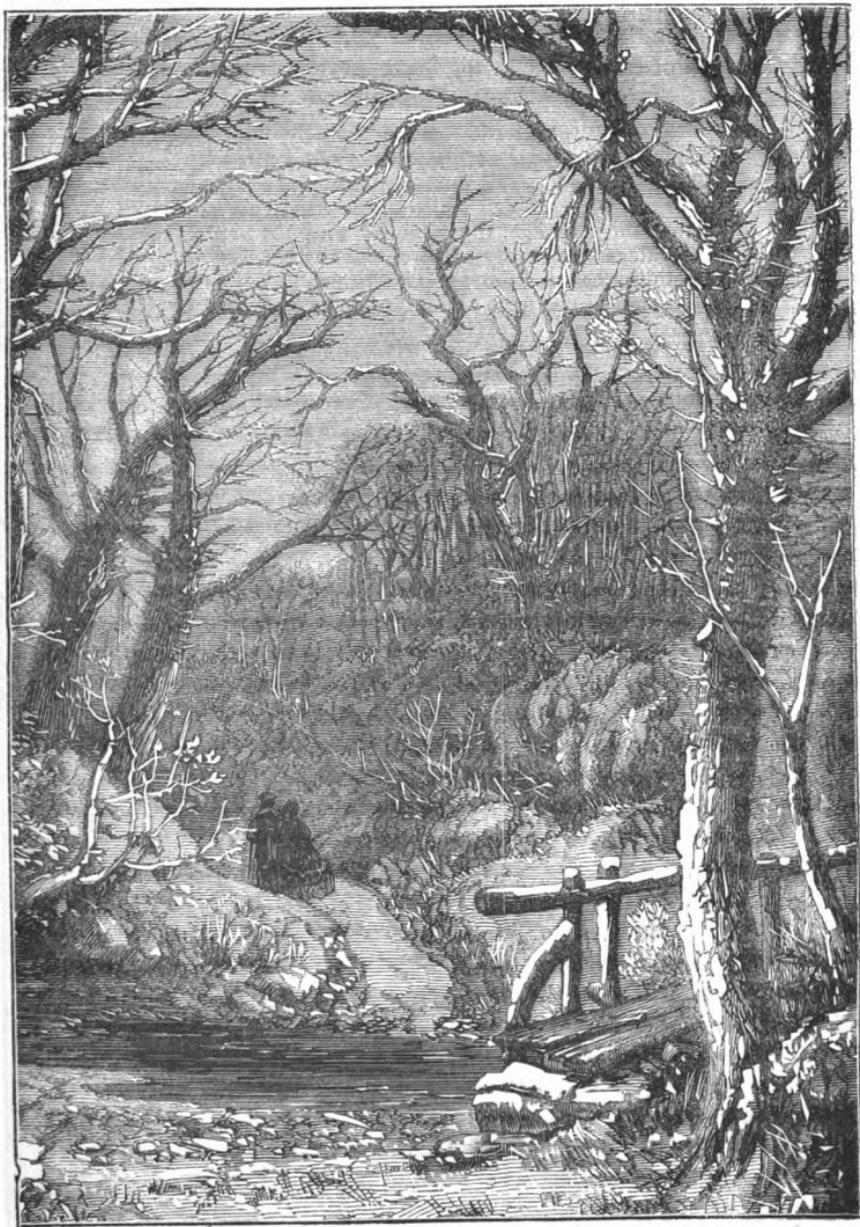
Hallelujah! God has given
 Unto all the tribes of earth
 Peace below and rest in heaven:
 Hail with joy the Saviour’s birth.
 Kiss the Son, kiss the Son—
 Glory of the heaven and earth.

 WINTER.

EVERY season has its own beauties. Spring, rising from the dead, puts on an ever-deepening green; summer, the high noon of the year, clothes itself with an unsearchable wealth of leaf and flower; autumn, rich in fruitfulness of orchard and field, hushes the song of every bird save the cheerful redbreast; but to compensate for this, wears a robe of flame, and then, with calm decay, rolls its days towards winter. Nor is this last season of the year without glories all its own. Frost and snow bring forth no colour, but they create a million fantastic combinations of form, which no summer heat can emulate. Few things are more beautiful than snow. In England we see it to perfection only once or twice a year, and then only for a few hours. Our climate is too changeable, and the traffic and smoke are too great, for us to realise all its white loveliness. We should go to Canada, or Switzerland, or the Scotch highlands: then, as we gazed on the fair purity of the landscape, and caught the glitter of the snow-crystals, and watched the coming and going of delicate pink and purple tints, and saw the graceful melting of the snow-curves as they lay in a hollow or hung over a bank,—as we beheld all this, we should turn involuntarily to Bible words, and say, “The earth ‘was transfigured before them, and its raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them.’”

But the snow is often terrible. Though it falls gently, and looks fragile, and is blown whithersoever the wind listeth, and may be melted by a child's breath, yet it has its awful side. It is weak, yet strong. It will cover you like a winding-sheet, and wrap you up like a shroud. It will crush you like a rock, and bury you like the sea. It will bewilder you like a tempter, and blind you like a fire. Then let us be thankful that with us the winters are tempered by many influences, and that by our modern civilisation we are so protected that we may bid defiance to the terrors of the snow. In England it seems that God “giveth snow like wool,” a pure garment for the earth, and not like white iron fetters, crippling both nature and man.

All the great poets have noted the characteristics of winter, but none with a keener eye and a sounder judgment than Cowper. “The Task,” with its exquisite descriptions of winter scenery in the morn-



WINTER.

ing and at noon, is worth a thousand "Don Juans" or "Corsairs;" and the joys of a winter evening have never been more sweetly or nobly sung than in these words of Cowper:—

"O Winter! ruler of the inverted year,
 Thy scattered hair with sleet-like ashes filled,
 Thy breath congeal'd upon thy lips, thy cheeks
 Fringed with a beard made white with other snows
 Than those of age, thy forehead wrapped in clouds,
 A leafless branch thy sceptre, and thy throne
 A sliding car, indebted to no wheels,
 But urged by storms along its slippery way,—
 I love thee, all unlovely as thou seem'st,
 And dreaded as thou art! Thou hold'st the sun
 A prisoner in the yet undawning east,
 Shortening his journey between morn and noon,
 And hurrying him, impatient of his stay,
 Down to the rosy west; but kindly still
 Compensating his loss with added hours
 Of social converse and instructive ease;
 And gathering, at short notice, in one group,
 The family dispersed; and fixing thought,
 Not less dispersed by daylight and its cares.
 I crown thee king of intimate delights,
 Fireside enjoyments, home-born happiness,
 And all the comforts that the lowly roof
 Of undisturbed retirement, and the hours
 Of long, uninterrupted evening know."

THE INTER-DEPENDENCE OF INDEPENDENT CHURCHES.

BY FREDK. S. WILLIAMS.

IN an Independent chapel* in the West of England stands a beautiful monument—wrought with cunning hand and reverent love—in memory of the first four pastors of that Church, each of whom had been ejected from his living as clergyman of the Established Church on the fatal day of St. Bartholomew. Rising from the midst of this memorial pile towers a rugged cross, blossoming with full-flowering lilies—emblematic of the sorrows and sacrifices of those troublous times, and also of the blooming graces and the fragrant memory of the just; while underneath is the declaration of the

* Frome, Somerset.

Church itself, now two centuries old—"Having, therefore, obtained help of God, we continue unto this day witnessing."

And may not we, the assembled representatives of more than two thousand Independent Churches, as we look back on the dark and cruel night in which our fathers toiled and suffered, as we try to estimate the priceless inheritance they left to their children's children,—may we not also to-day, in holy thought, again chisel the rugged cross and again twine the flowering lilies, and, with subdued and even tearful gratitude both to God and man, exclaim, "Having, therefore, obtained help of God, we continue witnessing"?

Never was there a time when, in the presence of this great nation and in the midst of the ecclesiastical controversies of the hour, our Independent Churches had less reason to be ashamed of their position and of their principles than they have to-day. It is something that we are opening a new chapel every week, and frequently three in a fortnight; that we maintain the efficiency of our Church institutions at home, and are among the pioneers of Christian enterprise abroad. It is something that we have shared so conspicuously in the assertion of the spirituality of the kingdom of Christ—a truth that is now being accepted by the most thoughtful and eminent men in Church and State. It is something that, as Lord Brougham has declared, to Independents is due "a boundless debt of gratitude" for having "obtained for England the free constitution which she now enjoys;" and that it is being admitted, however reluctantly, that we, in association with other Nonconformists, "hold in our hands the destinies of Liberal legislation in England." It is something, too, that we are not a whit behind the chief of our brethren of other denominations in the readiness with which we co-operate with them in any philanthropic or Christian undertaking, and in the sincerity and emphasis with which we pronounce the Catholic benison, "Grace be with ALL them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity."

If, then, to-day, or any day, we offer criticisms on existing defects, or if in any of our enterprises we ask for the selection of a more excellent way, it is not in derogation of our position or claims as Independent Churches. Nay, it is in assertion of our loyalty—in pledge of our devotion—that we love and labour that every line of our rubric and every detail of our practice may be as primitive and as apostolic as our principles. There are three ways in which the inter-dependence of our Independent Churches may be illustrated:—1, In Reputation; 2, In Communion; 3, In Work.

1. In Reputation. What Church is there represented here that has not felt its own character affected by the good or the ill repute of the Churches in whose neighbourhood its lot may be cast? I remember, when commencing my own ministry in a district near Liverpool, where the principles of Independency were little understood, a member of our congregation was seen to emerge from our chapel wearing a white flowing beard—a curiosity then as rare (I speak on the authority of a chairman of the Congregational Union) as a razor is now. An observant Churchman who was passing by leaped, somewhat precipitately, to the conclusion that the newly-formed congregation consisted of the followers of Joanna Southcott. Our critic, however, was informed that he was mistaken; that we were Independents; that we were in fact (and that fact settled everything) “the same as Dr. Raffles.” Criticism was not only silenced, but satisfied. The broad robe of the doctor’s good name covered with the ample folds of its sanction the unknown and un-accredited community. We became, with a word, respectable.

But if this subject has its humorous side, it has also aspects sufficiently grave. Here and there may, perhaps, still be found an Independent Church, which, if its creed were formulated from its life, might run somewhat as follows:—“I believe that every Independent and every Independent Church has a perfect right to do just as it likes. It is at liberty to be as isolated, or as angular, or as ridiculous, or as contentious as it pleases; and no other Church has the slightest concern in the matter.” And if, in the interests of truth, however momentous, or even of peace, any outsider were to interpose, the act might be resented as an intrusion, as an assumption of an usurped authority; as, in fact, an attempt to tamper with the Divine liberties, the prescriptive, the indefeasible, the eternal prerogatives of an Independent Church! Of course, the perfect specimen of such a Church—like any other wonderful production of nature—is rare; but it is possible that many communities may, with more or less success, approximate towards this ideal of the independence of Independency.

On the contrary, we contend that such a spirit contravenes the essential principle on which the Church of Christ exists. If our Churches are, as we believe, members of the body of Christ—the body of which He is the soul—a perpetual incarnation—then have they relations with one another most loving, intimate, and profound; and the character and the reputation of every one must immediately affect the character and the reputation of the whole.

But if, then, no individual Christian and no individual Church lives to itself, ought we not to cherish a graver sense of responsibility, both as to our own demeanour and as to our public honour? Ought we not to be more frank in the terms we employ in transferring a member or an officer from one Church or one county to another? Why is it still possible, when a minister has culpably failed in one part of the country, for him to "turn up" in another part, and to bring fresh discredit upon his office and upon the Church? Why is it still possible for a deacon, who has been penurious or crotchety in one fellowship, to carry with him a letter of commendation, full of bland platitudes that say nothing about his sins? Why, too, is not a just vigilance exercised with regard to the character and reputation of Churches? Ought not the persuasions, the arguments, even the remonstrances, of sister communities, to be brought to bear upon a Church which, by any grave lack of consistency, may sully the fair name and public honour of those by whom it is surrounded?

Not long ago a place of worship (not an Independent) was pointed out to me, the congregation of which had exceeded the exploits of the Kilkenny cats: there was literally *nothing* left, and the building was closed. And if anywhere any Church should be found among us that emulates such a career, surely it should be aided as early as possible to come to a like end. It has been said of some men that they never performed so grateful a service to the world as when they passed out of it; and if we know of any Church that persists in gross inconsistency, and is obdurate in its impenitency, ought not every other Church and every other minister to stand aloof from it, until it arrives at a painless, or, for that matter, a painful extinction?

"Whatsoever things are of good report." Jealously let us guard our reputation as Churches, and as jealously the public reputation of the whole. Let every community remember that the good name of all our Churches is committed to its trust. Let us give honour to whom honour is due, and win honour in return. Nay, let us remember that the estimation in which our Churches are held touches the honour of Christ. Let us catch something of the solicitude and awe of the ancient leader of Israel, when, fearing that disaster and disgrace might befall the chosen people of God, and bring dishonour even on the Most High, he bowed himself in reverent importunity, and exclaimed, "And what wilt Thou do unto Thy great Name?"

Yes, in reputation we are inter-dependent.

2. In Communion. I desire to employ this word in its broadest sense—to signify all that pertains to the union and communion of life in our Churches. For this life we hold in common. We may be independent in name; but we are inter-dependent in fact, in much that nourishes the gifts and graces of the Church. Isolation would mean both narrowness and exaggeration, both formalities and vagaries. Let a plant draw all its nutriment from one source, from one root, instead of gathering nourishment from every passing breeze and every falling shower, and it would become sickly and deformed. And let a Church feed—so to speak—upon itself, instead of breathing the common air, and throbbing with a common life, and drawing strength from the many gifts and graces of the fellowship of Churches, and it must suffer injury, and inflict it.

Now “there are” in the Church, says the apostle, “diversities of gifts—differences of administrations—diversities of operations”—“all these worketh that one and the selfsame spirit;” and all “to profit withal.” One Church is not endowed with every gift of every kind: these are the rich possession of the many. The treasures of wealth—the storehouse of learning—the wise counsel—the statesmanlike grasp of policy—the ready pen or tongue—the might of eloquence—the contemplative piety that looks into the deeper things of God: such gifts as these are not all entrusted to one Church; and if they were, they would be but talents to be used for the enrichment of all. There may be many parts, many faculties and functions; but they, ‘being many, are one body.’ “Now, ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.” . . .

But perhaps the highest gift of all is when, in the midst of our Churches, there wells up some new and overflowing fulness of spiritual life. Like as in some lofty mountain height the warmth of returning spring unlocks the bands of ice, and unseals the fountains that pour their waters into the lake, until at last, overflowing their banks, they find new channels and break down the valleys, singing the sweet songs of many waters, and refreshing the thirsty plains; so has it often been, and so is it to-day, in the history of our Churches. And in the human soul, or in individual Church community that has thus been blessed with the deeper fulness of the life of God, there awakes the consciousness that such blessing is not for itself alone, and it comes to share the eagerness of the apostle when he exclaimed: “I long to see you, that I may IMPART—IMPART unto

you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established, that is, with the mutual faith both of you and me."

Yes, all our Churches are inter-dependent in the union and communion of life.

3. In Work. No one can have watched the later history of our Independent Churches without thankfully observing a growing willingness to unite together in Church effort and enterprise. Time was when, for instance, if a chapel had to be built, it was mainly the result of the toils and sacrifices of some one wise master-builder. A Thomas Wilson, for instance, encouraged some minister to the work, and he went forth, a solitary beggar, to plead for guineas. Such men rendered in their day a noble service; but all such individual and isolated effort is inferior in spirit and in result to the combined exertions of confederated communions. New Churches are now planted, not as splits of the disaffected, but as honoured sons who have served well in their father's house, and who go forth with a father's blessing, to thrill with new joy the blood that perhaps begins to run chill in the veins of happy and honoured age.

Illustrations abound of the value and of the results of this inter-dependence, this mutual helpfulness in work. In the county of Nottingham it has led to more being done in the last ten years in the way of Church extension than in the two previous centuries. . . . We are feeling that there is no work in which others can be invited to participate that should be done alone; we are rejoicing, not in our solitude, but in a oneness of life—oneness with each other and with Christ. Let us show that the freest independence is not incompatible with perfect adjustment—not the mechanical adjustment of a machine, but the willing subordination of part with part, the unity of a sympathetic and intelligent life.

Let us show by a growing realisation of our oneness with Christ and our oneness with each other that the mere independence of our Churches without a happy practical inter-dependence is an impossibility. Let the weak among us look up with trustfulness and thankfulness to the strong; and let the strong be glad to bear the burdens of the weak, and not live merely for selfish gratification—"to please themselves." Let the young seek counsel of the experienced, and let the wise not be vain of their wisdom. Then shall we feel more deeply than ever our identity of interest, of hope, and of reward. We shall consciously breathe the same air, speak the same thing, be bound with the same chain, weep the same tears,

thrill with the same joy, and strive to be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

We shall glory still in the independence of our Churches; but the crown of our glory will be our willing helpfulness, our Catholic temper, our mutual love—the acknowledged, practical, affectionate spirit in which we recognise the obligations and the privileges that arise out of the inter-dependence of our Independent Churches.

NEW YEAR'S EVE.

“Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.”—TENNYSON.

“RING in the Christ!” O patient, faithful Lord,
And dost Thou wait for hands of ours to ring?
Dost Thou still put the splendour from Thy brow,
To hold Thy cross up to a faithless world?
Our doors are barred, but still Thou standest there,
And knockest patiently the livelong night:
We hear the knock, but as we heard it not!
To some Thou comest with fair Plenty's horn—
Rich fields of harvest, and a golden store:
We take Thy gifts, and straightway pride *ourselves*;
And still Thou waitest, knocking patiently!
Sometimes Thou comest with Thine angel—Death,
Taking our darlings from our clinging arms,
If haply we may raise our weeping eyes
To see *Thee* standing, waiting patiently!
But when our tears are over, we look down
Mourning—“The earth is dark—heaven far away.”
Sometimes Thou comest with that flaming sword
Which drove our parents from their Paradise—
The fire and the brimstone which fell down
On Sodom and Gomorrah in their sins—
And then we cry, “O fell disease and pain!
We must be wise; find better ways to sin,
To crucify our Lord, nor feel the pain”—
And still Thou standest waiting patiently!
And dost Thou wait for hands of ours to ring?

Over the snow fields, and the bleak, bare hill—
 Over the restless city, whose pure snow
 Lies smutched and draggled with the mire of men—
 Comes the New Year, fresh and unstained to all ;
 And One comes with it, waiting patiently—
 Comes bearing still His cross aloft for us !
 O friends ! and shall He bear it still in vain ?
 Shall we not take it, bear it joyfully,
 Deny ourselves, and follow, follow Him ?
 " Lord, what shall each one do ? " When thus we ask,
 Without a reservation or a care
 Beyond the answer, He will tell us what.
 He has a post for every one of us,
 And His the hand alone can place us there,
 And His the love alone sustain us there—
 Place and sustain, instruct and comfort us.
 Seek we no more ! no crowns ! the while our King,
 Dethroned, waits patiently our tardy love.
 We want no crown, O Christ ! beyond Thy love.

* * *

I sang my *Miserere* and looked up,—
 And lo, a strange light shone athwart the earth—
 The midnight earth, with countless watching stars—
 The midnight earth, with silent tracts of snow—
 The midnight earth, whose silence breaks in peals
 Of joy-insisting music—joy and hope !
 O sweet strange bells, from many a house of God !
 O strange white Light, which lighteth every one !
 O airs of heaven, close upon each soul !
 O Father ! Saviour ! dwelling in our midst ;
 We know Thou art ! and wait for all the rest.
 And if Thou usest our weak baby hands
 To make Thy " pathway straight," how blest we are !
 So use them, Lord ! Use hands, and hearts, and lives.
 " Ring in the Christ " who reigns Omnipotent !"

Mrs. Mellinson.

◆

THE Spirit of Christ sweetly calms the soul of a suffering believer, not by taking away all sense of pain, but by overcoming it with the sense of His love.

THOUGHTS—GRAVE AND GAY.

THE following sentences are extracted from a recent leading article in the *Times*, a journal supposed to state facts and to reflect public opinion. The agricultural labourer "has everything done for him. All his wants are provided for, all his contingencies anticipated. His diet is simple and unvarying, his hours of work moderate, his climate just that which suits him."

A story is told of a late premier, that having a Garter and Order of the Thistle to bestow, he was advised to give them to people whom (to avoid wounding susceptibilities) we will call Lord Y. and Lord Z. "Give the Thistle to Z.?" said the minister. "Why, he'd eat it."

The darkest day in any man's earthly career is that wherein he fancies that there is some easier way of gaining a dollar than by squarely earning it.

Pity expresses itself in words, often relieves itself by a look. Charity asserts itself in gifts. A man may be full of pity and yet extremely empty-handed.

If reproof doth not savour of humanity, it signifieth nothing. It must be like a bitter pill, wrapped in gold and tempered with sugar, otherwise it will not go down, or work effectually.

In a message to the members of an art class at Nottingham, Mr. Ruskin recently remarked that they have "empty little egg-shells of heads." Not one in a million of them, he adds, could ever be great in anything. We suppose this observation was intended as a specimen of thoughtful discrimination of character, and to encourage the young in their study of the beautiful.

Thirty or forty years ago—I recollect the time very well—there was a great fever and mania of speculation, and everybody went into everything—they generally came out with nothing. I recollect quite well the advertisement of a Great Sunflower Company, and if anybody had proposed so unsubstantial a speculation as the equinoctial line, people would have taken shares in that. Now at that time there was a very ingenious fellow; if I could remember his name I would immortalise him. He was a very ingenious fellow, and he put out a prospectus. He was what they call the "promoter" of a great company, which was to have great capital, and a great

number of shares, and great profits. All this was to work a great invention. Everything was great about it; but what it was was a great secret; indeed, it was so profound a secret that until all the money was paid in nobody was to know what it was. Now that is the Conservative policy at this moment. They have a policy which they offer for the coming election, but it is a profound secret. When you have all given your votes and returned a Conservative majority perhaps they will tell you what it is.—*John Bright.*

The race of mankind would perish did they cease to aid each other. From the time that the mother binds the child's head, till the moment that some kind assistant wipes the death-damp from the brow of the dying, we cannot exist without mutual help. All, therefore, that need aid have a right to ask it from their fellow-mortals; no one who holds the power of granting can refuse without guilt.—*Sir Walter Scott.*

We know not how our Lord God is carrying on His building. Here we see only the scaffolding, with its beams and boards. But in that life we shall see God's building and house; and then we shall wonder, and shall indeed rejoice that we have endured temptation.

A real Christian loves close, pointed, searching preaching, and seeks not the ministry of those who speak enticing words of man's wisdom.

Quiet is not idleness. "Study to be quiet and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands." Quiet is not indifference. Quiet is not sloth. Quiet is the work of a soul trusting in God—in no hurry while all eternity is before it, and in no doubt since God Almighty rules the universe.

He would read a letter published in one of those papers—not a squib, but a letter written by the vicar of a parish in one of the great colliery districts:—"Sir,—May I appeal through your columns to our brethren in the faith who are blessed with catholic privileges to help a very poor mission amongst the collieries, by sending us any of the following necessaries for our new church? We want Eucharistic vestments, albs, stoles, and maniples, altar furniture (except antependia), altar linen, a sacring bell, processional crucifix and candlesticks, acolytes' sash and cassocks and zucchetts, a cope, thurible and boat, sanctuary lamps, a confessional. Any of the above-

mentioned articles will be very thankfully received by — A. H. MATTHEWS, Rector. Dudley Station, near Newcastle-on-Tyne." He asked whether that was not a disgrace to England? These are the men who sneer at those who go forth with the simple Gospel message, which the Apostle Paul had declared to be the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.—*Rev. J. Thain Davidson.*

CHURCH NEWS OF THE MONTH.

"MR. BRIGHT has spoken," says the *English Independent*, "and the Liberal party is reunited." But is not this exultation a little premature? Are we quite safe in hallooing so long before we are out of the wood? We do not, indeed, undervalue the weight of the words employed by Mr. Bright. We hail them with satisfaction and gratitude. But Mr. Bright—influential as is his position—is not the prime minister, is not the government, is not even the minister of education. And so long as Mr. Forster is at the head of the Education Department, and so long as that department is occupied by gentlemen who are devoted to the spread of sectarianism, we prefer to wait, and not to believe till we see. The very latest disclosures of the department reveal the right honourable gentleman and his staff engaged in their accustomed exercises of cantering over religious difficulties and Christian consciences. Still, we do not despond. The right will win. The people who, under professed love for national education, are airing their own sectarian interests, will go to the wall; and national education—at last freed from all fetters and all feuds—will spread far and wide, pure and free as the air we breathe, the birthright of every child in the land.

But if Mr. Forster yields anything to our just demands, it will not be by virtue of their mere justice. It will be because the government is made to believe that there is a fixed and irreversible resolution on the part of true Liberals that, unless concessions are made, the days of the Liberal party and of Liberal government are numbered. "Cabinet secrets," said Mr. Bright, playfully, "are not made till November;" those secrets will not be allowed to transpire for some time to come; the exact facts will not be known till Parliament meets. Therefore we say to every Nonconformist committee, to every Nonconformist elector, and to every Englishman who,

as Mr. Bright remarks, "is more concerned for education than for sect," and desires "to create harmony where now only discord prevails,"—we say, believe no one, believe nothing, but in the equity of your demands, in your own strong resolutions, and in Him who will defend the right. Rest if you will—but rest on your arms, at your guns.

The Duke of Argyle recently mentioned, by way of showing how strong the Scottish Establishment is, that it had raised £500,000 for the Endowment Scheme since 1853. It is a striking circumstance that the Free Church has during the same period raised, without beat of drum, over £1,000,000 for church building, and that it is the Voluntary Free Church which is actually providing religious ordinances for the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

Mr. Spurgeon has lately remarked that to compel him "to support the present Popish Church of England is an act of tyranny." "He rejoiced," he said, "that during the twenty years of his ministry nobody had had a table, stool, or candlestick taken away for church-rates towards washing *his* surplice, nor had he been supported by rates levied on *any* persons against their will. All that had been received had been the proceeds of pure willingness." For the erection of the Tabernacle, £30,000; Almshouses and Schools, £6000; Orphanage, freehold, £20,000; Pastors' College (when completed), £12,000; Fund for advancing Loans without interest to chapels in debt, £4500; Lands belonging to the Orphanage, £27,000; Property for endowment of Almshouses, £3150; total, £102,650. The Colportage Society connected with the Metropolitan Tabernacle now employs nineteen agents. "This last," says Mr. Spurgeon, "is growth; but if good people knew the worth of the agency, they would soon increase the number to ninety or more. No better work is done under heaven."

A Liverpool clergyman—the Rev. W. R. Trench—has recently made application to the School Board for permission to give religious instruction in a Board School at his own cost. His proposals are thus stated:—1. Many children of Protestant parents resident in this district attend your schools in Love-lane, and by my advice and wish. 2. It is my desire to give to all children under my care more religious teaching than can be accomplished by means of Sunday-schools only, which, moreover, many children are unwilling to attend owing to poor clothes. 3. I believe that many parents who are now unwilling to send their children to your school would be induced to do

so if they knew that they were there daily receiving religious instruction from the clergyman of the parish. 4. My application, therefore, is, that I may be permitted to pay a rent to your Board for the use of some part of your school-buildings during a portion of each day—say three-quarters of an hour before the commencement of morning school—for the purpose of giving religious instruction to those children of Protestant parents who are in attendance at the school, and are willing to receive it. We hope the request will in due time be favourably considered. “It is not unlikely,” says the *Nonconformist*, that the public may eventually sanction such a scheme as Mr. Trench’s. It certainly offers a practical solution of the religious difficulty, and in a manner that has more than once been approved. It takes the religious instruction out of the hands of Boards—at least, that would be its effect—and leaves it to denominational zeal. But before we decide in its favour, we have to ask what would be its probable operation? In all small country parishes, at least, would not every Board School become a Church of England school?”

The site selected for the edifice which is about to be built for the Rev. David Thomas, D.D., by the congregation now worshipping in Stockwell Chapel, is at the junction of Jeffrey’s-road with Clapham-road. The value of the plot of land is estimated at £3000; but, through the liberality of the proprietor, who is a member of Dr. Thomas’s Church, it has been purchased for little more than half that amount.

The congregation and friends of the Rev. J. Kelly, of Liverpool, have recently presented him with an address, and a purse containing a cheque for £2700. The amount has been contributed by nearly three hundred individuals, in sums varying from a shilling to one hundred guineas.

The Rev. Henry Wonnacott, late of Luton, has become the pastor of Albion Church, Hull; the Rev. W. Mottram, of Highworth, of the Church at Melksham; and the Rev. S. Haymes, late of Spilsby, of Boston-road Chapel, Brentford.

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AND

Friend of the People.

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FREDERICK S. WILLIAMS,

EDITOR

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RUTH FREDEGAR;
OR, CLOUDS AND SUNSHINE.

By MARY SHERWOOD.

CHAP. I.—WAITING FOR THE DAYLIGHT.

PENGARVA is an odd-looking little village, almost as odd-looking as its name. It is on the rugged Cornwall coast, and consists chiefly of one long straggling line of whitewashed cottages, built on the strip of land that lies between the sea line and the high cliffs which shelter them from the northern blasts. Above, quite high on the cliffs, stands the church, a grey, time-battered edifice, which has weathered the storms of full five hundred years, and looks as if it might weather as many more. Around it lies the churchyard, darkened by ancient yews, and set thick with gravestones, some mossed and crumbling, the names once graven on them long since worn away, and others telling of the old men and children, the wives and mothers of Pengarva, who sleep below. Some telling, alas! of strong men—husbands, brothers, fathers—who are sleeping, not under the green turf in the still churchyard, but “tossed with tangle and with shells,” away under the great heaving waves which are ever surging restlessly around that rock-bound coast.

For Pengarva is a fishing village, and nearly every man in it gets a living for himself and his family by his boat and nets; or if he has them not of his own, by going out with those who have. It is a pretty sight, on a fine summer's day, to see the rippling sunlit sea dotted over with the little craft, rising and curtseying on the waves, their brown sails set, and the wind carrying them lightly on; while the fishermen, brave, hardy-looking fellows as they are, throw out their nets and wait for the draught, or drop deep into the sea the trap-like baskets, which they bring up presently heavy with the crabs and lobsters which, once having found their way within those treacherous wickers, only come out to die.

It is a pretty sight, I say, on a still summer's day, to watch the little brown-sailed craft dancing out to sea, away and away; for sometimes the boats will be out for several days together, and go some miles from the shore, coming back with heavy loads of fish, which are sent away at once to the markets of the nearer towns. But in the winter time, when seas are rough and winds are high—

and yet wife and children must be fed—then it is not always a pleasant sight to see the little brown-sailed craft putting out. There are stormy nights sometimes, when mothers and wives lie quaking in their beds, listening to the roaring of the winds and waves, and praying God to keep safe those who are out upon the deep. And sometimes, if the storms run high and have risen suddenly, as those Atlantic storms often do, before the boats which are far out have had time to make for land, then one or other of them will go down before its fury, or be dashed in pieces on the rocks, and one brave man and another will go down with it, leaving his children fatherless and his wife a widow.

That is how it comes to pass that there are so many stones in Pengarva churchyard with no graves beside them, only upon them the names of the dead who are lying coldly elsewhere, fathoms deep beneath the salt sea waves.

It is on a dull March day that my story begins; a dull, wild day, and towards sundown. The sky had been clear enough the evening before, and the wind not much more than would serve to fill the sails of the boats as they put out to sea, each carrying its little crew of hardy fishermen, who had said good-bye to wife and child, and sailed away, taking with them two or three days' provisions, for mackerel are scarce this season, and the boats have to go out some distance from the land sometimes before they can make up their full "take" of fish. A whole fleet of these small craft had put out, as I have said, from Pengarva the evening before; and the Pengarva women had watched them away, standing in their cottage doors, straining their eyes after those they loved, until the brown sails became only like so many brown specks upon the foam-flecked heaving sea, as the dusk deepened and the night fell. And then they had gone in and shut the door, and set the candle on the sill of the uncurtained window, and put their children snug and warm into their beds, and had sat down alone by the bit of blinking fire, to wish that the boats were safe at home again.

They had wished then without many anxious fears; for, as I have said, the western wind was no more than the fishermen had wanted to fill their sails. But it had risen in the night, and towards morning it had chopped round suddenly to south-west, and clouds had rolled up and gathered thickly overhead; and through the wild March day until now there are all the signs of a stormy night at hand, and the ground-swell is widening on the beach, with sullen, stifled thunder,

which bodes mischief coming, and the breakers are tossing themselves white upon that long reach of rocks which stretches out seawards, and the wind and tide are rising fast together, and the sun is going down.

Most of the boats that went out to sea last night have put back to shore during the day, empty as they went, and are lying now high and dry upon the beach. But two or three others have stood out to sea, their crews risking the chance of wind and wave for the sake of the cargo with which they hope by-and-by to return. For there is a good market, and there are good prices to be had for their fish just now; and wife and children, God bless them! must have food and raiment found by the brave hearts and strong hands that toil for them by night and day, through storm even as through calm. Doubtless the men are wishing now that they too had put back with the rest before the storm had begun to gather and the wind had risen too high to make it prudent for them to venture shorewards. Their only safety now is to stand out to sea, with their sails close-reefed, and wait till the storm has burst and spent itself.

Michael Tredegar is in one of these boats, he and his eldest boy, Reuben, and Simon Reeth, his partner; for they own the boat between them—one of the best and trimmest little craft in all Pengarva. Michael has one of the best and trimmest little wives, too—Mary Tredegar. The boat is named after her, and his son Reuben is one of the finest lads in the village. You would say so if you could have seen him as he sailed out with the others the night before, as tall as his father, though he is scarce sixteen, lithe and well-made, with his black hair lying in crisp curls upon his bright open forehead. His mother may well be proud of him, as she is. So would any mother who owned such a son, and such a husband too, for there is no better one in all Pengarva than her Michael.

Alas, for the women who have treasures such as these out at sea, with storms brewing like the one which is gathering to-night! Mary Tredegar looks out with a sinking heart from her cottage door over that blackening, hungry, angry sea, and listens to the muttering of the wind and the hollow roar of the breakers on the beach. The sun has gone down, and the wind keeps rising still. Night creeps on. It is blowing a hurricane now, and through the darkness the waves are sounding like thunder as they tear and toss themselves against the rocks. The candle is burning on the sill in the uncurtained window. The three little ones are in bed. Mary and her

eldest girl, Ruth, are cowering with quaking hearts beside the log fire on the cottage hearth, starting and shivering at each fresh onslaught of the blast, which seems at times as if it would tear off the very roof above their heads, so relentless is its fury.

It is no use looking out any longer into the storm: earth and sky and sea are all wrapped alike in one veil of pitchy darkness. There is nothing to be seen; only that fearful roaring of the wind to be heard, and the booming, like a thousand cannons, of the waves. God be thanked for those who are safe at home! God help those who are fighting, perhaps, at this moment in the darkness for their lives upon that cruel sea, face to face with danger and with death!

(To be continued in our next.)

FAITH IN CHRIST.

IT is possible that the reader has asked, "What must I do to be saved?" and has found difficulty in the very simplicity of the answer: "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." And yet, do you not see that this is the only answer that Scripture gives—the only answer that can be given? You cannot save yourself, for you cannot forgive your own past sins, or make atonement for them; and you cannot by your own strength live without sin in the future. Your fellow-man cannot save you. Rites and ceremonies cannot save you. Your own good desires or deeds cannot save you. There is One, and One only, who can save you. There is no other name given among men, whereby you can be saved, but His. He is a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins. He has made atonement. He can pronounce forgiveness. He can save unto the uttermost: save from hell, save from sin, save the soul alive. He can pardon it, purify it, bestow on it the blessedness of the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile, and can give it immortal happiness in the world beyond the grave. Since, therefore, the sinner cannot save himself, and since Christ can save him, all that the sinner can do is *to take Christ at His word, and to accept the salvation that Christ has provided*—to believe that He meant what He said, and can do what He promised, when He declared that He

had "come to seek and to save that which was lost," and that "he that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out." In other words, *the sinner must trust in Christ to save him.*

But it may be that you have not done this: that the only thing that you are required to do, the only thing that you can do, you have not done. Christ says, "Believe in Me," and you have not believed. He says, "Trust in Me," and you have not trusted. He says, "Come unto Me," and you have not come. You have attended the house of God, but you have not believed Him; you have been anxious about your salvation, but you have not believed Him; you have tried to reform your outer life, but you have not believed Him; you have prayed, but you have not believed Him. The very thing that you have been invited and commanded to do, you have not done. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,"—believe that He is infinitely able and infinitely willing to save you.

Those who are engaged in that most Christlike of all works—watching for souls, have frequently to deal with persons who make mistakes on the subject of faith.

"I believe," said a young man who was in great anxiety about his soul to a friend of the writer, "I believe all that the Bible says concerning Jesus Christ, but I feel so hard of heart and so unhappy, that I am sure I am not a Christian."

"But are you sure," was the reply, "that you do believe what the Bible says concerning Jesus Christ?"

"Yes," he promptly rejoined.

"Let me see, then," exclaimed our friend, "where the difficulty is." He took his Bible from his pocket—for he always carried one—and turning to the 3rd chapter of the Gospel by St. John, read, "He that believeth on the Son (that is, believes in Him as a Saviour) *hath* everlasting life" (John iii. 36). "Do you believe that?"

"Yes."

"Do you believe in Him as *your* Saviour?"

The young man paused for a while, and then answered, "I would like to do so."

"But surely you know whether you are believing in Him as your Saviour or not. Have you ever asked God for Jesus' sake to pardon your sins, and to give you His Holy Spirit?"

"Yes, a hundred times."

"Well; and will you now believe God if He tells you that for Jesus' sake they are blotted out?"

"Yes, I will."

"Are you sure you will?"

"I am sure."

Then reopening his Bible, our friend read to the eagerly listening inquirer the words, "I am the Lord, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King. I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins" (Isa. xliii. 15, 25). "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. i. 15); and "him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37).

"Do you believe *that*?"

"Yes, yes," he exclaimed; "I see it now."

"And do you now believe on the Son of God as your Saviour?"

"Yes."

"And what, then, *have* you?"

"I have everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation."

"How do you know that?" our friend insisted.

"Because God says it, and I believe it."

"Exactly. *First, know what He says, and then believe it, because He says it.* Remember, feeling is not faith. He who believes because he feels, is not believing God, but believing in his feeling. And if his feeling goes, his faith goes too. But the man who rests on God's word, rests upon a rock. He knows that his salvation does not depend upon himself, but upon Him who died for us, and rose again. He knows what he believes, and he knows why he believes it. The tide of feelings may ebb and flow; but he who rests his faith on God knows that, 'though the mountains may depart, and the hills be removed, His loving-kindness shall *never* depart, and the covenant of His peace shall never be broken.'"

"He that hath made his refuge God,
Shall find a most secure abode;
Shall walk all day beneath His shade,
And there at night shall rest his head."

The Gospel does not say, Trust in your trust; believe in your belief; have faith in your faith; but it says, Trust in Christ; believe in Christ; have faith in Christ. The beauty of seeing is never to

think of your eyes, but to see. And the beauty of faith is never to think of herself, but only and wholly on Christ.

"Faith," it has been well said, "is the touchstone of the Christian—faith in the crucified and risen Redeemer, in Jesus the Son of God. This must be the flash of heavenly light to break in upon the dark chambers of the unconverted soul; this must be the fire to warm the world-frozen currents of man's heart, and suffer them to flow on in living streams towards the foot of the love-pledging cross of Christ. And when dark and stormy thoughts of doubt and sorrow begin to gather round, when we feel ourselves about to enter the thickening mists which are sweeping rapidly down upon things temporal, and veil as yet the things which are eternal, oh, then how deep and unspeakable the comfort to feel that there is one sure Anchor which will hold the drifting soul, to rejoice in a faith which sees not our own poor doings, but trusts all to Him who alone can save." *

AUNT FANNY'S STORIES.

NO. I.

A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

"AUNTIE, we are going to sit up and hear the bells ring in the New Year, to-night. Mamma says we may," cried my nephews and nieces, one New Year's Eve about ten o'clock, appearing, to my astonishment, at the door of my room, where I was sitting by a bright fire.

"Nonsense!" I replied; "you'll be much better asleep in your beds."

"Oh, no; we shouldn't sleep. And mamma promised us last year that we should sit up."

"The idea of your remembering a year ago; and the idea of your not sleeping! Why, you won't keep awake anyhow till twelve o'clock. And I don't want you here," I continued, in my gravest voice. "I meant to have a quiet time to myself."

"We remember last year quite well. And we are quite wide awake, and shall not go to sleep a bit. And you've got to have us;

* Home Mission Tracts. "Faith: What is it?" Snow, Ivy Lane, Paternoster Row. Price one halfpenny, or 3s. 6d. per 100.

and we are going to be very quiet; and I daresay you'll tell us a story to keep us good."

So saying, they entered in a body, and took immediate possession of my room and of myself; and I saw that my chance of silent reflection was over, unless indeed the little intruders fulfilled my prophecy and went to sleep, of which there seemed not the slightest prospect at present. Perhaps it was as well. Quiet thoughts at such epochs as Christmas, or the close of the year, especially in the case of people with lives like mine—lives, if not lonely, yet without near ties, and with a good deal of leisure—are apt to become sad thoughts. And the presence of children, and their innocent talk, with its mixture of wisdom and simplicity, is a better preparation for beginning a new year, than the idle regrets which too often mingle with the retrospective reveries of middle age. So I welcomed my pets—my thoughtful Alice, my roguish Lizzie, my bright Harry, my ever-questioning Bobby, and my bonny wee Katie, who could not of course be expected to sit up, but who flatly refused to stop in bed when she found out what was going on, and whose golden curls fell over a little red flannel dressing-gown. "So she's all ready when she wants to go," Alice said. What Katie wanted seemed to be law among the rest. Before long the blue eyes had closed, and my audience had lessened by one. Alice carried the little sister back to the nursery, and then came and sat down by me, saying, "Now, Auntie, a nice New Year's story, to last till the bells ring." This modest request being seconded by the others, in due time I began.

"A good many years ago I spent a New Year's Day at a large house in the country. There were plenty of children in it, and a kind father and mother, who had plenty of money; and a great many preparations had been going on in order that New Year's Day might be a very happy one. Presents had been got ready to put on every one's plate at breakfast time." (Here knowing looks pass between my listeners, and Lizzie whispers to Bobby, "Auntie doesn't know, does she?") "A number of little cousins had been invited to spend the day, and there was nothing but laughing and merriment and anticipations of pleasure. Children always expect a new year will bring them more happiness than the old one has done, and there is no harm in this, if at the same time they will resolve that they will be better boys and girls in the new year; for if they carry out this resolve, it is very certain that they will be happier. But if they give up none of their little faults; if they do not try to be more

energetic, Alice; more careful, Lizzie; less mischievous, Bobby; and more obedient, Harry; why, they will find that a new year will bring them the same troubles, the same vexations, the same disappointments as the old.

“Well, in this family where I was staying, there was a little boy named Arthur. He was eight years old, and a very nice little fellow, full of fun, but never teasing either the cat or dog or his younger brothers and sisters; and he was very loving and affectionate to every one, especially to his mother. But he had a great fault. Arthur was not an obedient boy” (here Harry looked down); “and though this failing had cost him much trouble and disgrace and sorrow, he had not yet improved. He did not refuse to do what he was told; but would say, ‘Oh, yes, mamma;’ or, ‘Yes, I’ll do it, nurse;’ or, ‘No, papa, I won’t touch it;’ and then he would go away and forget all about the command and his promise. He used to be very sorry afterwards, but was rather fond of excusing himself by saying, ‘I meant to do it.’ But you see, children, if Arthur had plainly said, ‘I will not do what you tell me,’ naughty as it would have been, it would have given far less trouble; for then some one else could have been told to do it. But promising, and then neglecting his duty, caused more inconvenience than I can tell you. Gradually it came to be known all through the house that there was no trusting Arthur; and it is a very sad thing when any one, either a grown-up person or a little child, becomes untrustworthy. I can tell you it grieved Arthur’s mother very much, and she often talked to him seriously about it. Sometimes she feared that, if her little boy did not alter, some terrible lesson would come and teach him what her loving words could not teach.

“At the time of which I am telling you, Arthur was the merriest of the merry. All the winter he had longed for a pair of skates, and he had a shrewd suspicion that a mysterious-looking parcel that lay upon a certain table, with many more of the same sort, contained the wished-for treasure; and it looked like a hard frost, too. Hitherto Arthur had not been allowed to go skating with his elder brothers, chiefly, I suspect, because he could not be trusted; but he had great hopes that, among other delights, this one might come with the new year. And he had bought with his own pocket-money a wonderful spotted horse for little Jem, a baby brother; and a woolly lamb, that rattled, for Tottie, a baby sister; so that altogether he was in a very comfortable state of mind.

“That evening, being New Year’s Eve, you know, as it is now, and about this time, Arthur’s mamma was sitting in the nursery by the fire. The little ones had been put to bed, and Arthur was on a foot-stool by her side, with his head on her lap, a favourite position of his. He often used to ask for stories at such times, but to-night his mind was full of his own thoughts.

“‘Mamma,’ he said, presently, ‘do you think it will be a happy new year?’

“His mother took his curly head between her hands, and turned it towards her, so that she could look into his eyes. She was grave, but her voice was very kind, as she said, ‘Arthur, I think you may make it a happy new year, if you like. It is trying to be good, my boy, that makes us happy, and those who love us too. If you wish to make me so, you know how to do it. Will you try, my dear little son?’

“‘Yes, mother,’ said Arthur, the tears starting to his eyes; and he resolved that he would. He went to sleep thinking about it, and when he woke it was New Year’s Day. Such a bright, beautiful morning. A good beginning, as every one remarked, to another year. The children had been up as soon as ever it began to get light, and I am sorry to say Arthur had forgotten all last night’s resolves and his mamma’s talk. A dozen times, at least, before breakfast was over, his father had to tell him to do this, or not to do that; and so full was he of his own plans of pleasure, that he never saw his mother’s disappointed face.

One of Arthur’s bad habits had long been, sliding down the banisters. Now I daresay you boys have often done the same, and have thought it very good fun. I am not going to tell any tales, or ask any questions; but I think perhaps you have not yet given up the habit. No doubt the sensation is pleasant. Yes, you may laugh, but Auntie can remember quite enough about it to guess so much. But nevertheless it is a bad habit, and a dangerous one, and one that has caused a great deal of misery; and if a boy is so expert that there is no danger to himself, his example may tempt a younger brother into danger, which is far worse.

“Well, after breakfast on that new year’s morning, all the children trooped upstairs. They wanted to show their presents to nurse, and they wanted to get dressed, to go for a walk with their father. This was a special treat, and much appreciated by them all. He was waiting for them in the large stone hall, and the dogs were

bounding about, impatient to be off. Arthur was ready first: he ran along the landing, and, forgetting his parents' repeated injunctions, and his own repeated promises, he rushed to the banisters and began to slide down. Whether the sudden sight of his father in the hall below startled him, I do not know, but all in a moment he lost his balance, and over he went, falling heavily on to the stone floor. There was a crash, and then a silence, and in a few minutes all the household had gathered round the senseless child. He lay as if dead. A shriek from nurse, and a low moan from the poor mother, were the only sounds heard. The awestruck children followed their father as he carried the poor little fellow to his bed, while servants were sent off in frantic haste for the doctor. He soon arrived, and was shut into the darkened room with the boy and his parents, while the rest hovered about the passages, not daring to go in, yet unable to go away.

"One moment had changed everything. All the joy and brightness and beauty of that New Year's Day had vanished. Even the dogs seemed to understand the difference, and lay at their little master's door, whining.

"By-and-by there was a little news which cheered the children. Arthur had recovered his consciousness, and their father wished them all to go out, as the house was to be kept perfectly quiet. So there was a dreary walk, and then nursery tea, and bedtime, with old nurse drying her eyes at intervals, and hushing the little ones, who were too young to understand the necessity of quiet. So ended this New Year's Day, which was to have been so happy, and which had been so looked forward to. And although no one said so, the thought must have been in every mind that it was an act of disobedience that had caused all this misery. And, my children, how much worse this made the misery!

"For many weeks poor Arthur lay helpless and suffering upon his bed. The doctor could not tell at present what mischief had been done, or whether the mischief was to be cured. The whole system had received a severe shock, and perfect quiet was still enjoined. The little fellow was very patient, and his mother never left him night or day. I need not say that she never reproached him, but he remembered all about it when he became conscious, and putting his arms round her neck, he had whispered, 'Forgive me, dear mamma.' Yes, the lesson had come, but whether the boy would live to profit by it, was yet doubtful. By degrees, however, he got

better, and the kind doctor began to look more hopeful in his daily visits. He thought the weakness in the back might be outgrown. Arthur had always been a strong, healthy child, and his bright, cheerful disposition made his recovery more likely.

But as he felt stronger and better, the lying down, which the doctor still insisted on, became more irksome. Bright, frosty days, and the sound of his brothers' merry voices in the garden, were very trying for him to bear, but he never complained. Every one wondered at his patience. Only once did his fortitude really give way. His mother coming in, had found him sobbing as if his heart would break. He could not answer her questions, but covering his head in the bed-clothes, he cried till she became alarmed. 'Is this my patient little Arthur?' she said. 'Tell me what is the matter, my child.' And at last he told her. 'Oh, mamma,' he sobbed, 'I shall never walk again. I heard Jane say so to nurse. They were going past my door, and Jane said, "Nurse, do call Master Jem away from those stairs, or he'll be falling down and making himself a cripple for life, like poor Master Arthur." And nurse said, "Hold your tongue, Jane." But I heard it, mamma. And oh, what shall I do? I meant to be a soldier when I grew up, like Uncle Dick; but now I never can!' and he burst into fresh tears. His mother soothed and comforted him with her wise tender talk, on this and many other occasions when he became disheartened and weary; and before the spring flowers were over, all in the house knew that God had been very good to them, and had spared dear little Arthur, for he was gradually getting well. He still had to be careful, and to lie down every day for several hours; but that was nothing when he could look forward to becoming a strong active boy once more. One day he called his mother to him as he lay upon the sofa, and said, 'Mamma, I think after all this will be a happy new year, don't you? Because I am going to try really to be obedient. Will that make you happy, mamma?' It did make her very happy, for she felt she could trust her boy now, and she knew that God had taught him the lesson that she could not teach, or rather He had made her teaching of real use. Little Arthur got quite well, thanks to God and the good doctor, and he did not break his resolutions; and he is alive now."

"And is that the end of the story, Auntie?" asked Alice.

"And did Arthur become a soldier when he grew up?" asked Bobby.

"You see we didn't go to sleep, Auntie," cried Lizzie, winking very hard to keep herself awake.

"I won't slide on the banisters any more, Auntie," said Harry.

"Hark, children, there are the bells; it is striking twelve. The old year is gone, the new year is beginning. God bless you, my darlings. Auntie wishes you all a 'Happy New Year.'"

PASTORAL VISITATION.

THESE is no moment of time more thickly sown with seeds of life or death, more full of eternal possibilities, than when one is brought in close personal contact with a *soul*, and one, above all, whom the Spirit has wounded. The still parlour, or the pastor's study, or the quiet walk in the fields, or even the corner of the crowded city thoroughfare, becomes the centre of attraction to at least two worlds. There may be strong reasoning, and wise persuasion, and solemn warning—there *must* be the clear truth, and faithful pointing out of the narrow way of life, to the balancing and hesitating soul.

But even the truth should be presented with a feeling heart, one made fine by the love of Christ, one that has lost all its pride, formalism, and bitterness, that is overrunning with a Christlike sympathy. One must truly love sinners before he can convert them. As one who is himself raised from the death of trespasses and sins by the blood of Jesus, he must talk to the dying soul of that dying and yet risen Redeemer, with words of faith, and feeling, and power. He will thus be the means of kindling in these dark, despairing souls, the feeble, it may be, yet immortal hope of Christ. They will awake to his affectionate and earnest entreaties, and the Holy Spirit will use him as a powerful instrument to apply to their hearts the renovating word.—*Rev. J. M. Hoppin.*

IN a town in Massachusetts there is a young man of fine talents for active life, who for years has been a cripple, a paralytic, and so helpless, that he would starve if left alone. As a friend was pitying his condition, he slowly raised his withered hand, "*God makes no mistakes.*" How noble the sentiment! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

ANERLEY NEW CONGREGATIONAL CHAPEL.

THE annexed engraving represents the new chapel about to be erected by the Congregationalists of Anerley, an important and growing suburb of the south of London. The Church was originated in 1856, by a friendly secession from that at Sydenham, then under the pastorate of the Rev. T. C. Hine. A small but neat edifice was erected for its use, and for some ten years was found adequate to the requirements of the neighbourhood. The congregation enjoyed no settled pastoral oversight till 1862, when the Rev. W. Hickman Smith (now Aubrey) became the minister. From that time to the present there has been a constant accession to the population, rendering necessary, first, enlargement of the present building to twice its original size, and erection of school-rooms, at a cost of £1500; and now the much larger extension projected in the erection of a new and far more commodious edifice, to seat some 1250 persons.

A commanding site in a main thoroughfare has been secured, the first freehold purchased under the provisions of Mr. Osborne Morgan's Site Bill, passed during the late session of Parliament. The Church has hitherto had to contend against the serious drawbacks to progress involved in an obscure and unsuitable situation. Thanks to the energy of our Nonconformist M.Ps., and the growing liberality of sentiment in both Houses of the Legislature, it will shortly take a position second to none in the neighbourhood. The cost, exclusive of ground and extras, is estimated at £8000. The style of the building is Romanesque, in red brick, relieved with white brick and Bath stone dressings. The interior is elliptical, with concentric pews, and a slightly rising floor. Altogether, we believe the new edifice will be an ornament to the locality, and a credit to the denomination. The architect is Mr. George Elkington, of Cannon Street, City. The present pastor is the Rev. Joseph Halsey, late student of Hackney College, who has just completed the sixth year of his ministry in Anerley. He will thankfully receive contributions to the Building Fund. The amount at present promised, including loan from the Chapel Building Society of £300, is something over £3500.

BELIEVE all the good you hear of your neighbour, and forget the bad.



ANERLEY NEW CONGREGATIONAL CHAPEL.

DR. LANDELS ON RITUALISM.

THE evil of Ritualism is one in which we cannot afford to part with one atom of our strength. The Ritualists are men whose efforts no wise man will despise. They bring to their work an amount of zeal, of energy, and some of them of talent and oneness of purpose, which makes them formidable foes; and they are engaged in an attempt which ought to rouse the active hostility of every man, who has a regard to his rights as a citizen and a man—an attempt, which if successful, will reduce Britons, who have so long boasted of their freedom, to a fettered herd of superstitious slaves, grovelling at the feet of a ghostly hierarchy.

Is it possible that England, the herald of freedom to the nations, the guiding star to which long-oppressed nationalities have looked in their struggles to be free,—is it possible that she will descend from her proud position at the bidding of a bastard Popery? Shall she prove herself unworthy of her martyred heroes by despising the heritage which their blood has bought? Shall she, the liberator of the nations, spend her revenues in forging fetters for her sons—fetters more intolerable than ever galled the limbs of slaves, fetters which enthrall the soul? By the memory of our martyred fathers, by the testimony borne to God's truth on the scaffold and at the stake, amid suffocating smoke and scorching flame, by the heritage they have bequeathed to us, and by the example they have set us, let the answer from every one be "No." Unanimous voting will not suffice; laudation and tall talk will not suffice; but by the enlightened exposition and application of the principles of God's Word—by such a representation of those principles as will commend them to the attention of intelligent men,—by this alone, with God's blessing, can success be expected.

Never, however, were the prospects of victory so bright as they are to-day. The Establishment which has been so long the greatest barrier to progress, is falling into pieces through internal strife, and if testimony is now borne against the evil it will not be unheeded. At all events, it will shame Evangelical Churchmen out of the false position they have occupied, and the temporary policy they have pursued so long, on pain of their sinking beneath the contempt of the civilized world. The dial of the world will not move backward; God's truth is mighty, and will prevail. Amid the confused dia-

I can hear a voice rising loud and clear : it is the voice of one crying in the wilderness—"Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God;" but above that there rises a voice mightier and more majestic far: it is not the voice of the herald now, but the voice of the King, who, speaking in the plenitude of His power, says, for the encouragement of His witnessing Church, "Behold, I make all things new!" O brethren! it comes, and it is not far distant.

"I feel the soul in me draw near
The mount of prophesying;
In the bleak wilderness I hear
A John the Baptist crying;
In the far east I see upleap
The streaks of first forewarning;
And they that sowed the light shall reap
The golden sheaves of morning."

NOT HAPPY IN HEAVEN?

BY AN EX-MISSIONARY.

"**R**ULE Britannia, Britannia rules the waves; Britons never, never, never, shall be——"

"Good-morning, sir."

So said John Gardner, of No. 2, Little Harp Court, as my appearance at his open door suddenly cut short his vocal solo, as described above.

"Good-morning," said I in reply. "I hope you are well, this bright morning?"

"Much better in health than in temper, sir."

"Indeed!" said I. "One might have supposed you were very happy, by your singing so merrily."

"Happy, sir!" replied he. "Happiness does not belong to poor people who have to work hard for a crust, as I do, without proper tools. We are no better off than slaves."

"But," said I, "you are a Briton, and I think if you had finished the sentence which my abrupt appearance so suddenly terminated, it would have been, 'Britons never shall be slaves.' If so, your song and your sentiment do not agree."

"But," said he, "as I did not compose the song, I am not responsible for it. I know what my feelings are upon the subject."

"Yes," I replied, "and I think I know them also. You believe in men's right to liberty, and to do just what they please?"

"Of course I do," said he.

I may here state that John Gardner was a Cockney by birth, a brushmaker by profession, a tippler by practice, and a wretched and miserable man in consequence; his wife, and their children also, suffering their full measure of poverty and woe. For although the whole family worked hard every day, the most of their earnings were spent at the "Irish Harp," at one end of the court, or at the "Barley Mow," which stood at the other end. And as Gardner spent all his evenings in drinking, their poverty was great and continuous. Having known this family for several years, I could always speak plainly without giving offence.

"But how do you know what I feel about this matter?" said Gardner.

"How can any one avoid knowing what your sentiments are, when your very appearance at once declares them? Your toes sticking through your aged boots, proclaim by the act their love of liberty. Your elbows, refusing to be confined within the limits of your coat-sleeves, push their way through the cloth, and announce to all beholders their warm attachment to freedom. Your very——"

"Come, come," said he, with a good-humoured smile, "it is too bad to make sport of my poverty thus. And it is hardly like yourself to do so."

"Well," I said, "you know I should not be likely to insult any man's poverty. But, honestly and candidly, is not your poverty your own fault? Is not your income sufficient, if wisely spent, to keep you and your wife and family in respectability and comfort? And is not the liberty you desire simply opportunity and means to spend the whole of your time in the same way and manner as you spend your evenings? Come, now, speak out truthfully."

"I admit that there is some truth in what you suggest," said Gardner.

"Is it not all true? Be sincere."

"Perhaps so," said he. "But look here, I could earn half as much more money if my tools were at home. They are at my uncle's (meaning the pawnbroker's), and he won't let me have them without the cash. And I have none. And I am miserable when I have to work without proper tools."

"But with your present love of drink, and the society found at

the 'Irish Harp,' more money would be an injury rather than a benefit."

He looked earnestly at me for a few seconds, and then said, "I wish I was a better man."

"Do you mean that?"

"I do. And you can help me to be a better man if you will. I have an uncle—my father's brother—living at Greenwich, who is a wealthy man. I went to see him the other day, and intended to ask him to lend me the money to get my tools out of pawn; but he was so displeased with my appearance, that I did not venture to ask him. Now if you would write to him, state my case, and my desire to do better, I believe he would help me through you. And if you can take my word, I promise that from this day I will try and become a sober man."

"If I should do so, and the application is successful, and you recovered your tools, and earned more money, I fear the temptation to the 'Irish Harp' would only be strengthened."

"Trust me, sir, and try me," said he. "I will make the attempt. May God help me to succeed!"

"He will if you earnestly ask Him."

I did as he requested. His uncle sent me the money. I went with him to the different pawnbrokers' shops where the tools were, and redeemed them. He was grateful, and he appeared determined to pursue a new course, or, as he said, "Gather himself up again." I visited him now more frequently than usual, and spoke words of encouragement and hope to him, and was gratified to find that he kept from the public-house, and was really seeking to get clothing for himself and family—working each evening, in order to avoid the temptation which unoccupied time would present, and of course this helped greatly in securing his object.

One day I remarked that he had on a former occasion said to me, "Happiness is not for poor people." I asked, "Is that true?"

His wife replied, "I don't think that we shall ever be really happy until we get to heaven."

"Then, Mrs. Gardner," said I, "you will never be happy; for I am sure neither you nor your husband could ever be happy in heaven."

"What, sir! not happy in heaven? Is not that the place of happiness?"

"Yes; but not for you."

"But why?" said both at once.

"For this simple reason. For more than four years I have tried much to persuade you both to attend a place of worship, but have not been successful, which shows me that you have no love for the house and worship of God. You have used all sorts of excuses not one of which would have kept you away if you had desired to attend. And therefore I take it that if you could not once, during the four years that I have known you, find one hour's happiness in the house and worship of God on earth, it would be utterly impossible for you to be happy in heaven, where the worship is eternal."

I stopped here; both were silent. Presently I said, "Am I right?"

They both confessed their inability to deny the force of my words. "But," Gardner said, "I believe in God's mercy and willingness to forgive sin."

"He is merciful, and willing to forgive sin," I replied; "and through what Jesus Christ has done, pardon may be secured on the condition of faith and repentance. But pardon alone would not make you happy in heaven, nor even take you there."

"Why not?" said both at once.

"Because, unless you were both made different in heart and feeling, there could be no fitness for the society and worship of heaven. You would not be happy for a day in the society of the Queen and the royal family, should you?"

"Of course we should not," said Gardner, "amongst the grand folks in the palace."

"Then do you not see that in your present state you could not be happy in the presence of God in heaven."

I left them to think over what I had said.

The next Sunday evening they were in the house of God, listening to the Gospel, and learning how human souls may not only be pardoned, but renewed and fitted for the society of heaven. Again and again they came to the sanctuary. Eventually they sent their children to the Sunday-school, decently clad, and their own attendance became regular and constant. In their home there was as great an alteration as in their personal appearance. In due time they removed to more respectable apartments in a better neighbourhood; and were able at last to say that they found happiness in the place of worship, and had good reason to hope they should be happy in heaven.

Many have been the grateful expressions uttered to me by both Gardner and his wife for the way in which I corrected their ideas respecting liberty and happiness, and for my instrumentality in leading them to the enjoyment of both.

Several years have passed since I last saw them, but I have every reason to hope and believe that the good work begun in them, and thus far carried on, has by Divine grace been continued, and that I shall meet them again in the better land.

Let those who seek the salvation of the poor bear in mind that a helping hand extended in temporal matters is often introductory to the higher purpose of spiritual good.

NO MOTHER.

SITTING in the schoolroom, I overheard a conversation between a sister and brother. The little boy complained of insults or wrongs received from another little boy. His face was flushed with anger. The sister listened awhile, and then, turning away, she answered, "I do not want to hear another word: *Willie has no mother.*" The brother's lips were silent, the rebuke came home to him, and, stealing away, he muttered, "I never thought of that." He thought of his own mother, and the loneliness of "Willie" compared with his own happy lot. "*He has no mother.*" Do we think of it when want comes to the orphan, and rude words assail him? Has the little wanderer *no mother* to listen to his little sorrows? Speak gently to him, then.

BORN.

IT is related, we believe, of the missionary, Samuel J. Mills, that when under deep conviction of sin, and oppressed with the burden of his guilt, he remarked to his godly mother who was conversing with him, that he wished that he had never been born! The good woman, standing erect before him, replied with great earnestness, "But you *are* born, and must live for ever, and you can't help it!" And that which was true of him, is also, reader, true of you—born for immortality.

"FOLLOWING ON."

SAVIOUR! I follow on,
 Guided by Thee,
 Seeing not yet the hand
 That leadeth me.
 Hushed be my heart and still,
 Fear I no further ill,
 Only to meet Thy will
 My will shall be.

Riven the rock for me
 Thirst to relieve,
 Manna from heaven falls,
 Fresh every eve;
 Never a want severe
 Causeth my eye a tear,
 But Thou art whispering near,
 "Only believe."

Often to Marah's brink
 Have I been brought;
 Shrinking the cup to drink,
 Help I have sought;
 And with the prayer's ascent,
 Jesus the branch has rent—
 Quickly relief He sent,
 Sweetening the draught.

Saviour! I long to walk
 Closer with Thee;
 Led by Thy guiding hand
 Ever to be;
 Constantly near Thy side,
 Quickened and purified,
 Living for Him who died,
 Freely for me!

*Rev. Dr. Charles S. Robinson,
 of New York.*

THOUGHTS—GRAVE AND GAY.

THE first time the Abyssinians saw the engines in a steam-vessel they were struck with amazement, and said that the English were a very clever people, for they had captured the devil, and put him in an iron box, and made him work.

It behoves us always to bear in mind that while actions are always to be judged by the immutable standard of right and wrong, the judgments which we pass upon men must be qualified by considerations of age, country, station, and other accidental circumstances; and it will then be found that he who is most charitable in his judgments is generally the least unjust.—*Southey*.

Mr. Forster took the opportunity of informing the public that he still holds the same opinion he expressed in Parliament, and embodied in the clause which has made all the mischief. He has learned nothing from the experience and agitations of a couple of years. Parents who cannot pay school fees, do not want to choose the schools to which their children shall be sent; but Mr. Forster has a notion that they ought to choose the exact form which public help should take. Perhaps he will some day propose that the recipients of parish loaves should choose their baker; and that when the parish doctor visits a patient, that patient should be free to refuse his services, and demand to have the attendance of Sir Henry Thompson or Sir William Gull.—*Daily News*.

The Jews would not willingly tread upon the smallest piece of paper in their way, but took it up; for possibly, said they, the name of God may be upon it. Though there was a little superstition in this, yet truly there is nothing but good religion in it if we apply it to men. Trample not on any; there may be some work of grace there that thou knowest not of. The name of God may be written upon that soul thou treadest on, . . . therefore despise it not.—*Leighton*.

That sex which almost alone was friendly to the Saviour—which anointed His feet with ointment, and followed Him with tears to His cross—which prepared sweet spices for His burial, and was the first to hail His resurrection, has, in turn, been especially befriended by His Gospel. It has raised her from the degrading condition of a slave, or her still more degrading condition as a mere instrument of passion, to be a refined and purifying influence in society, and to lend to home the dignity and the grace of the mother, wife, sister, and daughter.

CHURCH NEWS OF THE MONTH.

THE year which—as we write—is drawing to an end, will close an important era in the political and ecclesiastical annals of this country. For the first time in our history the Nonconformist communities, which hitherto had been the mere beasts of burden to the Liberal party, have emerged from their seclusion, and have claimed to be, and been confessed to be, a power in the State—a power they will never again lay aside. It took a great deal to bring them, or rather to goad them, into this position. They had been so long accustomed to hew the wood and draw the water for their aristocratic allies, the Whigs; they had been so commonly ignored, and snubbed, and patronised; they had so constantly seen every claim of everybody (except their own) considered, every wrong (except their own) redressed, that they had got used to it. Now and then a minister of state would throw them a few crumbs of compliment; but the great chariot of Liberal government rolled majestically along, while the sublime beings who rode therein either feigned to forget or actually forgot who it was that pulled so patiently and persistently at the traces, and who so inconspicuously yet laboriously put their shoulders to the wheel.

It was the peculiar genius of Mr. Forster that found the means of bringing things to a crisis. Brought up as a Nonconformist, he knew—or might have known—exactly where the yoke would most sorely pinch, and where the lash would most heavily fall—and he applied both with irresistible effect. Under cover of a desire to promote education, he brought in a Bill which in a generation—or less—should blot out Nonconformity from the land. Happily the design was discovered. The skilful attack was so resisted and resented, that the overthrow of the ministry was threatened; and soon—at any risk and at any cost—Liberal government in England would have been swept away like chaff before the wind. And though the author of all this mischief still asserts his infallibility, the ablest and severest critic of his handiwork has been placed alongside of him in the same Cabinet; and on the limitation of Mr. Forster's influence, and on the inauguration of an equitable policy on national education, depends the fate of the government. Thus the old year closes an era of confusion, sectarianism, and distrust: it remains to be seen whether the new year will usher in

a new career for Liberal government, of equity and honour, or of disaster and disgrace.

The School Board contests that have raged through town after town, and will yet rage, have witnessed the bursting of a good many big bubbles. There was, for instance, the "no rate" bubble. On that frail and delusive fabric many gentlemen have sought to be borne into office by a too confiding people. Landlords, too, have employed the "no rate" cry as a means of coercing their tenants; but a recent incident at Birmingham, the prospect of a £50 penalty and of imprisonment, the protection of the ballot, and the vigilance of Liberal committees, will probably prevent the repetition of landlord intimidation. Besides, everybody now sees that, in order to lighten the heavy burdens of our poor rates and prison rates, a small school rate is being paid and must be paid; and that the only question before the country is whether that rate shall be put into the pockets of irresponsible sects, or kept under the control of the ratepayers.

The second bubble was a "Bible bubble." "What a shocking thing," exclaimed well-meaning people, "that the Bible should be kept away from the children! Surely those who wish this must be secularists, infidels, atheists, and worse." But at length these worthy alarmists found that there is hardly a person to be found who does not wish religious instruction to be given to the children, and that the only question is who shall teach its sacred truths—the state-paid schoolmaster, or those who love it.

Another bubble was the "voluntary" bubble. After all the professions about "voluntaryism," about "saving the public money," etc., the truth has gradually been leaking out. Voluntaryism usually means liberality: now it appears that the "liberality" of our Conservative friends means "liberality with other people's money." Voluntaryism usually means "willingness — willingness:" now it seems that it means "willingness" to take public money, and to refuse to give any account to the public of how it has been spent. The Rev. B. Waugh recently stated that "in his neighbourhood £3 out of £9 of the cost of their maintenance came from the pockets of the people—out of Government grants and children's pence; and he thought that generous denominationalists who gave £1 in order to have control over the people's £8, bought power very cheap."

The fourth delusion that has dazzled and dazed some beholders, has been what we may call the "good education bubble." "What

matter," they have said, "if this sect does get an undue advantage, and if that sect suffers some grievance, so that the children can be got to school, and there receive a good education?" But that is exactly what the children do not get, and this sad fact is clearly coming into the light. Though nearly £1,000,000 sterling of public money is spent every year on our primary schools; though 2,000,000 children are on the registers of the schools, yet the educational results are deplorable. "Our present educational system," says a clergyman, the head master of the City of London School, "is a failure—of that there can be no doubt." Nor is such a result surprising when, according to the official organ of the National Society, the main object to be kept in view in the schools, is that they should be "nurseries" (not of education, but) "of church principles;" and when that journal in almost so many words declares that the supreme object of our public schools ought to be to train the children so that they may grow up to be Churchmen, whose votes will avert disestablishment.

And now that these bubbles, with all their soapy, sickly shams, have collapsed, the air grows clearer for the conflict. The dazzling fragile delusions have gone, and we can see plainly the armies in the field, the standards under which they are ranged, and the issues of the fight. These issues are sufficiently momentous. Is public taxation to be, or not to be, under public control? Is the education of the children of the people to be controlled by irresponsible hole-and-corner cliques, or by the people? Is national education to be a weapon in the hands of priesthoods—a monopoly for the aggrandisement of sects? or is it to be pure, free, and measureless as the air we breathe, the birthright of every child in the land? Nay, more. Nonconformists everywhere have to aid this great nation at this supreme crisis in determining whether we will uphold the hands of a noble-minded statesman in eradicating the defects of a measure which he declares is the worst that has been passed by a Liberal Government for forty years, in reversing a policy of retrogression and reaction, and in hushing the miserable strife of schisms and sects that rages through the land; and whether, instead of all this, he shall usher in a period in which national education shall no longer be promoted in the interests of sects, in which the only rivalry shall be who shall confer the richest blessings on the children of the poor, and who shall spread widest peace on earth and good will among men.

Meanwhile the condition of the Established Church becomes every day more deplorable. It is, of course, no new thing, for instance, that the revival of the confessional in the Anglican Church should be discussed and advocated in a tone of confident assurance. "Thanks mainly to the meek submission of the Evangelical party, we are getting quite used to that;" and used also to other evils almost as bad. "I behold," says the Rev. J. W. Burgon, preaching at Oxford, "with dismay the ghastly up-growth of one more sect, one more schism, one fresh aspect of Nonconformity. There is no telling, in fact, how fatal is this retrograde movement to the progress of real Churchmanship throughout the length and breadth of the land. 'Ritualism' (for so *disloyalty to the Church* is absurdly called) is the great difficulty with a surprising number of the clergy in our large towns, especially in the northern dioceses. The working people simply *hate* it. 'I dare not call a Church defence meeting in this town,' writes an able and faithful incumbent; 'it would be instantly turned into an anti-Ritualistic demonstration.'"

The Bishop of Ripon has recently been speaking on Church defence, and, in doing so, charged the Nonconformists with an aggressive policy against the Established Church. Dr. Mellor has ably replied:—"We are, in your opinion," he says, "the aggressors, and you the defenders. The distinction is both insufficient and unjust, for it leaves wholly out of view the prior aggression of which the Nonconformists complain that they have been the victims for centuries, and which your lordship will not deny has been checked and moderated through the legislation of the last two hundred years. I need not name the several oppressive Acts which have been successively repealed, not by the spontaneous promptings of the Church of England, but by the stern and determined action of the Nonconformists themselves. . . . What, I would ask your lordship, was the cause of these frequent contests, now happily matters of history? Was it Nonconformity, or was it State Churchism? The Church of England was then one great Church defence institution to resist the righteous claims of Dissenters, and I must be pardoned if I remind your lordship that the wrong which occasions resistance is the aggression, and that resistance to it is only a fair and just defence. The maintainers of slavery, of corn monopoly, of university exclusiveness, and of every legalised privilege, might cheaply brand their opponents as restless disturbers and assailants; but the verdict of

history will apportion the epithets far otherwise, and will declare that there is no aggression more active or formidable than the upholding of an unequal law, and that there is no defence more just and honourable than that which resists it."

Belgrave Chapel, Leeds, has undergone several structural alterations, and the whole building has been renovated and painted, at an expense of upwards of £1000.—The Congregational Church, North Shields, has had its old pews replaced by stalls, and the interior has otherwise been thoroughly renovated and improved.

It is expected that the Rev. H. Ward Beecher will come to London in May, to preach the annual sermon for the London Missionary Society.

A steamer has been purchased, at the cost of £1,550, to go on a missionary expedition to New Guinea, at the expense of Miss Baxter, sister of the late Sir David Baxter.

We regret to announce the death of the Rev. Thomas James, the brother of the late Rev. John Angell James, of Birmingham, and, we understand, the oldest Independent minister in London. Mr. James, who was eighty-four years of age, was for more than twenty years an Independent minister at Woolwich; he had also for many years been the secretary of the Colonial Missionary Society.

The Rev. Thomas Bagley, late of Hackney College, has been ordained to the ministry of the Congregational Chapel, Banbury.

The Rev. Joseph Muncaster has resigned the pastorate of Broughton Congregational Church, Manchester. He has been connected with the Church from its origin, and his ministry has extended over twenty-one years. He has accepted an invitation to the quiet village of Somerleyton, in Suffolk, and will minister in the chapel connected with the estate of the late Sir Francis Crossley.

The Rev. R. C. Hutchings, for many years the Congregational minister of Ottery St. Mary, has accepted a very cordial and unanimous invitation to the pastorate from the Meadows Congregational Church, Nottingham.—The Rev. F. P. Sellar has become the pastor of the Dock-street Independent Church, Newport, Monmouthshire; the Rev. E. Bolton, of Lancaster-road Chapel, Preston, of Gloucester-street Church, Weymouth; and the Rev. L. J. Davies, of London, of the Independent Chapel, New Conduit-street, Lynn.

RUTH TREDGAR;
OR, CLOUDS AND SUNSHINE.

BY MARY SHERWOOD.

CHAP. II.—AFTER THE STORM.

A LOW firm rap at the cottage door.

The mother started from her chair, and then fell back trembling like an aspen leaf. It was not John Tredgar's knock. She would have known that, or Michael's either, among a thousand, as she would have known the sound of their voices. Could it be some neighbour bringing evil tidings of her husband and the lad?

It was Daniel Kenworthy who stood in the doorway as Ruth drew back the bolt and answered the summons from without—"Master Dan," or "The Captain," as he was called in the village; for he was not, like most of even the well-to-do folk in Pengarva, connected with the fishing trade of the place, but commanded a tight little craft belonging to Bexmouth, the port five miles away, and had been round the world in it three or four times at least, besides shorter voyages too numerous to mention. From one of these shorter voyages the *Ariadne* had not long returned, and was now lying in Bexmouth harbour, relading with stores, preparatory to spreading her sails again for a much longer trip.

Master Dan was not only the greatest traveller in Pengarva, and said to be the richest man as well—as indeed the number of cottages which he owned might testify—but he was also the biggest man in the whole village; and as he stood in the doorway before Ruth, with the darkness behind him, and the blaze of the cottage fire lighting up his weather-beaten face, what with his towering stature—though he stooped somewhat, as sailors do—and what with his broad shoulders, he filled up pretty nearly the whole space between the lintel and the posts.

"Why, little Ruth!" he cried, in his cheery voice, as he saw her pale face and troubled eyes, "you look as scared as if I was a ghost. I thought surely I should have had a smile to greet me here. Have you no welcome for an old friend? or have you forgotten me while I have been away?"

Then, catching sight of her mother's face, his voice fell, as the truth of the situation flashed upon him.

"Your folks are not out, surely, Mrs. Tredegar, a night like this!" he exclaimed, as he stepped forward to the hearth, and shook off the drops of rain from his rough seaman's jacket.

"They are, Master Dan; sorry I am to say it," she answered, faintly. "It made my heart stand still almost when I heard you knock. I thought for certain it was some one with news of the boat. But I am glad to see you at Pengarva again. I am indeed, though Ruth and me were so took aback just at first seeing you. And so will John be when he comes home. He was reckoning just a bit since that you would be about due at Bexmouth now."

"Ay," said the Captain. "Two days baek we put into port. Six weeks ashore to comfort my old mother up a bit, and to look round at old friends, and then we are off again, the *Ariadne* and me. Australia this time, and all round by them parts; and I don't expect to sight old England' again till this time two years."

"Two years," echoed Mrs. Tredegar. "That is a longer voyage than common, isn't it, Master Dan? What does Mrs. Kenworthy say to that?"

"Why, she is more downcast than a little about it. You see, she is not so hearty as she used to be, and her lame foot keeps her fast at home, and her sight fails her, and she begins to feel her years upon her, though she is hearty, too, for seventy-five; and, to tell the truth, I had been turning over a bit of a plan in my mind that I thought to have opened out to you and your master this evening. But we will let it stand over awhile. You have enough else on your mind just now with a wind like this blowing, and him and the lad out in it all. Michael will be with the boat too, I reckon, isn't he?"

"He is, Master Dan; he is. The Lord help them both!" cried the poor woman; and then, unable any longer to contain herself, and overcome by the thought of the peril to which her husband and boy were even then exposed, she covered her face with her apron and broke down into a fit of crying.

The Captain was not a man of many words, but his big brown face expressed the sympathy with which his heart was full.

"Cheer up! Mistress Tredegar; cheer up!" he said; and, strong rough man as he was, his voice sounded almost as gentle as a woman's.

"I can't cheer up, Master Dan," she sobbed, trembling, as a wilder blast than usual roared round the cottage and made every door and

casement shake. "I can't cheer up. How can I, till I know they are safe?"

"Then *look up!*" said the Captain, doing his best to steady his voice, for the sight of a woman in tears did more, as he confessed, to unman him, than if he had been fighting with the storm himself. "Try to look up, Mistress Tredegar, and that will help you, maybe." Then, thinking perhaps that she would recover herself better if left alone with Ruth, he took his hat and bade them both good-bye.

Mrs. Tredegar put down her apron from her eyes, and gave him her hand.

"Good-bye, and thank you kindly," she said, her voice trembling through her tears. "It is a comfort to have a friend that feels for one a time like this, though it is a poor welcome we've had to give you."

She did not try to keep him, however. The flow of tears had eased her heart, and the Captain's honest sympathy had done her good; yet she felt as if she would rather just now have only Ruth to share her trouble during the long hours of watching and suspense.

But somehow, when the door was shut behind him, and Ruth had gone back to her place at her mother's side, it seemed to the girl as if the storm howled more angrily, and as if some sense of strength and safety, which Master Dan's presence had brought with it into the cottage, were departed with him.

It was of no use, Ruth knew full well, trying to dissuade her mother from sitting up through the night, waiting till the first grey gleam of dawn should make it possible for her to strain her eyes again over the sea in quest of the little dark speck which the waves even now were beating about in the darkness. It was not the first time that she and her mother had kept watch together by the cottage hearth. Only last autumn just such another storm had come up from the west, and her father and Michael had been for a night and day tossing out at sea, drenched to the skin, and in danger of their lives. They had come home in safety with their boat, but ever since poor Mrs. Tredegar had been more anxious and nervous than before when the wind rose high, and the sound of the breakers came up hoarsely from the beach, and husband and son were out in the dark upon the waves.

Ruth did what she could, however, to make the hours pass less wearily away. She pulled up the chintz-covered settle to the fire, and persuaded her mother to lie down upon it, covered up warmly

with a shawl; and though her own heart was quaking all the time, she tried to look and talk, with something even of cheerfulness in her tone, of things that were to be done on the morrow, and of the fine piece of work that there would be for Michael to chop up firewood from the old fir-tree which the wind had blown down that afternoon at the bottom of the garden.

But Mrs. Tredegar said little in reply. "To-morrow is not here yet, Ruth," she said, in a hollow voice; and then she bade her bring the great leather-backed Bible, and read out of it to her Psalm cxlviii.

"Fire and hail, snow and vapour, stormy wind fulfilling His Word."

"That is it, Ruth," she said, faintly; "that is it. 'Stormy wind fulfilling His Word.'" And then she closed her eyes, and her lips moved silently as if in prayer.

Ruth sat quiet. She was saying the words over to herself—"Stormy wind fulfilling His Word;" and they seemed to hush the quaking at her heart.

The eight-day clock that stood in the corner struck nine—ten—eleven. The storm seemed to be lulling a little, though still the rain beat hard against the window panes, and the candle that was shining out into the night flickered unsteadily when every now and then a sharper gust than usual made the casement rattle in the frame.

Twelve o'clock struck. Ruth had heaped fresh wood upon the fire—softly, for the girl was not sure whether her mother was dozing as she lay silent and unmoved, or whether her eyes were closed in that intense inward prayer which seemed her only refuge from the agony of her fears. She watched the flames leaping up the chimney as the log glowed and sparkled in the heat, till at last, lulled by the warmth, and wearied by her long watching and the strain of excitement and suspense, drowsiness crept over her; her head sank on the cushion of the settle behind her, and all her troubles were forgotten in the sound, unbroken sleep of youth.

She was awake by a current of cold air streaming in upon her. She sat up and looked around. The fire had burned down into dull red embers; the candle that stood in the window was out; the cottage door was open, swinging on its hinges; and the grey light of dawn was in the sky. The wind was quite still now, and the dull recurring sound of the breakers on the beach alone broke the silence of the hour. Her mother's place was empty. She must have gone

out, gloomy as it still was, to seize the first faint chance which returning day afforded of searching over the waste of waves for some dim speck that might turn out to be the *Bonny Bess* steering in safety towards land and home.

Ruth rubbed her eyes, and as the mists of slumber cleared themselves from her brain, the thoughts and fears from which she had found for a time escape in sleep came surging back upon her. Her father and Michael! Where were they now? What had they been doing through all the terrible night? Oh! if she could but see them coming in again through that open door, and know that they were safe at home, Ruth felt as if there would be nothing left to wish for.

She stirred the brands of the fire together and put fresh fuel on, and filled up the kettle afresh. Ruth was a thoughtful girl, and she knew that when the drenched and toil-spent men came in, hungry and weary, and the life half beaten out of them, as it had been after that other terrible night last autumn, the first thing that they would want would be some hot drink and food, before they stripped off their dripping clothes and lay down to thankful sleep in the truckle beds upstairs. Then she covered herself up, head and shoulders, in a thick woollen shawl, and went out into the keen March morning to follow her mother to the beach. She knew where she would be sure to have gone. There was a bit of rising ground on a sort of promontory, a little distance off, whence you could look well out over the sea, and up and down the whole length of the beach for a mile or two each way; and thither Ruth sped as fast as her feet would carry her. The clouds had mostly cleared away. A few were drifting still slowly across the sky. The moon was setting over the sea; and in the east was the faint light of dawn, spreading upwards through the dusk. Ruth slackened her pace as she climbed the rough path to the bit of rocky ground where she expected her mother had gone before her. There was no trace of any one to be seen.

"Mother!" she cried; but no answer came; or if it did, the noise of the breakers dashing on the beach prevented her from hearing it.

Ruth glanced anxiously this way and that. She had made so sure her mother would be here, for nowhere else could such a wide expanse of sea and shore be traversed by the eye. And then for awhile, before she went down to the beach to seek her there, she stood searching with her keen young vision the misty ocean plain that lay heaving and moaning before her in the murk. But nothing met her eye save one vast expanse of restless waters, lurid under the gleams

of the setting moon, which was dropping out of the western sky. It was neither light enough nor clear enough to distinguish such a speck as the *Bonny Bess* would be if it were far out on the horizon; and near at hand there was nothing which even her quick eyes could detect that bore the likeness of a boat.

She turned away with an anxious heart, and a dull heavy fear strengthening, she scarce knew why, within her breast.

"Mother! mother!" she cried again; but no answer came; only the slow boom of the waves upon the shingle beneath her.

"She has gone down to the beach," said the girl to herself; and stooping to the edge of the low cliff on which she stood, and peering eagerly up and down, she saw, dark upon the strand, something in the distance, just where the tide was going down. She waved her hand and called. There was no answering sign. It might be only a heap of tangle left there by the receding tide; and yet, looking again, she was nearly sure that through the mist she could see a gleam of blue, which must be the shawl her mother wore. At all events, she would go and see. It was not far to scramble down the cliff, and Ruth's nimble feet soon carried her along the jagged side of the rock, by the rude steps which the fishermen's feet had worn, and then more swiftly still over the firm sands of the beach.

Swifter, swifter still, Ruth fled along; wild with fear and anguish now. That was her mother sitting there upon the sands, her blue shawl flapping in the wind. But what was it that she was bending over, clasping in her arms as she sat motionless and rigid, almost within reach of the receding tide?

Ruth knew by the thrill of dread that ran through her veins and almost stayed the blood about her heart.

It was her father's corpse!

(To be continued in our next.)

"THE turn of a sentence," says Bentham, "has decided the fate of many a friendship, and, for aught that we know, the fate of many a kingdom." So, when one is tempted to write a clever but sharp thing, though it may be difficult to restrain it, it is always better to leave it in the inkstand. "A goose's quill," says the Spanish proverb, "often hurts more than the lion's claw."

LIGHT AT THE LANE'S END.

BY AN EX-MISSIONARY.

IF there ever was one man who above all others prided himself in his quickness of apprehension, his correctness of opinion, and his intellectual powers generally, surely that man must have been Thomas Crook, of No. 20, Little Crane-street, in the City, shoemaker, who also filled the office of chairman of the "Free and Easy" Club, which was held three times a week at the "Flying Horse" in the next street.

My first introduction to him was under the disadvantage of ignorance of his particular views upon all moral subjects and questions, and of his self-supposed superiority to everybody else. I sought his acquaintance as he was working in his shop with three young men who were under his tuition, not only in the art and science of cordwainery in all its branches, but also in sundry departments of mental and moral philosophy, in which he delighted to instruct them.

On my entering unbidden into his shop and presence, and not happening to be a customer, I saw that his curiosity was excited as to the nature of my visit. After sundry observations hopefully expressed, first as to his health, and then in respect to the weather, I gently introduced the subject of "the Divine goodness in the operations of nature," and then as tenderly pursued my way respecting the richer expressions of God's love in the gift of His Son.

No sooner had I touched upon this subject than I found I had a decided and thorough antagonist in the person of Mr. Crook, and that his three disciples were anticipating a treat in his opposition to the matter before us. Their earnest looks, the merry twinkle of their eyes, and the satisfaction visible in their countenances, helped to prepare me for the torrent of argument and the tempest of wrath which was to drown me in a whirlpool of confusion.

Looking at me for a few seconds much after the manner in which a hungry cat would contemplate the mouse she intended to devour, Mr. Crook said, "You have touched upon a subject that you understand nothing of. I know well what your opinions are upon it, and also the falsehood of them. I don't accuse you of wilful falsehood, but your ideas are false. I once thought as you do; was able to receive the teaching which you call orthodox. But I have become wiser. I exercise my own reason, and judge for myself upon all

these questions ; and by so doing am free from the bonds and fetters which enslave men's minds and leave them fools."

I replied : " It has been said that when a man becomes his own lawyer he has not a very wise client. I do not know how it is when he becomes his own moral governor."

He said : " Anyhow, I think I understand the morality of the Bible better than you do."

" Then you do read it ?" I said.

" Of course I do," he replied.

" And believe it ?" I asked.

" Yes ; in the sense I interpret it : but there are many statements in it which cannot be received by any man who honestly thinks for himself."

" Well," I said, " perhaps I think for myself as freely and as honestly as you do, and I do not reject any of its statements."

" Do you not ?" said he. " I can name some things which you cannot believe ; that is, if you possess an average amount of understanding, and will let your reason honestly guide you."

" Well, name them," I said.

" Then, to start with," said he, " there is the statement of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ. You cannot believe that He was the son of only one human parent." As he said this his countenance announced the triumph he should gain before his three satellites by this bold statement.

I quietly said, " I suppose, then, you do not believe it."

He replied, " I should be ashamed of my reasoning powers if I did."

" And yet," I said, " I think I can name something which you do most firmly believe, which is twice as wonderful as that."

" Can you ?" said he.

" I think so. Do you believe in a first man whom we speak of as Adam ?"

" Of course I do," he readily replied.

" Well, then, you believe in the fact of a man having come into this world without a human parent at all ?"

He fixed his eyes on me for a short time in silence. His young companions fixed their eyes on him, evidently interested in what would be his reply. Presently he said, with a smile, " That's one to you."

" Well, what next ?" said I.

He replied, "I could name many things; but I will only introduce one more now, and that is 'the resurrection of the body from the dead.' Now, you know that after death our bodies decay, waste away, and not a particle of the human being could be found; even the bones, in course of time, would dissolve and not be discoverable; therefore it is impossible that these bodies of ours can be raised again."

I said, "Yes; it would be impossible by any theory that you or I could weave, and then reduce to practice. I see in your box of flowers there by the window three different colours amongst those in bloom: blue, red, and yellow."

"Well, what of them?"

"Why, they all root in the same soil."

"Yes: what then?"

"They seem to feed upon the same sustenance, and are refreshed by the same water."

"Yes; that's right."

"Well, then, can you explain to me how it is that three flowers, differing in shape, size, and colour, should be produced thus; or how they are produced at all?"

"Because," said he, "it is their nature."

"Granted," I said. "You state a fact without giving me an explanation. Now, is it not beyond your power to show me how it is that the moisture absorbed by those plants becomes converted into these flowers of beauty which you so admire as to keep and prize them because of their loveliness?"

"Well, I must confess it is."

"Then," said I, "cannot the power which converts the moisture and sustenance these plants absorb into flowers like these reconstruct man's body, although it may have passed into decay and have mingled with the earth? You say 'the flowers differ in size, shape, and colour, because it is their nature.' May it not also be in man's nature, too, that he is capable of being raised again? You have seen cattle graze upon the herbage of the field, become fattened thereby, then afterwards killed and used as human food: and do not those who partake of this animal food incorporate into their own physical natures the substance and essence of the herbage the cattle consumed; and so does not the grass of the field become part of the human body?"

"Well, it seems so."

"Is it not so?" I asked. "And if so, is the resurrection of the body a more difficult task for the Divine Creator to accomplish than these things?"

Again he looked at me, and his companions looked at him; and again he admitted there was some force in the words I had uttered.

I then bade him "good-day," saying I would call again, as I thought it best not to let him feel annoyed in my presence that he had not the best of the argument.

From this time I frequently called upon him, and many subjects of this kind were discussed, and many battles fought. Eventually he said to me one day when I found him alone, "I shall always be glad to see you when you are in this neighbourhood, if you will not in future introduce religious subjects; for I am so opposed to what you call Christianity, that I cannot discuss the matter with the coolness I should like. Therefore, oblige me by avoiding it altogether."

For some length of time I did as he wished, but at last concluded that if religion must be a proscribed subject, the time would be wasted that I spent with him, and so I refrained from calling upon him.

Months passed away, and I had not seen him. At the close of service one Sunday evening his wife came to me and asked if I would call upon her husband, as he was very ill and wished to see me.

I said, "Yes; I will go at once."

"Not now, sir; but to-morrow, if you please," she said.

"But why is it that he wishes to see me?" I asked. "He is opposed to Christianity, and has expressed his desire that it should never be mentioned to him again."

She said, "You will not find him so much opposed to it now. He has been very ill for some time, and very unhappy. He said to-day he wished you would call, for you were the only person who had ever taken a step to lead him right; and as he had requested you not to speak about religion, he supposed he had driven you from him altogether."

On the following day I called upon him. I found him very ill, and without any expectation of recovery. After sundry inquiries as to his physical state, I said, "Well, Mr. Crook, this is the time when, if those opinions you hold upon religious matters are correct, you should find them of service to you."

"They are all gone, sir ; and I am at sea altogether."

"How so?" said I.

He replied, "When I first became ill I thought much about my future condition, and soon found that I had nothing solid on which to stand. You had very much shaken my strong opinions in the conversations we had, and I saw that what I had used as argument, and thought I believed as truth, was not of the slightest use to me in the prospect of death. I wanted to see you, and tell you my story ; not that any good can come of it, nor that I can ever hope to be saved. I was brought up to attend Divine worship. At eighteen years of age I became a Sunday-school teacher, and at twenty-two years of age a lay preacher, and continued so to be until, when about twenty-five years of age, a person who was accustomed to seeing me studying the Bible, said one day, 'You will read that book until you will not believe it.' This sentence for the time produced no further effect than surprise that any one should say or think so. But the words came up again and again, until I asked myself 'why I should believe the Bible at all?' From that time the most conflicting thoughts possessed my mind. I could not give up the book, but I began the study of it anew, and attempted to put my own interpretation upon all I read, and so far succeeded as to persuade myself that its main statements, doctrines, and narratives, were to be received in a very different manner from that which had been my former belief. I gave up all Sunday-school teaching and preaching, and became a decided unbeliever of all that is called orthodox Christianity, and for forty years have endeavoured to persuade others, as well as myself, that it was a delusion, a falsehood, and a snare ; and now here I am, at sixty-five years of age, my health broken down, death not very far distant, and not one ray of hope either on this side of the grave or beyond to cheer my soul. My life has been like a journey pursued along a dark and crooked lane, and I am wretched and hopeless."

"I hope there will be light at the lane's end," I replied.

"Then," said he, "it will be to reveal the road to hell more plainly."

"I do not mean that. I mean the light that shows the way to heaven," I said.

"You do not suppose that salvation is possible for me now !"

"I do. God is able and willing to save you upon your faith and repentance."

"No, sir; God would not save such a wretch as I am and have been. He could not forgive me; I am sure of it."

I said, "That is, you feel, if you were God, you could not forgive one who had sinned as you have. Is not that it?"

"Well," he said, "judging from my own feelings, I think it would be impossible for God to forgive such a one as I."

"Yes," I replied; "but then your feelings do not interpret God's; so it will be much better to take His own statements. His Word interprets His will, and Jesus Christ most fully expresses it. And He declares that 'God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' Jesus Christ says, 'Whosoever.' The Bible declares that 'the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.'" And as I quoted text after text he seemed confused, anxious, and sorrowful; and said, after I had prayed with him, "Call again, sir; I must think more about the possibility of pardon."

I visited him again the next day, and many days afterwards. We discussed fresh subjects, all bearing upon the possibility of his salvation; and I found he was willing to believe—wanted to believe—but confessed that "forty years of ungodliness and unbelief, practised and rejoiced in, had so perverted his mind that faith seemed to him an impossibility."

He said to me one day, "O that I could believe!"

I replied, "You do believe. The very desire you have now expressed is the proof of it. If you did not believe, you would have no desire to do so."

"Well," he said, "there is something in that."

Shortly after this I found him in tears. He said, "Sir, I do believe it possible for God to pardon me."

I answered, "I know that it is not only possible, but certain, if you do but by faith accept the mercy the Saviour offers."

From this time he was able to lay hold on the truth, and although the process was slow, yet it was progressive. He passed out of the darkness into the light, cast his helpless soul upon the mercy of God in Christ, and eventually found peace through what Christ had done.

He partially recovered from his sickness, and his altered life gave evidence of a real change of heart, and henceforward he became a regular attendant upon the worship and service of God. But after some months he was again taken ill, and after a very few days of severe bodily suffering he passed away. I called upon him just

before he breathed his last, and he said, "I am going; I am not afraid." But this expresses it all.

"Just as I am—without one plea,
Save that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come."

I left him with the hope of meeting him in the better world.
There was "light at the lane's end."

FIDELITY.

I OVERTOOK a young lady of wealth and culture, walking a mile and one half to a mission-school, in the rain and through the spring mud, and I said: "Does it pay to go so far upon such a day?" She replied: "I must not disappoint my class." And when we entered the school-house, there were eight bare-footed boys gathered in one corner, looking as eager as a nest of young robins for food; and one said to the others: "Billy, I knowed she'd come. I'll bet we'll be here every time now." Never disappoint your class.

THE HISTORY OF A VILLAGE CHURCH.

BURTON JOYCE is a village standing on the banks of the river Trent, about five miles east of Nottingham. The surrounding scenery is very beautiful, with "green pastures and still waters." The river here is a noble stream, and the hills which skirt the goodly and well-watered valley are so soft in outline, and so varied with wood and field, that they might have suggested Mrs. Browning's lines,—

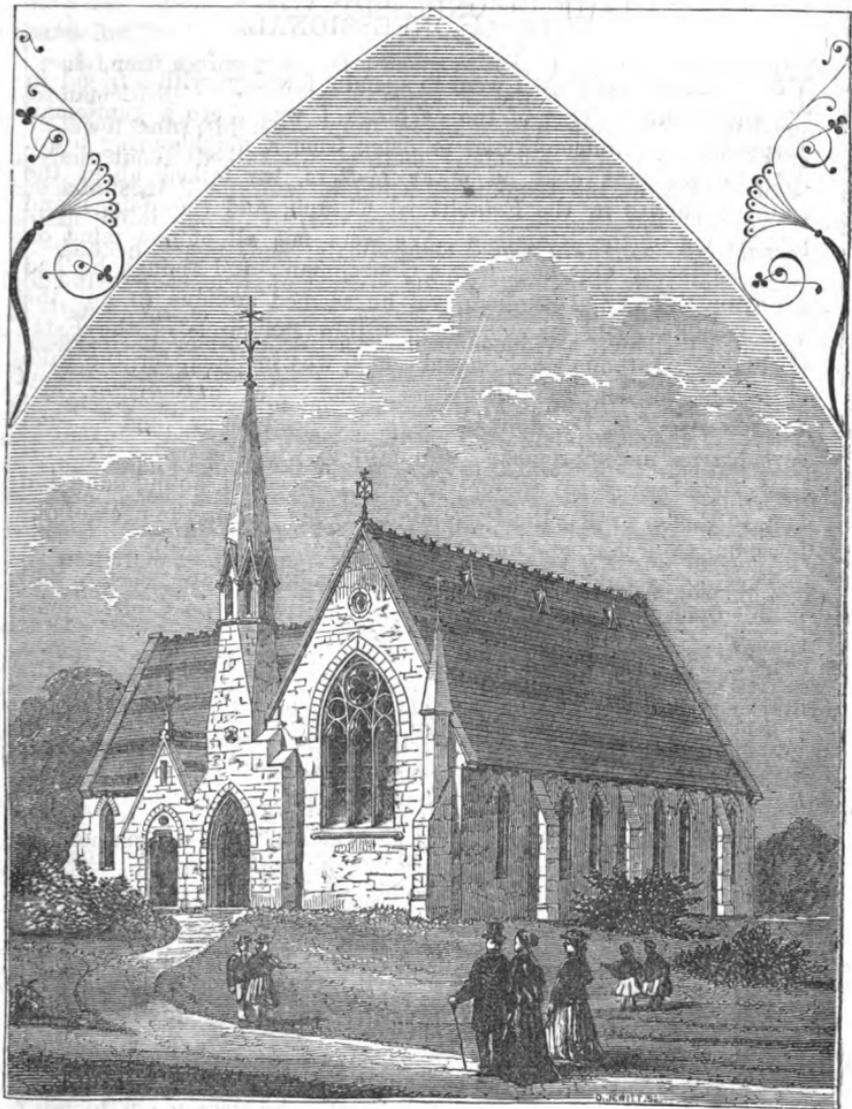
"Such an up and down of verdure,
Nothing too much up or down; a ripple
Of land; as if the finger of God touched,
But did not press, in making England."

But this village has also pleasant religious associations, dating as far back as 1662, when "they that were scattered abroad" by the Act of Uniformity "went everywhere preaching the Word." A congregation of Nonconformists met every Lord's day for worship and instruction. By a singular circumstance the names of this little band have been preserved. The preacher, John Truman, seems to have been a layman; and we have reason to believe that he belonged

to the same family as the Rev. Joseph Truman, B.D., who was ejected from the living of Cromwell, Nottinghamshire, and who was born at Gedling, a village only two miles [from Burton Joyce. Calamy, in his "Nonconformists' Memorial," gives a full account of this remarkable man. In 1669 a vigorous persecution against Nonconformists was commenced by the Archdeacon of Nottingham, Dr. Harcourt, who used unsparingly the powers of the "Conventicle Act." The Church meeting at the house of John Truman was completely broken up. The fire of persecution was too fierce and sweeping to be resisted. A long blank of two hundred years then settled on our history in this village.

But in the year 1861 Nonconformity rose from the dead. Burton Joyce was made an evangelistic centre, and the Notts County Association of Independent Churches appointed a Scripture reader to visit and preach in this and three neighbouring villages. In 1864 a club-room was hired, and regular Sunday services were conducted by students from the Congregational Institute, Nottingham. The club-room was soon exchanged for a building much larger and more convenient, and the mission grew on every side. A Church was formed; a Sunday-school was commenced; there were crowded classes on week evenings; and large and steady congregations testified to the value of the ministry of [the students. In 1869 the foundation-stone of a new building was laid by Mr. S. Morley, M.P. The engraving, while giving some general idea of the exterior, does not convey an adequate impression of its proper beauty, nor any notion of the attractiveness and convenience of the interior. The chapel and school-room are divided by a Gothic arcade, the lower part of which is filled in with shutters that slide down to the floor: the upper part is of glass. By this arrangement the school may, at any time, by two minutes' work, be made a side aisle of the chapel, and used for an overflow of the congregation. This was the happy thought of a lady connected with the mission.

The work at Burton Joyce has grown steadily. The Church which had such humble beginnings has now its own pastor, and is Independent in reality as well as in name. The Sunday-school and Bible-classes have increased so much, that the erection of class-rooms has become a necessity. Thus, in quiet villages, as in busy towns, the work of God goes on, and the Church, the body of Christ, "grows up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ."



CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, BURTON JOYCE.

THE CONFESSIONAL.

IN the autumn of 1873 I went to spend a few days with a friend in the country. One of the evenings I was there a gentleman dropped in—a Nonconformist minister from a neighbouring town. After a pleasant chat on many matters, we talked about the state of parties in the Established Church, and the doings and pretensions of the Ritualists. We were not all of one mind on these subjects. Our host was a Churchman; and though he had no sympathy with Ritualism, yet he seemed anxious to put the best face he could on everything within the circle of the Establishment. I, though a Nonconformist, was inclined, for the sake of peace, to let the Ritualists alone. But our visitor, Mr. Andrews, was, as Dr. Johnson says, “a good hater,” and he soon revealed an uncompromising antipathy to what he called “an organised and persistent attempt to carry this nation, bound hand and foot, to Rome, so that the Pope might lay his foot on the neck of our laws, our Churches, and our families.”

Turning to our host, Mr. Andrews said, “I suppose, sir, that in this quiet spot you have very little controversy on Church questions?”

“No,” was the reply; “although we had a little commotion the other day because our vicar refused to bury an unbaptised child.”

“Ah, my dear friend,” said Mr. Andrews, “that is a very small matter. Now in our town we have had quite a whirlwind, and I fear it has turned some people’s heads.”

I said, “What has been happening in your town?”

He replied, “We have lately had a twelve-days’ Ritualist mission, surrounded with all the attractions of brilliant vestments and exquisite music. I must say that the preaching, in the street or in the church, was both eloquent and urgent; but there was so much erroneous teaching, that I fear the evil quite outweighs the good.”

“Don’t you think,” said our host, “that these missions are a hopeful sign of the times? Why, a few years ago, even the suggestion that a clergyman should preach in the streets would have been met with a stare of amazement, as if the sky were about to fall.”

I agreed with our host; but Mr. Andrews said, “Well, the things that I have lately seen and heard make me doubt the benefits of these missions. I cannot think they are inspired from above.”

I said, "Have these mission clergy introduced the practice of confession?"

"Oh, yes," he replied; "they have done it in the most unblushing manner."

"Well," said our host, "I've heard a great deal of declamation against the confessional, and I have sometimes thought that the arguments of its advocates have been somewhat cavalierly dealt with."

"That may be so," said Mr. Andrews; "but the fact is, you cannot get a clergyman to reason candidly on the matter at all; his conclusion is foregone. He rests on an apostolical priesthood and the consent of the Fathers, and seldom makes an appeal to the Bible. If he does, it is to quote a few dubious passages, which, whatever they may mean, certainly do not mean what he says they mean. For instance, I knew a clergyman who expounded the text, 'Confess your faults one to another' (James v. 16), to mean that we must confess to a priest, and since he was a priest, the people must confess to him. I heard and read a report of the sermon, and one sentence has stuck to me ever since. He cried, 'Away with the doctrine that it is enough for the soul to pour its confessions into the ear of God!' But how any man could twist that text to mean 'confess to a priest,' passes my comprehension. I give it up. It is very evident that he had eyes only for the word 'confess,' and quietly ignored the words 'one to another;' for the words of James are only an echo of the words of our Lord, when He said, 'If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone;' and again, 'If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar and go thy way: first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.'"

Mr. Andrews went on: "And here we touch one of the evils of confession to a priest. I mean, that it generally ends there. I cannot learn that the practice makes peace between people, healing neighbours' differences, and teaching forbearance and forgiveness."

Here our host said, "I agree with you, Mr. Andrews, that confession cannot be warranted by Scripture; but, you see, our clergymen sustain peculiar relations to the Prayer-book, and many of them say that it at least permits and recommends confession. Here, I will read the passage for you." He fetched a Prayer-book from a side table, and found the exhortation in the Communion Service:—"And

because it is requisite, that no man should come to the holy Communion, but . . . with a quiet conscience; therefore, if there be any of you, who by this means cannot quiet his conscience herein, but requireth further comfort or counsel, let him come to me . . . and open his grief; that by the ministry of God's holy Word he may receive the benefit of absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice, to the quieting of his conscience, and avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness." "Now you see," he continued, "as Pusey puts it, 'The Church of England leaves her children free to open their griefs.'"

Mr. Andrews paused a few moments, and then said, gravely, "Well, I have two or three things to say about that. And, first, I think you would hardly allow that those words, 'Let him come to me, and open his grief,' mean that he must give particular answers to every question a priest likes to put to him; nor that those other words, 'That by the ministry of God's holy Word he may receive absolution,' mean that the priest has authority to forgive sins, or even so much as assure a man that, independently of his own faith in Christ, his sins are forgiven. But more than that, surely those words do not warrant any minister of the Church of England in making confession a condition of Church membership, and of admission to the Communion. Yet this is what has been done in my own town. Humble and pure-living people have, to my own knowledge, been refused the bread and wine because they had not conformed to the rule of confession. Thus, instead of the 'Church of England leaving her children free to open their griefs,' she has set up a spiritual terrorism, which leaves them anything but free."

Our host said nothing, and Mr. Andrews went on: "I am hardly surprised that ignorant persons are led away by the pretensions of some clergymen. You see, they claim the power to work a constant miracle; and they take advantage of dress, and music, and dim light, and incense, to surround this work of theirs with fascination and mystery. They are no longer common men, but priests who have power to create and impart a real Presence of Christ, under the form of bread and wine. They stand in sacerdotal dignity, surrounded by spiritual illusions; and credulous eyes see them transformed by the majestic framework. Then they descend and speak with insinuating or authoritative tones to bewildered children, and palpitating girls, and sentimental youths, and women whose consciences are as morbid as they are tender, and men whose crass ignorance of

Bible truth and human dignity lays them open to every attack of superstition. No wonder that many persons, having their wills lulled and annihilated, go to confession like sheep following one another.

“And now, if you will pardon my monopoly of the conversation, I should like to ask, What effect will the common practice of confession have on our social life? We often boast that ‘an Englishman’s home is his castle,’ where he is lord of all. But suppose his servants go to confession, will they not be required to reveal all the inner arrangements of a home? Suppose a son goes, are we sure that he will not be taught to regard the lightest word of the priest as more weighty than his father’s strongest wish? Then suppose a wife goes, what becomes of the husband’s trust and the wife’s confidence? If confession became common, the sweet privacy of home would be laid bare with pitiless, unshrinking hands, and there would be a constant struggle for authority within against an authority without. And, by-the-bye, this reminds me of a little episode which came under my notice the other day. I was at work in my study, and a neighbour of mine, a respectable mechanic, came to see me. He looked gloomy and troubled, and said he wanted a friend’s advice. His wife had lately taken a fancy to go to the Ritualistic Church, and had been drawn under the influence of one of the curates, a young unmarried man, who had at last induced her to go to confession at his house. She was taken to a private room, and the door was locked. She was then told to kneel, and the young man questioned her minutely as to her thoughts and habits. She was led on gradually, until at last he put a question so gross, so impure, that the poor woman burst into tears. However, she answered the question, and the curate said, ‘Then you cannot be allowed to partake of the Holy Sacrament until three days have passed.’ I cannot give you in words the vaguest hint as to the nature of the question put to her. She had grace enough left to come home and tell her husband, and to vow that she would never go again. He was dreadfully exasperated and humiliated, and said, that sooner than put such a question to any woman, he could have sunk into the earth. I asked him what he thought I could do further in the matter, and suggested that it would be best, now his wife had confided in him, to let the matter drop. He said he gladly would, but that the curate had been diligently endeavouring to repeat the interview; and he should like to know if there were no legal means of touching him. Could not

the bishop or a magistrate interfere for the protection of his wife? I said to him, 'Why, man, the best magistrate in such a case is a horsewhip. Keep one behind the door, and let the fellow feel it if he comes again; and if he will not clear off with a horsewhip, then kick him out.'

"What!" cried our host, with a look of comical amazement, "do you, a man of peace, advise such warlike proceedings!"

"Yes, indeed," replied Mr. Andrews, "for if ever war is justifiable, it is when we are fighting for home liberties against unscrupulous foes; and I should be very much surprised if you, my dear friend, would not do something similar in similar circumstances."

"Well, perhaps I should," was the reply, quietly spoken.

The conversation soon after took a turn, but I could not shake off the impression it had made on me. When that night I went to my bedroom, I turned with a quick instinct to the eleventh chapter of Matthew, and read those dear words, "Come unto ME, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;" and I could not help thinking how depraved must the religious feeling be which could consent for a moment to place a man between the soul and the Saviour. What poor notions of Christ's infinite grace must they have who suppose that He cannot immediately comfort their hearts and give them peace. I felt deeply all the arguments against confession, its opposition to Scripture, and to legal enactments, and to social happiness, and to good morals in both the penitent and the priest; but in the solemn moments of prayer that night I could feel nothing save the dishonour this vile system heaps on the head of our living Saviour. Surely it mars His visage over again, and starts again the springs of His passionate tears over the folly of men who will not come unto Him that they may have life; it sets aside as needless the hands of the Good Shepherd just touching the lost sheep He has so long been seeking, and forbids harshly the approach of trembling souls who would come to touch the border of His garment, and wash His feet with tears. Oh! may God yet save England from this "snare of the devil," and forbid that our Churches should ever be "taken captive by him at his will"!

ANGER is like the waves of a troubled sea; when it is corrected with a soft reply, as with a little strand, it retires, and leaves behind but froth and shells, no permanent mischief.—*Jeremy Taylor.*

THE CLAWS OF THE CLAUSE.

I'M a plain man, and my wife is a plain woman, and she says to me one day, "John, whatever is this 25th Clause, as folks is making such a fuss about?" "I'm sure I don't know," says I, through not being much of a scholar, though I can read and write pretty fair. I says, "It's something to do with the schools, as how Parliament wants everybody to learn to read and write and cipher." "And a very good thing too," says she, "for there's many a thousand in this country as don't know A from a bull's foot, as is a shame; and it can't be for want of money in the country, and see what lots is spent on soldiering; and when that 'ere King of Sheba, or whatever they call him, come from foreign parts, why, there was no end of good money thrown away."

Well, just then, in come our minister. He's a good 'un, and knows all about the doings in Parliament, through him readin' of the papers constant; so I told him what me and my wife had been talkin' about, and he says, pleasant-like, "Why you're touched with the same disease as everybody else; for, go where I will, people begin to talk about the 25th Clause; and I've been almost ready to say, 'I wish it would take its nasty claws away from me.'"

Me and my wife both laughed at this, and so did he. "However," says he, "I'll do my best to explain the matter to you. Of course you remember that three years ago the Government brought in a Bill to make better provision for the Elementary Education of the children of the country. Now, this is a matter in which the whole nation is concerned, and we Nonconformists were very anxious that the Government should consult national interests, and not show favour to sects and parties. And at first it did seem as if our wishes would be realised. School Boards were to be elected in every town, and rate-supported schools provided by them which should be un-denominational, and which we hoped should in time, and by a gradual process, take the place of the existing sectarian schools. You see, in any system of education for the nation, we should take care to teach only those things in which all the nation can agree. We can all agree about the three Rs, and simple geography, and grammar, and the elements of physical science; but in the sectarian schools many things are often taught which go sadly against the grain of the beliefs of a great many people."

"Yes," says my wife, "that's very true, for I've got a sister down in Northamptonshire, and she's a Baptist, and she sent her children to the National School, and they made 'em learn the Catechism, all about 'godfathers and godmothers in my baptism,' and there was pretty work, I can tell you."

"Well, excuse me," I says, "but what's all this got to do with the 25th Clause?"

Says our minister, "Wait a bit; I'm coming to it. When the Act came into operation, and School Boards began to compel children whose parents couldn't afford to pay fees to attend school, the question came up, 'Where shall we send them?' Now, the 25th Clause of the Bill gives the Board power to pay fees for poor children at Denominational schools. For instance, if a Roman Catholic parent pleads poverty as the reason why his children don't attend school, then the Board can pay for their education in a Roman Catholic school; and so with a Churchman, or a Jew, or a Baptist. As soon as this was understood, the managers of sectarian schools began to press the School Boards to send children to them."

"Well," says I, "I reckon that's nowt but fair. I don't like them Romans, but if they wants to bring their children up to it, why let 'em, I say."

"Quite so," says our minister; "let men be free, even if they differ from us. If a man wants his children made into little Roman Catholics or Churchmen, then so be it. But he ought not to expect other people to pay for it. Yet they do pay: for the School Board money is public money, raised by a rate; and every fee paid under the 25th Clause to a sectarian school has been taken from all the people of a town, many of them bitterly opposed to any such use of their money. And so it comes to pass, by the 25th Clause, that Dissenters pay for children to be taught that dissent is a sin; and Protestants pay for children to be taught that the Pope is infallible, and that all Protestants are on the high road to hell. You see, we should not object if the parent sent the child with the fee in his hand, for then it might easily be supposed that the fee paid for his religious instruction, and the Government grants paid for the elementary instruction. But when the Board pays the fee, then it pays for all the teaching the child receives, both secular and sectarian. Now, we cannot see this to be just. Why should the public money of a town be put into the hands of school managers and used by them for private and sectarian purposes? That's where the Clause

scratches us. It creates a manifest unfairness between man and man. It robs Peter to pay Paul, and gives Cæsar more than his due. In fact, the principle involved in this 25th Clause is just the same as that of Church Rates, against which we fought so persistently. By one, no less than the other, men are compelled to pay for teaching over which they have no control, and to which they may be opposed."

Then my wife breaks in, and she says, "But if the School Board don't like these schools, why do they send any children there at all? Why not send 'em to other schools, as people agrees with?"

"Why, the fact is," he says, "though it's a burning shame—the fact is, that nearly all the School Boards in England have had a majority in favour of this 25th Clause, and so have done their best to fill up the sectarian schools with all the children they could cram into them. But there's another thing. If you could read the 25th Clause, you would find that to some extent it ties the hands of the Board. If the parent choose a sectarian school, or if the priest or clergyman choose one for him, then the parent may say, 'I'll have my child paid for here, or nowhere.' The Board cannot refuse to pay, nor compel the child to go elsewhere."

"Then what's to become of the poor children?" says I.

"Oh," says the minister, "never fear for them. The School Board can pay their fees at its own schools. The 17th Clause gives it the power to do that; † so that if the Clause were simply blotted out and forgotten for ever, the education of our children would not suffer one bit; indeed, it would prosper; for School Board schools would be in every way more efficient than the majority of our present schools. They would be more jealously watched, and influenced on every side by public opinion. Nor is there any danger that in Board Schools anything contrary to the Christian religion will be taught; and it seems, as things go at present, that the Bible will be read, and explained in a simple unsectarian manner. You see, then, that there can be no earthly reason for keeping that 25th Clause in the Bill, except the beggarly wish to play into the hands

* 25. "The School Board may . . . pay the whole or any part of the school fees payable at any public elementary school; . . . but no such payment shall be made or refused on condition of the child attending any public elementary school other than such as may be selected by the parent." (*Vide* Education Act of 1870.) The words in italics are the crucial part of the Clause.

† 17. "Every child attending a school provided by any School Board shall pay such weekly fee as may be prescribed by the School Board; . . . but the School Board may . . . remit the whole or any part of such fee. . . ."

of the Established Church and Roman Catholics, and to give them an undue advantage at the expense of Nonconformists."

"Well," I says, "I'm much obliged to you, and I think I sees it clear. A friend of mine was in here the other day, and he told me as John Bright said as how this Education Act was the worst Act as had been passed by a Liberal Government within forty years; and I must say as I agrees with John Bright, if it allows such things as you've named."

When our minister was gone, I turns to my wife and says, "Well, how things do get mixed up in this world, to be sure! I should have thought as the Parliament would have knowed better than that." And my wife she says to me, "It seems to me as things is upside down: and the sooner they gets turned right side up the better."

THOUGHTS—GRAVE AND GAY.

SIR CORNEWALL LEWIS used to say, "Life would be very tolerable if it were not for its pleasures."

Dr. Chalmers beautifully said: "The little that I have seen in the world, and know of the history of mankind, teaches me to look upon their errors in sorrow, not in anger. When I take the history of one poor heart that has sinned and suffered, and represent to myself the struggles and temptation it passed through—the brief pulsations of joy; the tears of regret; the feebleness of purpose; the scorn of the world that has little charity; the desolation of the soul's sanctuary, and threatening voice within; health gone; happiness gone;—I would fain leave the erring soul of my fellow-man with Him from whose hand it came."

The secret of being rightly guided — guided of God — is to have our own will thoroughly subdued. "The meek will He guide in judgment, and the meek will He teach His way."

When the veil of death has been drawn between us and the objects of our regard, how quicksighted do we become to their merits, and how bitterly do we remember words or even looks of unkindness which may have escaped in our intercourse with them! How careful should such thoughts render us, in the fulfilment of those offices of affection which may yet be in our power to perform; for who can tell how soon the moment may arrive when repentance cannot be followed by reparation!—*Bishop Heber.*

There is an old story of a Hindoo at Goa whose conversion had long been attempted by the Jesuits, but who refused to embrace Christianity until he should go to Rome. The state of the Eternal City was at that time a scandal to Christendom, and the reverend fathers did all that they could to divert their expected convert from his project. However, the Hindoo was obdurate, and set out on his journey. On his return, to the astonishment of his Jesuit friends, he announced that after his visit to Rome he was in very truth a convert to Christianity; for, he added, "a religion which can exist notwithstanding the infamy and iniquity I have seen perpetrated in its name, must assuredly be the true faith."

CHURCH NEWS OF THE MONTH.

THE able article recently written by Rev. R. W. Dale, in the *Daily Telegraph*, on the position of Nonconformity in this country, has naturally awakened much interest. We should have liked to publish it *in extenso*, but our space compels us to content ourselves with a few extracts. Referring to Nonconformist modes of worship, Mr. Dale says:—"Of late years there has been a general attempt to improve the character of the psalmody, which holds a very important place in Nonconformist services; and in nearly all congregations there is a choir. Nonconformists attach great weight to preaching. There are, no doubt, many dull preachers among the Dissenters, and many who can be hardly called dull are shallow and showy; but, incredible as it may seem, Nonconformist congregations generally listen to their ministers' sermons with interest. If a man's preaching is not interesting he has very little chance of being invited to become the minister of a Dissenting Church; and if it ceases to be interesting, he generally has to resign his charge sooner or later, unless he has qualities which in the judgment of his congregation compensate even for dulness."

In an able passage on the political position of Nonconformists, Mr. Dale speaks as follows:—"Politically, the Nonconformists—ministers and people—have as a rule always been Liberals. Gradually, the mass of the Wesleyan people have drifted towards the political convictions of their fellow-Nonconformists, and though the transition is even now not complete, it is being accomplished very

rapidly. But the mass of the Nonconformists have been identified throughout their whole history with the Liberal party. They were the followers of Henry Brougham in his earliest and best days. They were true to Lord Grey. For Lord Russell in his prime, notwithstanding the coldness which might seem to render it impossible that he should excite and attract popular admiration, they cherished a hearty loyalty: there was a certain grit in his composition which suited their temper and traditions.

“Mr. Gladstone has commanded not their loyalty merely, but their enthusiasm. That this enthusiasm has been chilled, and that in every part of the country the most active Nonconformist politicians are resolving at all costs to withhold their support from the chiefs of the Liberal party until the principles which have determined the educational policy of the Government are abandoned, are facts which are perplexing and irritating the recognised leaders of Liberal constituencies. What has shaken their allegiance to their former leaders is the conviction that the policy of the Government is extending and perpetuating the power of the clergy of the Church of England and the priests of the Church of Rome over elementary schools, which derive a large portion of their support from public funds. The struggle over the 25th Clause of the Elementary Education Act is but an incident in a far wider and larger conflict. The Nonconformists maintain that no new sources of public support should be opened to schools which are under private, irresponsible, and sectarian management, and that the policy of the Liberal party should be directed to the gradual absorption of these schools in a truly national and unsectarian system. An additional motive to resistance was supplied by the urgency and perseverance with which Mr. Forster asserted the principle that to compel a poor parent, who is unable to pay for his child's education, to send the child to a Board-school, where he would receive no sectarian teaching at all, would be unjust; and that the parent had a right to claim the fees which would enable him to send the child to a school where it would receive the sectarian religious instruction he preferred. This principle seems, to large numbers of Nonconformists, to be so hostile to the spirit and traditions of Liberalism, and to the highest interests of the country, as to require them to use whatever strength they have in resisting the educational policy which is intended to give it effect. How long the schism between the Liberal leaders and themselves is likely to last, it is hard to

predict; the sooner it disappears the better it will be for the Nonconformists, the Liberal party, and for the country. The return of Mr. Bright to the ministry, and the vigour and frankness of his speeches at Birmingham, have created a hope that during the next session of Parliament the Government will make a serious effort to remove the grounds of Nonconformist discontent. The Nonconformist leaders have, therefore, called a truce, and have suspended the electoral policy which during the summer assisted to render it impossible for any ministerial candidate to obtain a seat."

In a leading article that followed this paper, the *Daily Telegraph* said: "The noblest and most pathetic records of France are the annals of her Dissenters, the Huguenots; and if our own Nonconformists escaped so terrible a persecution as that which made France a moral desolation—if their sufferings were trivial in comparison with a fury which deemed even the Massacre of Saint Bartholomew and the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes incomplete—if they were saved by English jealousy of clerical rule from the more sanguinary visitation of clerical vengeance—their history may, nevertheless, fill all Englishmen with pride.

"We say that it may be a proud record to all Englishmen, and not to Dissenters, because we trust the day is past when Dissent was the theme of stupid, ignorant, and vulgar derision. That was in the old port-drinking, hard-swearing, and High and Dry Church times, when England was only freeing herself from the rule of an oligarchy, when Dissent was taken to be synonymous with the spirit of revolution, and when the freest livers were loudest in their devotions to the Church, because she was a machine invented by Providence for keeping down the Whigs. The Squire Westerns could not understand why any one could find fault with bishops, or refuse to pray according to the rules of the Liturgy. They were certain that all who would not perform so plain a duty of a Christian and an Englishman, must be rascals, and they said so most emphatically after the third bottle. The hardest drinkers, indeed, were the best Churchmen. If any squire was a Tory, he was certain to believe that, next to poaching, Dissent was the greatest of sins. It was the wild, rollicking, fox-hunting, and orthodox squires who were the backbone of the party which permitted Bolingbroke to show that, if he was at once the most brilliant and the most profligate man in England, he was also the most devoted friend of the Church. After drinking claret or champagne half the night, and seeing all his

friends safely under the table, the gifted and wicked statesman would be ready next morning to go with his colleagues to Westminster Abbey and take the sacrament. Then he would make a jest of the whole business to a select little band of sceptics. And afterwards, in a crowded House, he would make a magnificent speech, to show the necessity of pulling down Dissent.

"All educated men now admit that Nonconformists have been the consistent defenders of Liberal opinions for two centuries; that they taught the duty of religious toleration; that they helped to save the country from any risk of its falling again under any form of sacerdotal dominion; that they have ever been on the side of the weak, the oppressed, and the suffering. Nonconformity has been the political teacher of the English nation. But for the fanaticism of Puritanism, the ideal enthusiasm of Bunyan, the sturdy demand of the Nonconformists for political equality, and the marvellous consistency which they have preserved for two centuries, the history of England would have been far less of an heroic record."

There was a time, says the *Nonconformist*, not ten years ago, "when no member of parliament or candidate for parliamentary honours would have dreamed of saying a word about the separation of Church and State, and now no member or candidate can appear before the constituencies without declaring his faith upon that question. Probably the first working man who will be returned at the next general election—one who is already sure of his seat—is Mr. Burt, the remarkably able leader of the working miners, whose seat for Morpeth, in succession to Sir George Grey, is safe, and who has frankly declared himself to be an anti-state Churchman. So far as we can judge at present, the candidates who will offer themselves at the next general election, voluntarily pledged to the separation of Church and State, will be largely in excess of any number that we have calculated upon."

We regret to learn that the Rev. Joseph Fletcher, of Christchurch, Hants, has been obliged to resign his pastorate, in consequence of long and serious illness.

Rev. W. D. Ground has resigned his charge at Percy Chapel, Bath. On the following day he was presented with a purse containing £35.—Rev. J. W. Ingram has accepted the pastorate of the Church at North Tawton.—Rev. Frederick Hastings, late of Wanstead, has accepted the pastorate of the Church at Weston-super-Mare.

RUTH TREDEGAR;

OR, CLOUDS AND SUNSHINE.

BY MARY SHERWOOD.

CHAP. III.—THE QUIET SLEEP.

THE storm that night had done its work. The *Bonny Bess* would never put out to sea again, her brown sail filling with the breeze, and the sunny wavelets kissing her prow, as she danced up and down upon the broad blue ocean plain. She had gone down in the darkness, and her little crew had gone down with her to their death.

All Pengarva was stirred at the news, which flew from house to house, almost before the day had dawned. In those simple fishing villages, where the men all follow one calling, and every woman knows what it is to tremble of nights, listening to the roaring of the blast, and thinking of those who are out upon the sea, there is no lack of sympathy when the trouble from which none are ever quite secure has fallen upon one. And John Tredegar was popular with all his neighbours, and Mary Tredegar, too, had the good word of most of the Pengarva folk; though there were some who thought that she held her head a little high, and that it would be just as well if she went about a little more, and showed that she did not think herself better than other people, whose cottages were not, perhaps, quite so clean, and whose children, more often than not, ran about in pinafores and shoes with holes in them which it would be hard to mend.

There was soon a little throng upon the beach. Ruth had fled straight to the nearest cottage—old Mark Reeson's—and roused the inmates by her cries for help. It was not long to seek. There had not been many sound sleepers in Pengarva that night, and the old fisherman, as he said, had been sleeping with one eye open, when the sound of Ruth's voice outside awoke him. Before many minutes had elapsed, he and half-a-dozen others from the neighbouring cottages were on their way with Ruth to the shore. The women hurried on their gowns and ran out, some following the men, some standing in their cottage doors, talking, with scared faces, one to the other of the terrible tidings that had burst upon them. One huge figure came striding down the street: it was Master Dan, who had been up with the dawn, and was going to the beach, if perchance, with returning

light, any signs of the boat were to be descried, when he was met by the tidings that it had gone down, and that John Tredegar's body had been washed ashore. He turned aside for a moment, wrenched off an old outhouse door that was swinging on its hinges, and then went quickly with it after the rest.

Half an hour later they brought it back on the shoulders of four brawny fishermen, and upon it, covered with a woman's shawl that had been hastily flung over it, lay, stiff and stark, the awful burden that they had gone to fetch.

Behind them came Master Dan and another man, carrying the insensible form of Mary Tredegar. The poor woman had swooned away as she saw her husband's corpse lifted on to the rude bier which had been brought down to the beach, and her countenance looked now scarcely less deathly than that over which she had bent in agony an hour ago, when in the grey morning light she had seen it lying cold and ghastly on the sands, and knew that the sea had given back to her, not the living, but the dead.

Beside them walked Ruth, sobbing bitterly, as she toiled with heavy heart and streaming eyes up the steep hill path, along which the rough but kindly fishermen were stumbling along. The women, who by this time had joined the group, were gathered round her, some crying themselves in sympathy with her grief, others doing their best to console her with well-meant words which Ruth was too stunned and sick at heart either to hear or to comprehend. And so through the awakening village they wound their way in the misty dawn to the cottage, where the door was on the latch, and the children sleeping upstairs, and the fire was blazing brightly on the hearth below, just as Ruth had left it an hour ago when she went out to seek her mother.

She choked back her sobs as they came near the cottage, and with one or two of the women hurried on in advance to prepare for the entrance of the fishermen. How strange it seemed! Scarcely an hour since she had gone out, and yet in that little space of time what changes had been wrought! For a moment the sense of loss came over her with a bitterness that she could hardly bear. She longed to rush upstairs and away from every one, and to shut herself up in her own little chamber in the roof, alone with this terrible trouble, which the sight and presence of so many people seemed to make only the harder to endure. A mist swam before her eyes. She felt as if the throng and tramp and the sound of so many voices in the

little house-place almost overpowered her. Just then a hand was laid upon her shoulder: Ruth turned round: it was Master Dan, who had given up his fainting charge into the care of the women, and was standing now looking down upon the girl from under his shaggy brows.

"Poor child! poor child!" was all he said, but there was helpfulness in the sound of his voice, and in the pitying glance of his keen, grey eyes; and Ruth felt it like a sudden comfort at her heart.

"Oh, Master Dan! surely this is all a dream!" she murmured; and then a shudder crept through her frame, and she closed her eyes and turned aside. For now there came the heavier tread of those who were bearing in her father's corpse. Shoulder high they carried it across the threshold and up the narrow stairs into the cottage chamber, where they laid it down upon the empty bed, and left it for the women, who had followed them, to perform the last offices for the dead.

But there was her mother still to care for; and Ruth, with a brave effort, roused herself from the grief which it would have been such a relief at the moment to indulge, and hastened to help the neighbours, who were doing what they could, with such simple remedies as were at hand, to bring her back to consciousness.

It was a terrible awaking to the new-made widow. The long suspense of the night, and the shock of the morning, had been too much for her feeble frame; and she recovered consciousness only to moan out the names of her husband and the boy whom she had lost, and then to fall again from one fainting fit into another. Perhaps it was as well, however, for the poor woman, that for the present her senses were so far closed against the agony that had overwhelmed her; for close on the heels of those who had borne her husband home came the heavy tread of others advancing towards the cottage door. Another body had been washed ashore, and now the boy Michael, the joy and pride of his mother's heart, was laid a stiffened corpse by the father's side. Quietly enough they slept now in that little upper chamber. No roar of tempests any more to disturb their deep repose. The waves of this troublesome world were overpassed, and the haven reached at last. Only for those whom they had left behind was there watching and strife and pain!

(To be continued in our next.)

THE DEEPENING OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE.

BY THE REV. JOSEPH HALSEY.

AMONG the many signs of the times that glitter hopefully in the ecclesiastical firmament, betokening "fair weather to-day," is the phenomenon of a deep, growing, contagious desire for a fuller volume, a higher tone, a mightier impulse in the spiritual life. Everywhere in our Churches this seems to be *the desideratum*. There is chafing discontentment at things as they are, an earnest desire to "strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die." Instead of Laodicean complacency, the number is being daily increased of those who "sigh and cry" over the coldness and deadness of the spiritual life. The writer has heard many addresses of late, the whole burden of which has been—More of the life of God in the soul. He has been invited to deliver addresses at the social gatherings of Churches, and the request has been for some words calculated to stir up the piety and the zeal of the people. It is so all over the land. Our denominational periodicals strike the same key-note. We are all greater in elegiacs than in heroics just now. We are "mourning sore," like the dove without her mate. "There is none that stirreth up himself to take hold of *Thee*;" this is our refrain and our plaint, thinking always first of ourselves, and not of our neighbours, as we utter it. Converse with our ministers, and so will you find it. Overhear their mutual confidences in their fraternal gatherings, the same thing will strike you. They may not want revivalism, but they want revival; they may not want any new thing, but they want the true thing; they may not be vociferant, but they are hungry. An epidemic is upon the Church just now—a craving after some deeper experiences of the life and love of God in the soul.

What does all this mean? Is it meteoric and transitory, or is it a significant sign of real forces at work, whose effects must shortly appear? Is it a mere phenomenon, or is it a portent? Is it a "star in the east," drawing "wise men" after it to the place where Jesus is; or is it a rocket-flash, exciting the stupid and momentary wonder of staring clowns? Is it astrological or astronomical? of the earth? or is this thing of God?

We believe the latter—with all our heart we believe it. There is every mark of Divine operation in this excitation of desire and

expectation. It is, so far as human agencies are concerned, spontaneous, and yet it is simultaneous; it is universal, without being the creature of organisation. It is in the air. We "hear the sound thereof, but cannot tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth." Surely this is of the Spirit. The cry is not the noisy, clamorous cry of children for food, who want it, but do not need it. It is rather the suppressed moan of real hunger—hunger that is more of a pain than an appetite. We accept this as a precurrent pledge and symptom of what God is going to do. The shaking among the dry bones is surely preliminary to the coming of bone to his bone, and all the other steps in the process of revivification, until the great living army shall stand ready equipped to win the world for Christ.

The deepening of the spiritual life, this is what is wanted. There is room for it, and need for it. Shallowness in everything is a characteristic of the age. Superficiality carries a man as well through society—ought we to add, as well through the Church?—as solidity and profundity; and it is so much easier to discover an electroplating bath than the philosopher's stone. Gold-wash looks as well as gold, if it doesn't wear as long; and seeing life is "but a vapour which appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away," what matters about the wear? So we survey, but do not bore; area, not depth, is the criterion of our judgment; we count men, but do not weigh them. And so long as the shallow babbling stream turns the wheel as well as, or even better, than the calm, deep-flowing stream; so long as machinery is held of more account than spirituality—there is not much hope for the higher interests of the Church. But the "sign of the times" is a growing sense of dissatisfaction and impatience at this state of things. We say—Give us clearness, depth, force. The brook that drives the mill is something; but the river that fertilises the land, and nourishes the corn for the mill to grind, is a grander and a better thing. So we pant for a deeper spirituality.

And God means to give it us. He would not have engendered the appetite if He had not intended to "satisfy the hungry soul with His goodness." Then what are we to do? or, are we to do anything but "hope and quietly wait for" the blessing? Is there any function for *means* in this matter? There is doubtless something in mere attitude, in a receptive state of mind, in a posture of expectancy. There is something in the old mystical doctrine of just opening the soul to God, calmly attent until the afflatus come. And we may make a mistake in laying too much stress upon means.

Meat is essential to life, and yet "the life is more than meat." But means are not to be despised or neglected. It is true, that if you can impart a fuller volume and a swifter current to the tide, dredging will be superfluous. The torrent will scoop its own channels; and when Divine grace comes in a freshet it will carry everything before it—the choking mud, barring sandbanks, obstructive wreckage—sweeping for itself a clear bed, excavating and widening as it goes. But it is to be remembered that dredging itself will tend to increase the velocity of the current; and it is also true that by the use of means we may become "labourers together with God." Let us pray and hope and wait for the freshet, and mean time let us ply the drodge. We are, in this matter, to adopt the Divine formula—"Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

We have to find the golden mean, if possible, between meddlingness and indolence. Wise effort along the line of God's working is desirable and necessary, but we are not to be wiser than God. "What have you been doing?" said a mother to her little one, as she came toddling in from the garden, her countenance beaming with liveliest satisfaction. "Helping God," was the innocent's reply. "Helping God! Why, how have you been doing that?" asked the astonished parent. "Why, I found some flowers a-goin' to b'ossom, and I b'ossomed 'em." That is how, with our machinery, and in our unwisdom and impatience, we "children of a larger growth" too often "help God." We find His flowers of paradise about to blossom on the earth, and we go straightway and "blossom them." We precipitate results without accelerating processes. We are beforehand with God. We cannot "in our patience possess our souls" until the perfect flower opens its lovely corolla to the sun. We must see immediate results. We must make a revival before it comes. We cannot "rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him," who

"Never is before His time,
And never is behind;"

but with hasty hands must counterfeit a consummation towards which God's providence was gently, but surely leading us. On the other hand, there are ways in which and times at which we can "help God." Indeed, He claims our help. Our human shoulder is to be put to His triumphant chariot-wheel, that He may ride forth prosperously to bless all hearts and our own. What can we

do, then, for the deepening of our own spiritual life, that so we may become depositaries of Divine influences to the glory of God, to the "peace which passeth understanding" of our own souls, and to the healing and benediction of mankind?

We have no novelties to suggest. We are in the position of an invalid who possesses locked up in his cabinet the very prescription which would be a specific for his disorder, but to which through indolence, neglect, or forgetfulness, he does not refer, and which he has never applied. We all know how to foster the Divine life within. We could all of us sit down and write a recipe for some other spiritual valetudinarian. But we do not honestly and faithfully use the means we know. Hence our weakness.

If we say that prayer is essential to the deepening of the springs of the spiritual life, who will not turn away disappointed from the page and say, "Why, we knew that well enough before. It needed no prophet to tell us that." But, dear reader, there was one of old who *knew* his Lord's will but *did* it not, and he was appointed his portion with the unbelievers. Who of us prays, really *prays*? grasping the knocker of heaven's gates with firm, tenacious, pertinacious grip, never ceasing our battery till admittance is granted, and we get at last a sight and then an audience of the King? "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." But we go and give a timorous knock, not because we want anything, but because it is a certain hour of the day, the appointed time to do it, and having knocked, we run away! Our prayers have not more power because they have not more passion. They are only surface ripples, not "deep calling unto deep." They have not more effect because we have not more expectancy. Till we learn to pray in such wise as to convince Heaven we are in earnest, our spiritual life will continue to be the poor, flaccid, drooping thing it is.

Again, if we were to insist on diligent study of God's word as an essential condition of anything like robustness and growth in the Divine life, people might think us, perhaps, a safe person to be invited to give an infant-school address, but would have a poor opinion of our originality. And yet this is a means, a Divinely appointed means, a *sine qua non*, of deep spirituality—a means too much neglected. Who of us reads his Bible with the relish, the gusto, the application of those grand saints of other days, who were men of one book? "There were giants in those days." And

well they might be, for they were nourished on a different sort of pabulum from that which constitutes the diet of latter-day Christians. If we read as much of our Bibles as of our morning papers, what well-instructed scribes should we be! If we talked as much and as earnestly of the one literature as the other, how soon would God's work revive in our families and in our own souls! We fear many professed believers never systematically read the word of God at all. It is a dip here and a dip there, as the mood takes them. In the case of others, who do observe some sort of method and regularity in their study of the sacred Book, what a very homœopathic method it is!

What an unspeakable benefaction have the twenty-third Psalm, and other similar portions whose charm is their brevity, been to the Church of God! Whoever reads as much of the Scriptures as of the last novel, at a sitting? Is the average modern professor, who makes any pretensions to reading at all, as well acquainted with the books of Kings and Chronicles, as with Macaulay and Froude; with Isaiah, as with Tennyson; with Paul's Epistles, as with the letters of Junius? No wonder at a want of masculine vigour in our piety, and of fine tone in our spiritual health, if we neglect, as it is too much to be feared we do, the proper nourishment of the life of the soul.

Again, abounding Christian activity is another essential condition of soul prosperity. - "Take plenty of exercise in the open air," is the advice a physician would give to a dyspeptic patient. "Son, go work in My vineyard," is the Master's injunction to all whose spiritual appetite is bad, and whose functions are deranged. No man can get above the lowest plane of religious experience, who does not seek to kill self by a consecrated devotion to some form of sacred activity. It is as we labour on the vine-clad slopes of Christian service, supporting here a trailing bough, watering there a drooping plant, that breezes from the celestial hills play refreshingly around our brow; while each inspiration makes the life-blood leap more glowingly through the once languid veins, and imparts a new elasticity to the spiritual powers.

We have only hinted at thoughts we fain would have dwelt on. Thank God for those phenomena in our midst which encourage us to think they may not be inopportune.

"NO PLACE FOR THE LIKES O' YOU."

"A CHILDREN'S party! Oh, my, let's have a look at the little swells!" And Jamie drew close to the railings and watched with eager interest each carriage-load deposited at the brilliantly lighted hall door.

Poor little Jamie! Little of brightness and joy had his life seen. Forsaken by his father, cursed and beaten by a cruel drunken mother, treated with roughness and suspicion by all around, he lived the usual life of a city outcast—roaming the streets all day, and stealing back at night to the filthy crowded room which was all he had of home. And now he stood watching, with all a child's love of sight-seeing, the bright scene before him. Presently a little boy came to the door and looked out. Velvet knickerbockers, white waistcoat, hair scented and curled. There he stood, with the light shining full on his golden curls. Jamie looked at him with curious eyes.

"He's no bigger nor me," he muttered; "guess I could wear his things," and he glanced down on his bare legs and dirty rags with a smile of amusement at the thought of himself in such fine clothes.

Just then the little boy's eyes fell upon him, and a look of indignation crossed his face. "Go away," he exclaimed, angrily. "This is no place for such as you." A policeman standing near raised his hand, but Jamie, with a strange lump in his throat and a mist before his eyes, dodged the expected blow, and sprang across the pavement into the muddy street. There was a sudden stir and bustle, and people stopped to inquire what was the matter. "Only a street boy run over," was the careless reply; and they passed on, remarking, "It's a wonder more are not killed, they are always under the horses' feet."

"Only a street boy!" They carried him to the hospital, and laid him in one of the children's cots. He was not run over, but had received a blow, and fell with his head on a stone. All night long he was delirious. Once when the nurse spoke to him, he threw up his thin arms, crying piteously, "I tried to get out of the way; he said that was no place for the likes o' me, and I tried to get away. Oh, don't!" and up again went the little arm, as if to ward off a blow. Gently and kindly was the little lad tended in this, one of Christ's own institutions; but the angel of death was overshadowing him,

and the nurse knew it. One day he rallied, and gazed with languid interest round the room.

"What place is this?" he asked.

"A place for little boys and girls to come to when they are ill. Little ragged boys who have no home," replied the nurse.

"A place on purpose?" said Jamie, with wide, open eyes. "Buildded on purpose for ragged boys like me?"

"Yes," said the nurse, smiling.

"Why, I thought they only had prisons on purpose for us! Shall I live here always, when I gets well?"

The nurse hesitated: she knew that Jamie's "always" would be at the longest only a week or two. Bending over the cot, she said, gently, "Do you want very much to get well, dear?"

The child looked at her, and suddenly the truth broke upon him. The blue eyes dilated with terror, and the thin arms were thrown up in agony. Am I going to die? Oh, don't let me die! I dare not die! I shall go to that dreadful place and be burnt! Oh, don't, please don't let me die!"

"Jamie," said the nurse, firmly, "you will not go to any dreadful place; you may go to a beautiful place, and live with Jesus, if you ask Him."

"Oh, no! no!" shrieked the child. "They told me I should go there! They always said so."

Oh, England! beautiful, happy, Christian England! This is the way hundreds of your little ones are taught to die! From their infancy they are constantly hearing themselves consigned to everlasting perdition. Is it any wonder they look upon death as an awful mystery?

Look at the death-bed of a Christian child, one who has been led to Jesus. The sweet eyes full of love and trust, while the childish voice gasps, "Don't cry, mamma; I am going to be with Jesus in my beautiful home." O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory?

Look again, it is only a street boy. The little form writhing in anguish, piteous eyes full of entreaty, voice choked with sobs, pleading for life—"Oh! don't let me die!"

And Jesus said, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me."

But Jamie heard the "old, old story," and received it with a child's unwavering faith. Heard, for the first time in his life, the sweet story of a Saviour's love, and then he longed to die. All fear was

gone. Jesus was indeed to him a Good Shepherd. Long days and nights of wearying pain brought him nearer home, and one night the summons came. He was moaning in his sleep, and the nurse, bending over him, heard the words that had been so often on his lips during his delirium: "This is no place for the likes o' you."

Oh, little Jamie, there seemed indeed to be no place for "the likes o' you." No place in the beautiful rooms and well-kept nurseries; in the lighted hall, or even on the steps outside! No place in the wide world for the weary little feet, no pillow for the weary little head, no home for the outcast, so Jesus took him. He passed away in sleep.

No more oaths, and blows, and curses; no more sleepless nights and weary days. Happy little Jamie! You have found your place in the great Children's Home above.—*The Children's Advocate.*

BLESSING BODY AND SOUL.

DR. GUTHRIE tells us how he came to learn that the body must not be overlooked in care and kindness for the soul. "When visiting in a house in the Cowgate, I found a lone woman lying on a bed of straw. She was old and grey-headed; a mug with water stood by her bedside, and a mere handful of coal was smouldering in the grate on that cold winter day. Her pallet was straw, her bed-clothes a thin and ragged coverlet. I sat down by her bedside on the only stool in her house, and began to speak kindly, affectionately, and religiously to her. She raised herself up, and putting back her old grey locks, stretched out her skinny arm, and shaking it in my face, said, 'I am cold and hungry.' 'Well,' I said, 'my good friend, I will see what can be done to fill that grate with coals, and your barrel with meal; but I beseech you to remember there is something worse than cold and hunger.' 'Ah! but see!' she said, again lifting that withered arm, 'if you were as cold and as hungry as I am, you could think about nothing else.'"

"I learned there," says Dr. Guthrie, "that if a man would reach the hearts of these people, he must not overlook their temporal necessities."

REMEMBER, whatever warrant you have for praying, you have the same warrant to believe your prayers will be answered.

THE SNOW-EVANGEL.

THE white snowflakes

In pure ethereal crystals thickly fell ;
 The trees and shrubs in spotless robe arrayed,
 Told silently of those—"whiter than snow,"—
 Washed in the Saviour's blood, who had exchanged
 The stain of earth for Heaven's own purity.
 Thus musing, I approached that sacred spot—
 "God's Acre"—where the dead in Christ await
 His call.

'Twas early morn,
 And not a footprint marked the snowy path.
 On either side of which stood many a stone.
 In memory of loved departed ones.
 But little heeding these, I onward stepped
 Until I stood before a well-known spot,
 Where with uncovered head I, silent, paused,
 While memories sweet and sad most strangely met.
 A group of stones here tells its threefold tale
 Of Life, and Death, and deathless Life to come.

Here rests, in blessed hope, a friend whose name
 Is held in honoured memory, whose life
 Was spent in loyal service of his Lord.
 From duty stern he shrank not, resolute
 In battling for the right ; and yet, withal,
 The little children, with discernment quick,
 Read in his countenance a father's love,
 And clustered round his knee.—He sleeps "in Christ."

Here at his feet

Two of his little friends are sleeping now ;
 One called away in early dawn of youth,—
 All life, and hope, and joy ; cherished and loved
 As only father, mother, sister—love.
 She was the brightness of the earthly home,
 And now the heavenly home has brighter grown,
 And more attractive far. Here now, awhile
 She rests, in the Lord Jesus sleeping,—
 "Until the day dawn."

Close by her side there stands a little grave,—
 “Garden,” we call it,—where in summer time
 Sweet flowers bloom and fade. And when the cold
 Of winter comes, we place the evergreens
 And little wreaths of flowers, to mark our love.
 “I’m going up to see ‘kind Jesus’ soon,”—
 • One day he brightly said. He was well then,
 And full of life and childish happiness;
 But ere a month had passed the reaper came,
 And to the “fields of light” transplanted him.
 And though we sorely wept, we yet rejoiced,
 Because the gentle Shepherd had, in love,
 Gathered our little lamb within His fold.

This day, the graves
 Were well nigh covered with the snow; and one
 Who knew them not, could scarce have told the names
 Of those who slept beneath them; but as if
 To charm the thoughts away from earth to heaven,
 The mottoes on the stones alone were seen;
 And thus they ran:—

“Within His arms
 “The Lambs He’ll gather.”

Then upon the next,
 Those blessed words—“In Christ.”

And then,—like sweet
 Melodious symphony at close of song,—
 “Until the day dawn.”

Salisbury.

E. J. O.

DEATH is another life; we bow our heads at going out; and then we walk into another chamber of the King, larger and lovelier than this.

SUNDAY is the golden clasp that binds together the volume of the week.

EVERY heart has a wound which none can heal but Christ.

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, RIPPONDEN.

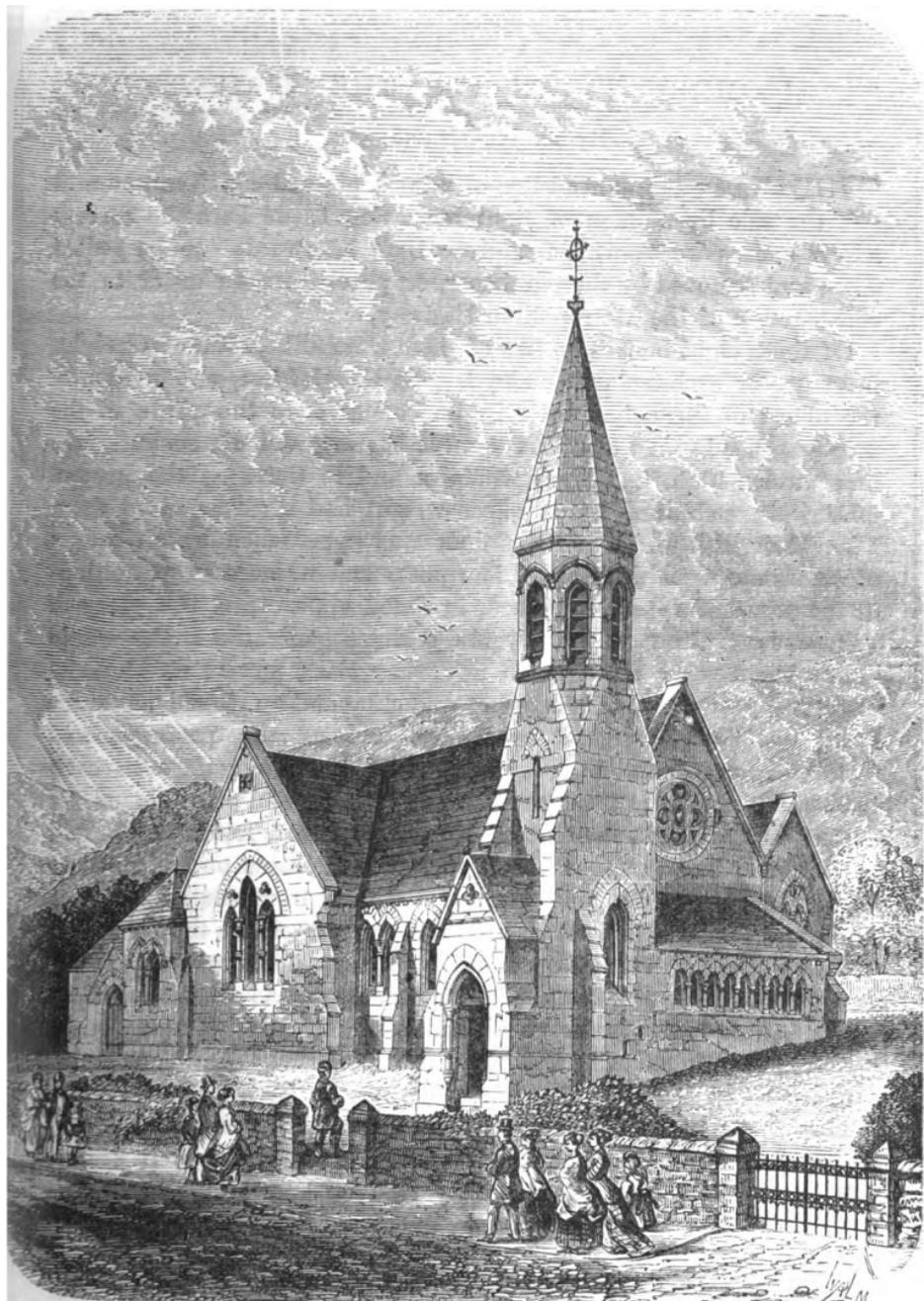
THE village of Ripponden is situated in the beautiful valley of the Rybourn, six miles from the town of Halifax. Within a circle of a mile and a half radius from the parish church, in the centre of the village, is a population of about 7000 souls, for whose accommodation no place of worship in connection with the Congregational body existed up to 1870, though the need for one had long been felt,

The origin of the present Church was somewhat peculiar. In 1868 a number of Christian people felt it their duty to withdraw from a Church in the district. During the first summer after their withdrawal they worshipped in the open air, in winter they held their meetings in cottages. Their services were so successful, that the people began to entertain hopes and form plans for a new chapel. One was commenced which would have seated about 1200 persons. While soliciting subscriptions, they were brought into contact with Mr. R. R. Lee, of Rebroyd Bridge. He at once with much spirit took up the scheme. Through his influence and promised help, the people were induced to pull down the building which was in course of erection, new plans were procured, and the present beautiful chapel and schools were at once commenced. A Church was formed by the Rev. Dr. Frazer, of Airedale College. The new place of worship was opened in September, 1870. At the close of the opening services there was still a debt of £1600. A bazaar was at once set on foot to realise this sum, and all hands became busy in preparation.

At this point, however, sorrow came upon them in a way they little expected. It pleased God to take away from them their dear friend and helper, Mr. Lee. He had won his way to the hearts of the people as few men could, and though some time has elapsed since the Master called him to Himself, the name of Robert Rilsall Lee is still felt to be a great power for good in the valley of Ripponden.

In the chapel may be seen a very handsome marble tablet, with a medallion of Mr. Lee, placed there by his devoted wife; also a beautiful organ given by Mr. Henry Lee, in memory of his brother.

The bazaar was held at Halifax, in June, 1872, and through generous help of friends there, and from Manchester, it was announced at the close that the chapel and schools, which had cost £4252, were free from debt.



RIPPONDEN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH AND SCHOOLS

"COMING DOWN FOR THE RAILWAY."

BY AN EX-MISSIONARY.

THE above was the head line of a large placard which announced the sale by auction of eight houses in Little Paradise Street; which houses were—within a given time afterwards—to be pulled down and removed by the purchaser, or purchasers, in order to the construction of the Metropolitan Railway.

Of these eight houses no two of them were alike, either in height, frontage, or architecture. The largest and loftiest, and evidently the oldest of them, had been in its earlier days the pride of the neighbourhood. It was of aristocratic bearing and dimensions, was four stories high, had large windows, and to those on the ground floor massive shutters hung, whose weight had almost pulled them from their fittings. The front door was approached by an ascent of five steps, and the carved door-posts and wainscoted panellings of the passage or hall, indicated, in faded appearance, the glory of bygone days. But now for years, perhaps generations, the whole house had been a stranger to any renovating power, so that its present aspect was that of neglect and dilapidation. And as every room contained a tenant or family, and as the passages and staircase formed the highway and right of thoroughfare to each habitation, the front door was never fastened, nor even closed, by day or night; consequently, whoever was found loitering therein would never be questioned either as to his business or his right to be there. Hence this house formed a shelter from the rain or the sunshine, for the idle and unemployed who dwelt in that locality, and was therefore often frequented by a very loose and disorderly group. But it is not so much with the house, as with one of its tenants, that our present business lies. Thomas Harper, more generally known as "Crooked Tom," occupied the ground-floor front-room.

He was a tall, gaunt, bony man, who owned a temper as rough and ungenial as a northern blast or a thunderstorm; a fact well understood and thoroughly recognised by all who knew him; hence the appellation of "Crooked Tom."

Now, as the idlers who congregated in the passage often did so congregate, to the great annoyance of "Crooked Tom," and sometimes by knocking at his door, and sundry other things, did con-

stantly provoke him, it is not to be wondered at that his temper grew worse rather than better, and that therefore any knock at his door should prepare the way for a torrent of wrath.

He was a whipmaker by trade, and served shops where whips were sold, so that all his work was done at home, his one room being at once his manufactory, sitting-room, bedroom, and storehouse. Consequently, for the greatest portion of the day he was to be found at home; and as few people went on business, few legitimate knocks were heard at the door of that room.

His wife was a little spare woman, with a spirit that had been thoroughly trained to submission; and as for many years she had been subject to the will of her husband, she did not now think it strange that she exercised no will of her own. When his temper was unusually crooked she had to bear all the hard words and rough usage that resulted therefrom, but she did so meekly. And if ever he spoke to her in rough kindness, she attached but little importance to it, as it was sure to pass away with the first thing that displeased him. But, although at home all the day, he was always away at the public-house every evening, *Sunday evening not excepted*. Therefore she had an opportunity to attend the house and worship of God; and as she did so, found the only comfort she enjoyed, and the only antidote to a life of sorrow. And as she was always at home long before he returned, he either did not know she had been absent, or said nothing about it, if he did.

Of course these facts were gathered after some lengthened acquaintance with Harper and his wife. But on my first meeting with him I was not only a stranger to him, but also to everything pertaining to his history or peculiarities; so when I first knocked at his door, with a desire to speak a word about the Lord Jesus Christ to the persons living there, a rough voice from within shouted, “Go ahead!” I knocked again, and the same words were repeated: after knocking several times, the voice said, “Hit away, my hearty!”

I then said, “Will you please open the door, I want to speak with you?”

“Who are you?” said the voice.

“A friend,” I replied.

“No friend of mine, I know,” said the voice; and the door was opened, and “Crooked Tom” presented himself, evidently undecided how he should conduct himself to a stranger.

I at once wished him “good-morning”—spoke of the weather and

his health, and then said, "I should like to walk in and converse with you for a few moments, if you will allow me."

"You can come in," said he, "if you like, but I do not see what you want to talk to me about. I don't think I should have opened the door if I had known who you were."

"I do not think you know me," I said.

"But I can give a pretty shrewd guess as to your business," he replied.

I found that the reason why he had not opened the door to me sooner, was because he supposed it was one of the idlers in the passage trying to provoke him by knocking for their amusement and his annoyance.

Having spoken some words touching upon religion, he stopped me by saying, "Hold there! I don't want any conversation on that subject; and besides, I am busy in getting a living in this world, and am not in the humour to talk about another. I have to struggle and work hard to get a crust, so as to keep body and soul together; and I am to be turned out of this crib in a week or so, or else I shall have the place pulled down over my head."

"Yes," I replied. "I see by the placard that it is to come down for the railway."

"And I wish no good luck to the railway, driving us poor folk about anywhere. It matters little to them what becomes of us: we may sleep in the streets, for all they care."

"But perhaps," said I, "you can get more convenient apartments somewhere else."

"More convenient! What place could suit me as well as this? Although it is an old place, it suits me. I have lived here for years, and should like to stay; but I'll take care I am not again moved by a railway, if there's a place to be had where a railway won't come."

"Yet," I said, "your house will come down."

"What do you mean?"

"What I say. Wherever you may go, your house will be taken down; you cannot live in it always. One day, *willing or unwilling*, you must be turned out of it, and it will be taken down."

He looked at me, at first as if he questioned either my earnestness or my sanity, and said, "You don't know what you are talking about."

I replied, "Yes, I do, and I will explain myself. You seem annoyed that this old house is to come down; but the house in which your soul dwells (I mean your body), that will be taken down as

surely as this old house, which is to come down for the railway. Whenever death comes to you, he will take down your body, and your soul will then have to quit. You seem anxious as to where you shall secure a home when you leave this room; and if you were sure of a more convenient and suitable dwelling, would not, I think, mind the trouble of moving. Now, respecting your soul, where shall it dwell when death shall eject it from its present tabernacle?"

He stared at me, his lips quivered. I saw he was greatly moved; but whether his emotions were those of anger, or of some other kind, I did not know. Yet I felt sure that I had touched some chord which was vibrating through his frame, and thought it best to retire, and leave him to his feelings. So I left him, saying, "I will look in some other day." His wife sat in the corner, and did not speak other than to bid me "Good-morning" as I departed.

A few days afterwards I again called, and found him at home, apparently in a most wretched frame of mind. He met me with emotion; his voice was tremulous. The tears started into his eyes, and he astonished me by saying, "Sir, I am the worst man living;" and then he proceeded to relate to me his history. In early years he had been brought up to attend the house and worship of God, in connection with the Wesleyan Methodists in his native village, in one of the midland counties. Eventually he became a member of their Society, and, as he believed, a Christian. He was happy and contented. In due time he was married, and all seemed to be prosperous with him. But in order to improve his temporal circumstances, he embraced an opportunity that was offered him, and came to London. A stranger to the great city, and to all in it, he had to form his acquaintance with new associates and associations, and fell into the society of men of what he termed the "happy-go-lucky class;" and the result was that the house of God was never sought, while the public-house and gin-palace became the places of nightly resort, and he fell into all the habits of vice and debauchery consequent upon such a course. All religious thoughts and convictions were resisted and stifled so successfully, that he said his conscience had not troubled him for years, and he had been controlled only by that which was evil; and he felt now, at sixty-one years of age, that he was beginning to suffer the physical effects of his unholy course of life. But that had simply soured his temper, and made him a worse man than before; and as he was so often irritated beyond measure by those who loved to tease him, he felt that he was never

in a frame of mind suited to serious thought, or for society other than that which he found at the public-house. Then, he said, no one had ever spoken to him about the state of his soul before; but somehow the words I had spoken to him just carried his thoughts back to the time when the thought of death would have had no terror for him—as, when a member of the Wesleyan Society, he had felt he was not afraid to die.

But now he was wretched. He saw his whole life in London in a new light; and whilst the past filled him with shame, the future was full of dread. He said, "I have been a bad husband, a bad father, and a bad man in every sense;" and as he uttered these words he sobbed aloud, and the tears streamed down his face rapidly. It was an affecting sight: yet at that moment, doubtless, angels rejoiced over him. I conversed with him for some time, showing him the mercy of God in Christ for sinners, and the efficacy of the blood of the Redeemer, and the power of the Holy Spirit. He said, "I know it is so; the mercy of God is sure to the penitent believer. But I have no confidence in my own penitence." I prayed with him; and as he bowed his knees before God, his earnest cries to God that He would hear my supplications on his behalf, and have mercy upon his soul, were such as to make it difficult for me to proceed. He was truly in earnest, and from that time became a changed character. He attended the service and worship of God; and although for a long time he had but the one suit of clothes to wear that served him for working days, yet he never failed to attend. Earnest, humble, penitent, believing, he sought and found the "mercy that endureth for ever."

Eventually, he became possessor of another suit of clothes, and then he asked admission to the Young Men's Bible Class, where he secured additional instruction and help. And after a length of time, during which his character and conduct had testified to the change within, he and his wife were, at the same time, received into the Church, as disciples of the Lord Jesus. It was now a pleasant sight to see his timid wife leaning on the arm that had so often been extended towards her in anger, as they came together to every service that was held. She was now a happy woman; blessed with a husband "clothed and in his right mind," a home, and a family altar.

Four years afterwards, at a public meeting held for the instruction of the poor and wretched of mankind, Harper stood on the platform, and addressed the assembly of several hundreds of persons, and

said, "I am now four years of age. It is sixty-five years since I was born into this world. It is four years since I was born again. You, most of you, knew me as 'Crooked Tom.' You know what sort of life for many years I led. I have never known what happiness was during all my life in London (now more than thirty-five years), until I became a new man in Christ Jesus. God in His mercy has made me what I am; and what He has done for me He can do for you. Seek His mercy, and you shall find it." His speech was not a long one, but it was powerful upon those who heard it. They knew what a bad man he had been. They had seen his changed life. And from his own lips they learned the cause. And many times since then, many who heard him speak on that occasion have heard his voice in prayer for them. "This was the Lord's doing, and it was marvellous in our eyes."

The railway trains now run beneath the spot on which the old house stood in which I first met with Thomas Harper. There is nothing to mark the site, yet, both on his memory and on that of his wife, is recorded, as amongst the most interesting places on earth, the room in the old house where the arrow of conviction struck so deeply into his heart; and although he never forgave himself the ill-treatment he had for years exercised towards his wife, yet she forgave, and forgot all the past, in the joy and happiness of a new home, and the new heart, which made her life an experience of gladness and hope. And in the smile of God their united lives were henceforth crowned with peace.

In this short narrative we have another instance of the power of Divine Grace to reach and soften the hardest hearts, and of the success of human instrumentality when accompanied by the Divine Spirit's help.

BILLY DAWSON, THE YORKSHIRE PREACHER.

"A H! I see; you went to the top of your neighbour's house, and looked down the chimney: you got choked with the smoke, instead of coming in at the door, as you should have done, and being comfortable with the family round the hearth!"

The speaker was a strongly-built, well proportioned man, whose dress was a strange-looking compromise between that of a yeoman and that of a minister. It was Mr. William Dawson, better known as "Billy Dawson," the Yorkshire farmer and preacher. One of his

hearers was saying how much he had enjoyed the sermon. "But," he added, "I lost all at the prayer meeting. I went into the gallery, and the scene of confusion beneath was such that it drove away all the good I had received."

"Ah! I see," replied Mr. Dawson. And then came the rebuke recorded above.

Mr. Dawson was often very quaint in his method of administering rebukes. A man who had been a most notorious character was led to join the Wesleyan body. One day he was telling, with seeming relish, what a great sinner he had been. "But," he added, "a change came, and I sold off the old stock."

"Did you?" asked Mr. Dawson. "Who bought them? Not the Lord, for they are the abominable thing which He hateth; not man, for every one has enough; and not the devil, for they were his without buying. No, bury them, man—bury them! Don't sell them."

"What do you think of So-and-so's preaching?" said a friend, one day. "There is not much in it to take home for meditation."

"I eat what I can," replied Mr. Dawson; "but I pocket nothing."

As a platform speaker, Mr. Dawson possessed extraordinary power. He never seemed more at home than when advocating the mission cause. He had no time to indulge in those loose general remarks which constitute the staple of so many platform addresses. Every speech had its distinctive name, and addressed itself to some particular phase of Christian work. In what was known as his "watch speech," every part of the watch was made to illustrate some feature of missionary labour—the hands, which were dealt with last, pointing to the previous collection! In the "sowing speech" and the "harvest-home speech" he was peculiarly happy. In one of his addresses he would roll the paper on which was written the resolution he had to propose, so as to form a narrow tube. Placing this tube to his eye, he would exclaim, "What, sir—what do I see?" And then, with wonderful power, he would graphically describe the future of Christ's kingdom, as if all was present to his eye. That was the "telescope speech." For his "railway speech," in which the world was the track; the Gospel, the train; and Jesus Christ the chief director, he was severely handled by one of the leading morning journals.

At a meeting in the West of England, Mr. Dawson, on one occasion, created a sensation unusual even for him. It was the year 1831. There had been serious disturbances in the town concerning the Reform Bill, and party feeling ran very high. A missionary

meeting was held, at which Mr. Dawson was present; and at the commencement he suggested to the chairman and speakers that it would be wise to avoid all political allusions. A ready assent was of course given. The chairman delivered his opening address—no politics! The first speaker followed: still no political references. Other speakers came in their order, and all with the greatest care avoided the dangerous topic. Presently Mr. Dawson was called upon. "Ah," thought the chairman, "we are safe here from politics." Mr. Dawson began: "I'm for the bill—the whole bill—and nothing but the bill!" Instantly there was a tremendous commotion. The chairman and those on the platform with him were amazed—dumfounded. Mr. Dawson had recommended no politics, and here he had wilfully run into the very thicket of them. But no man knew better how to play with a dangerous topic. He waited for a minute, until the commotion had somewhat subsided, and then he proceeded with wonderful tact to apply every section of the bill to the work of God, never once diverging into matters political. The effect was tremendous. Mr. Dawson had taken his hearers to the edge of a dangerous precipice, and when everybody expected a catastrophe, he cleverly turned aside and led them into "fresh fields and pastures new."

It was, however, as a preacher that Mr. Dawson was most widely known. Family circumstances prevented his entering—as he wished to enter—the regular ministry. He consequently became, as he facetiously described himself, "a travelling local preacher."

Great was the demand for his services, especially in the North and West of England. Unwearied was he in his efforts, performing well-nigh one hundred journeys every year; and disinterested was he in his labours, never, even when pressed by adversity, accepting for his services anything beyond travelling expenses. The secret of Mr. Dawson's power as a preacher lay in his bold imagery and in his graphic pictorial descriptions. Whenever he failed, as he occasionally did, it was because he allowed his vivid imagination to carry him beyond the sublime. As a rule, however, he held his congregation as by magic. They would listen in breathless suspense, whilst his appeals wrung tears and cries from the most hardened.

On one occasion, at Leeds, a humorous incident occurred. A pedlar, well known in the district, professed a great admiration for Mr. Dawson, and followed him, when he could, to hear him preach. Concerning the honesty of this pedlar, sundry rumours were afloat, and the nickname of "Mr. Short-measure" had been given him.

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, RIPPONDEN.

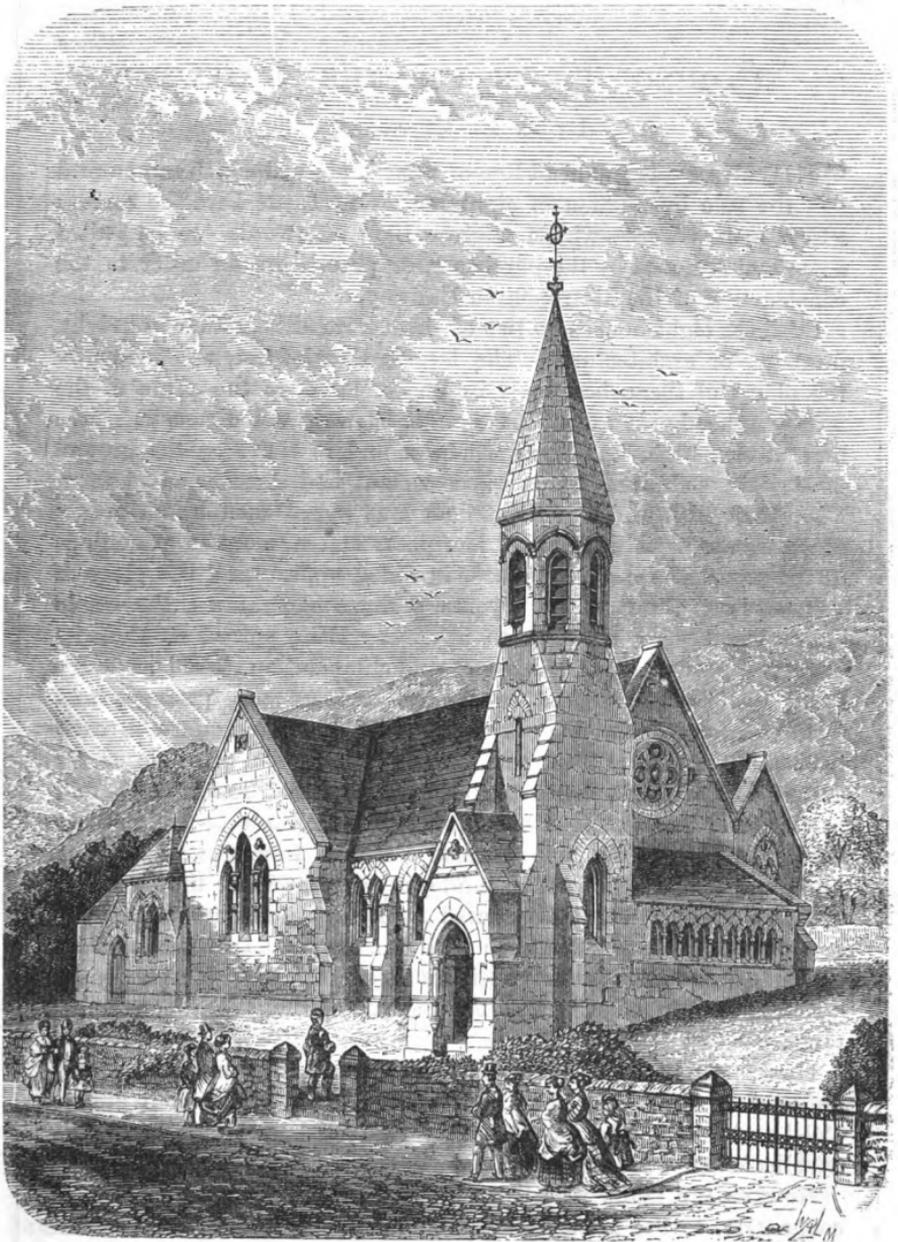
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He was a whipmaker by trade, and served shops where whips were sold, so that all his work was done at home, his one room being at once his manufactory, sitting-room, bedroom, and storehouse. Consequently, for the greatest portion of the day he was to be found at home; and as few people went on business, few legitimate knocks were heard at the door of that room.

His wife was a little spare woman, with a spirit that had been thoroughly trained to submission; and as for many years she had been subject to the will of her husband, she did not now think it strange that she exercised no will of her own. When his temper was unusually crooked she had to bear all the hard words and rough usage that resulted therefrom, but she did so meekly. And if ever he spoke to her in rough kindness, she attached but little importance to it, as it was sure to pass away with the first thing that displeased him. But, although at home all the day, he was always away at the public-house every evening, *Sunday evening not excepted*. Therefore she had an opportunity to attend the house and worship of God; and as she did so, found the only comfort she enjoyed, and the only antidote to a life of sorrow. And as she was always at home long before he returned, he either did not know she had been absent, or said nothing about it, if he did.

Of course these facts were gathered after some lengthened acquaintance with Harper and his wife. But on my first meeting with him I was not only a stranger to him, but also to everything pertaining to his history or peculiarities; so when I first knocked at his door, with a desire to speak a word about the Lord Jesus Christ to the persons living there, a rough voice from within shouted, “Go ahead!” I knocked again, and the same words were repeated: after knocking several times, the voice said, “Hit away, my hearty!”

I then said, “Will you please open the door, I want to speak with you?”

“Who are you?” said the voice.

“A friend,” I replied.

“No friend of mine, I know,” said the voice; and the door was opened, and “Crooked Tom” presented himself, evidently undecided how he should conduct himself to a stranger.

I at once wished him “good-morning”—spoke of the weather and

his health, and then said, "I should like to walk in and converse with you for a few moments, if you will allow me."

"You can come in," said he, "if you like, but I do not see what you want to talk to me about. I don't think I should have opened the door if I had known who you were."

"I do not think you know me," I said.

"But I can give a pretty shrewd guess as to your business," he replied.

I found that the reason why he had not opened the door to me sooner, was because he supposed it was one of the idlers in the passage trying to provoke him by knocking for their amusement and his annoyance.

Having spoken some words touching upon religion, he stopped me by saying, "Hold there! I don't want any conversation on that subject; and besides, I am busy in getting a living in this world, and am not in the humour to talk about another. I have to struggle and work hard to get a crust, so as to keep body and soul together; and I am to be turned out of this crib in a week or so, or else I shall have the place pulled down over my head."

"Yes," I replied. "I see by the placard that it is to come down for the railway."

"And I wish no good luck to the railway, driving us poor folk about anywhere. It matters little to them what becomes of us: we may sleep in the streets, for all they care."

"But perhaps," said I, "you can get more convenient apartments somewhere else."

"More convenient! What place could suit me as well as this? Although it is an old place, it suits me. I have lived here for years, and should like to stay; but I'll take care I am not again moved by a railway, if there's a place to be had where a railway won't come."

"Yet," I said, "your house will come down."

"What do you mean?"

"What I say. Wherever you may go, your house will be taken down; you cannot live in it always. One day, *willing or unwilling*, you must be turned out of it, and it will be taken down."

He looked at me, at first as if he questioned either my earnestness or my sanity, and said, "You don't know what you are talking about."

I replied, "Yes, I do, and I will explain myself. You seem annoyed that this old house is to come down; but the house in which your soul dwells (I mean your body), that will be taken down as

surely as this old house, which is to come down for the railway. Whenever death comes to you, he will take down your body, and your soul will then have to quit. You seem anxious as to where you shall secure a home when you leave this room; and if you were sure of a more convenient and suitable dwelling, would not, I think, mind the trouble of moving. Now, respecting your soul, where shall it dwell when death shall eject it from its present tabernacle?"

He stared at me, his lips quivered. I saw he was greatly moved; but whether his emotions were those of anger, or of some other kind, I did not know. Yet I felt sure that I had touched some chord which was vibrating through his frame, and thought it best to retire, and leave him to his feelings. So I left him, saying, "I will look in some other day." His wife sat in the corner, and did not speak other than to bid me "Good-morning" as I departed.

A few days afterwards I again called, and found him at home, apparently in a most wretched frame of mind. He met me with emotion; his voice was tremulous. The tears started into his eyes, and he astonished me by saying, "Sir, I am the worst man living;" and then he proceeded to relate to me his history. In early years he had been brought up to attend the house and worship of God, in connection with the Wesleyan Methodists in his native village, in one of the midland counties. Eventually he became a member of their Society, and, as he believed, a Christian. He was happy and contented. In due time he was married, and all seemed to be prosperous with him. But in order to improve his temporal circumstances, he embraced an opportunity that was offered him, and came to London. A stranger to the great city, and to all in it, he had to form his acquaintance with new associates and associations, and fell into the society of men of what he termed the "happy-go-lucky class;" and the result was that the house of God was never sought, while the public-house and gin-palace became the places of nightly resort, and he fell into all the habits of vice and debauchery consequent upon such a course. All religious thoughts and convictions were resisted and stifled so successfully, that he said his conscience had not troubled him for years, and he had been controlled only by that which was evil; and he felt now, at sixty-one years of age, that he was beginning to suffer the physical effects of his unholy course of life. But that had simply soured his temper, and made him a worse man than before; and as he was so often irritated beyond measure by those who loved to tease him, he felt that he was never

in a frame of mind suited to serious thought, or for society other than that which he found at the public-house. Then, he said, no one had ever spoken to him about the state of his soul before; but somehow the words I had spoken to him just carried his thoughts back to the time when the thought of death would have had no terror for him—as, when a member of the Wesleyan Society, he had felt he was not afraid to die.

But now he was wretched. He saw his whole life in London in a new light; and whilst the past filled him with shame, the future was full of dread. He said, "I have been a bad husband, a bad father, and a bad man in every sense;" and as he uttered these words he sobbed aloud, and the tears streamed down his face rapidly. It was an affecting sight: yet at that moment, doubtless, angels rejoiced over him. I conversed with him for some time, showing him the mercy of God in Christ for sinners, and the efficacy of the blood of the Redeemer, and the power of the Holy Spirit. He said, "I know it is so; the mercy of God is sure to the penitent believer. But I have no confidence in my own penitence." I prayed with him; and as he bowed his knees before God, his earnest cries to God that He would hear my supplications on his behalf, and have mercy upon his soul, were such as to make it difficult for me to proceed. He was truly in earnest, and from that time became a changed character. He attended the service and worship of God; and although for a long time he had but the one suit of clothes to wear that served him for working days, yet he never failed to attend. Earnest, humble, penitent, believing, he sought and found the "mercy that endureth for ever."

Eventually, he became possessor of another suit of clothes, and then he asked admission to the Young Men's Bible Class, where he secured additional instruction and help. And after a length of time, during which his character and conduct had testified to the change within, he and his wife were, at the same time, received into the Church, as disciples of the Lord Jesus. It was now a pleasant sight to see his timid wife leaning on the arm that had so often been extended towards her in anger, as they came together to every service that was held. She was now a happy woman; blessed with a husband "clothed and in his right mind," a home, and a family altar.

Four years afterwards, at a public meeting held for the instruction of the poor and wretched of mankind, Harper stood on the platform, and addressed the assembly of several hundreds of persons, and

said, "I am now four years of age. It is sixty-five years since I was born into this world. It is four years since I was born again. You, most of you, knew me as 'Crooked Tom.' You know what sort of life for many years I led. I have never known what happiness was during all my life in London (now more than thirty-five years), until I became a new man in Christ Jesus. God in His mercy has made me what I am; and what He has done for me He can do for you. Seek His mercy, and you shall find it." His speech was not a long one, but it was powerful upon those who heard it. They knew what a bad man he had been. They had seen his changed life. And from his own lips they learned the cause. And many times since then, many who heard him speak on that occasion have heard his voice in prayer for them. "This was the Lord's doing, and it was marvellous in our eyes."

The railway trains now run beneath the spot on which the old house stood in which I first met with Thomas Harper. There is nothing to mark the site, yet, both on his memory and on that of his wife, is recorded, as amongst the most interesting places on earth, the room in the old house where the arrow of conviction struck so deeply into his heart; and although he never forgave himself the ill-treatment he had for years exercised towards his wife, yet she forgave, and forgot all the past, in the joy and happiness of a new home, and the new heart, which made her life an experience of gladness and hope. And in the smile of God their united lives were henceforth crowned with peace.

In this short narrative we have another instance of the power of Divine Grace to reach and soften the hardest hearts, and of the success of human instrumentality when accompanied by the Divine Spirit's help.

BILLY DAWSON, THE YORKSHIRE PREACHER.

"A H! I see; you went to the top of your neighbour's house, and looked down the chimney: you got choked with the smoke, instead of coming in at the door, as you should have done, and being comfortable with the family round the hearth!"

The speaker was a strongly-built, well proportioned man, whose dress was a strange-looking compromise between that of a yeoman and that of a minister. It was Mr. William Dawson, better known as "Billy Dawson," the Yorkshire farmer and preacher. One of his

hearers was saying how much he had enjoyed the sermon. "But," he added, "I lost all at the prayer meeting. I went into the gallery, and the scene of confusion beneath was such that it drove away all the good I had received."

"Ah! I see," replied Mr. Dawson. And then came the rebuke recorded above.

Mr. Dawson was often very quaint in his method of administering rebukes. A man who had been a most notorious character was led to join the Wesleyan body. One day he was telling, with seeming relish, what a great sinner he had been. "But," he added, "a change came, and I sold off the old stock."

"Did you?" asked Mr. Dawson. "Who bought them? Not the Lord, for they are the abominable thing which He hateth; not man, for every one has enough; and not the devil, for they were his without buying. No, bury them, man—bury them! Don't sell them."

"What do you think of So-and-so's preaching?" said a friend, one day. "There is not much in it to take home for meditation."

"I eat what I can," replied Mr. Dawson; "but I pocket nothing."

As a platform speaker, Mr. Dawson possessed extraordinary power. He never seemed more at home than when advocating the mission cause. He had no time to indulge in those loose general remarks which constitute the staple of so many platform addresses. Every speech had its distinctive name, and addressed itself to some particular phase of Christian work. In what was known as his "watch speech," every part of the watch was made to illustrate some feature of missionary labour—the hands, which were dealt with last, pointing to the previous collection! In the "sowing speech" and the "harvest-home speech" he was peculiarly happy. In one of his addresses he would roll the paper on which was written the resolution he had to propose, so as to form a narrow tube. Placing this tube to his eye, he would exclaim, "What, sir—what do I see?" And then, with wonderful power, he would graphically describe the future of Christ's kingdom, as if all was present to his eye. That was the "telescope speech." For his "railway speech," in which the world was the track; the Gospel, the train; and Jesus Christ the chief director, he was severely handled by one of the leading morning journals.

At a meeting in the West of England, Mr. Dawson, on one occasion, created a sensation unusual even for him. It was the year 1831. There had been serious disturbances in the town concerning the Reform Bill, and party feeling ran very high. A missionary

meeting was held, at which Mr. Dawson was present; and at the commencement he suggested to the chairman and speakers that it would be wise to avoid all political allusions. A ready assent was of course given. The chairman delivered his opening address—no politics! The first speaker followed: still no political references. Other speakers came in their order, and all with the greatest care avoided the dangerous topic. Presently Mr. Dawson was called upon. "Ah," thought the chairman, "we are safe here from politics." Mr. Dawson began: "I'm for the bill—the whole bill—and nothing but the bill!" Instantly there was a tremendous commotion. The chairman and those on the platform with him were amazed — dumfounded. Mr. Dawson had recommended no politics, and here he had wilfully run into the very thick of them. But no man knew better how to play with a dangerous topic. He waited for a minute, until the commotion had somewhat subsided, and then he proceeded with wonderful tact to apply every section of the bill to the work of God, never once diverging into matters political. The effect was tremendous. Mr. Dawson had taken his hearers to the edge of a dangerous precipice, and when everybody expected a catastrophe, he cleverly turned aside and led them into "fresh fields and pastures new."

It was, however, as a preacher that Mr. Dawson was most widely known. Family circumstances prevented his entering—as he wished to enter—the regular ministry. He consequently became, as he facetiously described himself, "a *travelling local preacher*."

Great was the demand for his services, especially in the North and West of England. Unwearied was he in his efforts, performing well-nigh one hundred journeys every year; and disinterested was he in his labours, never, even when pressed by adversity, accepting for his services anything beyond travelling expenses. The secret of Mr. Dawson's power as a preacher lay in his bold imagery and in his graphic pictorial descriptions. Whenever he failed, as he occasionally did, it was because he allowed his vivid imagination to carry him beyond the sublime. As a rule, however, he held his congregation as by magic. They would listen in breathless suspense, whilst his appeals wrung tears and cries from the most hardened.

On one occasion, at Leeds, a humorous incident occurred. A pedlar, well known in the district, professed a great admiration for Mr. Dawson, and followed him, when he could, to hear him preach. Concerning the honesty of this pedlar, sundry rumours were afloat, and the nickname of "Mr. Short-measure" had been given him.

To this service the pedlar came, bringing with him his pack and his suspected-measure. It chanced that Mr. Dawson was preaching a sermon known as "The Balances." In his usually graphic and thrilling manner he described different characters, each of whom he placed in the balance and weighed. Mr. "Short-measure" became deeply interested, and kept up a running commentary on the discourse. "Light again!" he ejaculated, as each character described by the preacher was weighed and found wanting. The Sabbath-breaker was described, and then placed in the scale. "Light again!" said the pedlar. The swearer came next. "Light again!" The drunkard: "Light again!" Traffickers with those "divers weights and divers measures which are an abomination to the Lord" were next dealt with. This was coming home to "Mr. Short-measure" rather too closely. For a minute or two he shifted uneasily on his seat, and then, unable longer to endure, he started up, excitedly, crying, "Stop, Mr. Dawson; stop, sir!" Snatching the suspected yard-measure from his pack, and breaking it across his knee, he added, "Now go on, sir; now go on!"

The same sermon, upon another occasion, acted in much the same manner upon the feelings of a publican. The good man thought that the "publicans" of the Bible and those of the present day were one and the same. The preacher pictured the Bible publican, followed by the curses of widows and orphans, getting into the "Balances." In all this the man in the congregation thought he saw himself, and, with strained eye and suspended breath, waited to hear what doom was to be pronounced. "Why, he is not light!" said the preacher, "not wanting: for he says, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.' Ah! that is it—he has Christ in the scale with him." "And I'll have Christ in the scale, too," said the anxious listener. "I'll have Christ in the scale, too—'God be merciful to me a sinner.'"

A laughable incident, but one which, equally with the foregoing, shows Mr. Dawson's power over his hearers, occurred at the village of Pudsey, near Leeds. The sermon was upon the subject of David and Goliath. The preacher pictured the giant as overthrown. Stepping backwards in the pulpit, and looking down, he personated David taunting the prostrate foe. "He's down, and what shall be done now?" he cried. "Off with his yed, Billy!" cried an excited listener in the gallery.

On the 3rd of July, 1841, Mr. Dawson's earthly ministry terminated. He was in his 69th year.

THOUGHTS—GRAVE AND GAY.

HELEN CHALMERS narrates that her father, Thomas Chalmers, in the darkest hour of the history of the Free Church of Scotland, and when the woes of the land seemed to weigh upon his heart, said to his children, "Come, let us go out and play ball or fly kite;" and the only difficulty in the play was that the children could not keep up with their father. The McCheynes and the Summerfields of the Church, who did the most good, cultivated sunlight.

If we do not want our faults noticed, we must not speak of the faults of others.

On a tombstone in a graveyard in Lincolnshire, I saw underneath the announcement of the death of one child aged one year and another four years, just the words, "So Young." That was all.

Our teeth decay. Every one regrets it. What is the cause? We reply, want of cleanliness. Bestow trifling care upon your precious teeth, and you will keep them and ruin the dentists. Neglect it, and you will be sorry all your lives. Children forget. Watch them. The first teeth determine the character of the second set. Give them equal care. Sugar, acids, saleratus, and hot things are nothing when compared with food decomposing between the teeth. Mercury may loosen the teeth, long use may wear them out, but keep them clean, and they will never decay.

CHURCH NEWS OF THE MONTH

A FEW weeks ago Mr. Gladstone met his cabinet council with a smile and an anecdote. He reminded his brother councillors how a few years since a trial had been made in the grounds of Lord Granville of some new chemical ingredients, which had caused a sudden explosion that alarmed the neighbourhood; and then he told how that he was about to try another experiment, which would create a shock to the bystanders and through the country not less startling. He intended, he added, to ask the queen's consent to a dissolution of parliament.

We confess, however, that we cannot congratulate Mr. Gladstone on either the opportuneness or the results of his experiment. It is evident that he altogether miscalculated the force of the agency he was employing, or the range of its powers. We are not aware of the

sources from which the late prime minister derived his information of public events or of the mood of the public mind; but it is evident that on this occasion he had been grievously misinformed, or that he had mistrusted those in whom he ought to have confided. The result has been that the strength of his majority has been shattered, and that the forces of his political enemies are in victorious possession of the field.

But with the past we have now done. In the cool and quiet shade of opposition our Liberal chiefs and their followers will be able leisurely and wisely to prepare for the great future. The temper of the times may, for the moment, be reactionary. But this cannot last for ever. The cry for "Beer and the Bible," for "A national Church and a national beverage," will not last for ever. The wintry days of Tory rule and misrule will be followed by the soft south wind and the buds and blossoms of a spring-tide of hope and promise. The forces of the age are with us. Time is on our side. The mighty wrongs that yet afflict our country will be redressed. And "he that believeth need not make haste."

The moment of the fall of a great leader is not the time in which to offer animadversions on his mistakes. Only two facts, therefore, we will notice. The first is that the waning of Mr. Gladstone's ministry began in the fatal hour when he summoned the aid of his foes in order to carry a reactionary policy in opposition to the entreaties of those who had been his most faithful friends. Our second remark is that every allegation which Nonconformists have urged against the course that Mr. Forster has pursued, has been overwhelmingly confirmed by recent events at Bradford. In that borough Mr. Forster has been returned by Tory votes; and we have, at any rate, been saved from the intolerable anomaly of seeing a Conservative minister enforcing a reactionary policy in a Liberal cabinet.

But whatever the defects which critics may attribute to Mr. Gladstone, and though it may be essential for Liberal discipline and Liberal principles that they should sometimes be unpopular, yet when we attempt to compare the *morale* of Liberal leadership with that of Conservatives, we feel we have to cross a measureless abyss. William Wilberforce was once characterised by a vulgar opponent as the honourable and "religious" gentleman; and Mr. Gladstone has recently been exposed to a similar sneer from Mr. Disraeli. No wonder even Mr. Fawcett has said:—"I have been often charged with not being a sufficiently steady supporter of Mr. Gladstone;

but if I had opposed him ten times more frequently than I have, I should not be the less anxious to protest with all the earnestness I could command against his being sneered at because he is religious ; and against the sanctity of his home being intruded upon with taunts which we might have imagined that a third-rate pamphleteer would scorn to use. It would ill become a scurrilous and anonymous scribe to revile an opponent with reflections that may cross his mind at the time of his daily devotions. What, then, shall we think of the leader of a great party, in the midst of a great political crisis, if this is the kind of attack to which he is prepared to resort?"

A recent article in the "Methodist Recorder" gives evidence of the progress of Methodist opinion in the matter of the Establishment. "In the present day," says the writer, "when an active party in the Church of England are employing themselves without legal hindrance in laying down a velvet carpet upon which her adherents may walk over fashionably and pleasantly to Rome, the argument that she is a bulwark of Protestantism is turned into a satire, and the question is vehemently urged how long such a sect is to be tolerated as the accredited embodiment of the national faith?"—Several fresh instances have occurred of clergymen refusing to bury unbaptised children, and thereby inflicting the greatest hardship and pain on the bereaved.

The belief is expressed by the "Church Times" that a Disendowment Bill, which would offer a share of the tithe as a bribe to the landowners, would secure a "crowd of Conservative votes."

At the recent annual meeting of the Victoria Street Church, Derby, it was reported that between 170 and 180 persons had entered the fellowship during the past year, bringing the membership of the Church up to nearly 800. The work of revival is still proceeding quietly.

The English Congregational Chapel-Building Society has recently held its twentieth annual meeting. The Society has, during its existence, aided 428 cases. The aggregate value of property thus assisted is £730,000, towards which the Society has, in various ways, contributed or promised about £113,000. It was proposed to devote the five years now commencing to an increase of the loan fund to £40,000.

Arrangements are now in progress with a view to open the Memorial Hall early in May. It is intended that the meetings of the Congregational Union shall be held there, under the chairman-

ship of the Rev. J. G. Rogers. The building has an imposing appearance, and, when finished, will, we understand, be the only structure of the kind in London, the front being all of Devonshire marble stone, with polished granite and Portland stone carved on the splays of the windows.

The debt on the chapel at London Road, Leicester, of £1200, has been extinguished. The Rev. S. T. Williams, son of the missionary martyr, John Williams, is the pastor.—Bridge-street Chapel, Walsall, of which the Rev. J. Clarke is pastor, has been reopened, after undergoing improvements at a cost of about £1100.—A second Congregational Church has been opened at Tunbridge Wells. The cost, about £2500, has been defrayed by the liberality of J. Remington Mills, Esq., and Joshua Wilson, Esq. It is a handsome structure in the Gothic style of the thirteenth century, and is capable of seating 400 persons. The sermon at the opening service was preached by the Rev. James Parsons, late of York. The Rev. E. Cornwall has accepted the pastorate.—A new chapel at Beaumaris, for the congregation of which the Rev. J. Rowlands is pastor, has been opened, and the sum of £225 raised towards the cost. During the progress of the building Sir Richard Bulkeley granted the free use of a large room for the meetings of the congregation.—Wolfsdale Chapel, near Haverfordwest, has been reopened after alterations, at a cost of £140.—The Memorial Church at Hollingwood has been reopened, after being closed for four months for alterations, at a cost of £400.—A debt of £300 on the Chapel at Berkhamstead has been paid.—The Church at Rock Ferry, opened in November, 1871, under the ministry of the Rev. R. Ashcroft, at a cost exceeding £8000, is now free from debt.

The Rev. Wm. Scott, of Greenheys, Moss-side, Manchester, has accepted the unanimous invitation of the Tottenham and Edmonton Church to become their pastor, in succession to the Rev. Arthur Hall.—Rev. D. MacCormick, of West Burton, has accepted the pastorate of the Church at Castleford.—Rev. Edward Morris, who has been pastor of the Church at Sale for more than thirty years, has been presented with an address and a purse of 300 guineas.—Rev. Thomas Mays has resigned his charge at Ashby-de-la-Zouch.—Rev. J. Andrews, late of Ripon, has accepted the pastorate of the Church at Shanklin, Isle of Wight.—Mr. John T. Stannard, of Spring-hill College, has accepted an invitation to become assistant minister to the Rev. R. Skinner, at Huddersfield.

RUTH TREDEGAR;

OR, CLOUDS AND SUNSHINE.

BY MARY SHERWOOD.

CHAP. IV.—THE STRUGGLE FOR BREAD.

THE larks were singing high up in the blue, and the sun was pouring down a flood of sunshine upon the daisied turf, when the next Sabbath afternoon John Tredegar and Michael his son were carried to their last resting-place in Pengarva churchyard. And, like a child smiling in its sleep, all its passion spent, the sea lay clear and waveless within the bay, its shining ripples lapping softly upon the sands. So bright and peaceful everything looked; the green earth, the quiet sea; one scarce could think that in so fair a world sorrow and care could have a place!

But the great Nature goes on her way, heedless whether her children be sad or gay. As the widow Tredegar and her children went back to their desolate home, the sun, shining broadly in through the casement windows, seemed only to make a mockery of their grief, and to wake in them a keener sense of the trouble that had darkened over their lives.

But the luxury of grief is one in which the poor, whatever that grief may be, can seldom afford to indulge; and the Tredegars now were poor indeed. The cottage was their own, it is true. John Tredegar had put all his savings to the purchase of it not long before, from Master Dan, whose property it had been; and the little house-place and the chambers above were comfortably stocked with furniture. But that was all. The boat was lying at the bottom of the sea, and the strong arm that had wrought in it for the children's bread was stiff and cold, and the brave heart on which the weakly wife had leaned was still in death. And there were the three young children with hungry mouths that needed to be filled, besides Ruth and herself; and who was there to toil for them, and how was the money to be earned now that the father was taken from them?

On Ruth the burden fell. It was little that the feeble, broken-spirited mother could do but sit still in her chair by the hearth, and sigh to think how utterly her strength had failed her now when most she needed it.

The doctor from the next town had been sent for, but he could do nothing for her. Some inward spring seemed to have been broken, and all the energies of life to have been crushed by the twofold blow that had fallen so heavily upon her. Only time would cure her, he said; time and rest, and good food, and good nursing, such as he was sure Ruth would give her. Above all she must keep up her spirits. Nothing retarded recovery so much in cases like these as fretting over troubles.

"That's just what I always say myself," echoed Martha Ketteridge, Mark Reeson's daughter, who lived with him, and who had taken an active part in matters before the funeral. Martha Ketteridge had buried three husbands, and therefore might be supposed to have had some experience in the mode of taking troubles. "That's just what I say. There is nothing worse than fretting, when folks keep it on after a reasonable time. For there is reason in all things, and I am not the woman, and never was, to say that proper respect in every way should not be paid to them that's gone; and mourning the best that can be got, to let it be seen that there is affliction in the family, especially when it comes, as you may say, out of the ordinary way. For two deaths together in a house is more than an affliction; it is a dispensation, and ought to be felt accordingly. And I am not blaming Mary Tredegar that she felt it, coming upon her so sudden; and John Tredegar the best of husbands, and Michael a lad that any mother might be proud of; but I do blame her that she keeps on fret, fretting, now that all is over, and the funeral and everything done. She ought to be considering her mercies, and making an effort to put a morsel of bread into the mouths of those three children. She had ought to rouse herself, that is what she had ought to do."

Such were Mrs. Ketteridge's sentiments, as she expounded them to a conclave of Pengarva matrons who were assembled round her door-step. And doubtless, according to her lights, she was in the right in blaming Mary Tredegar for fretting over her loss, instead of rousing herself to provide for those who were left to her.

But the poor soul could not do it. She was one of those weak clinging natures who must have some strong stem around which to twine; and now that the prop on which she had leaned was snatched away, she lay prostrate, with no power of her own to rise again—like a vine that has been rudely rent from the oak around which its branches had been clasped. And so, as we have said, on Ruth

devolved the burden of keeping the home together, and finding support for both the little ones and the mother and herself.

But where to seek it? What was to be done to earn bread for them all? There had been a few pounds in the Bexmouth bank, but they had been drawn out to meet the expenses of the funeral; and now as the weeks, one by one, slipped on, it was needful that something should be decided on, for the lessening funds could not possibly hold out much longer. Ruth thought of half-a-dozen plans, but none of them seemed to meet their needs. Nothing could be done that involved her leaving home, else she could have fallen in with what Master Dan had intended to propose the first evening of his appearance, namely, that she should go to live with his mother during his long two years' absence. Mrs. Kenworthy was growing infirm now, her sight was failing her too, and in many ways she felt it would be a comfort to have some active, cheerful, strong young life about her. She had taken a fancy to Ruth, much to Master Dan's satisfaction, and he had made up his mind to try and talk over the girl's parents into allowing her to go.

But that was out of the question now, for what could Mrs. Tredegar do with the house and children on her hands, and no Ruth to look after things for her? And yet, if she stayed at home, what could Ruth herself do to earn a living for them all, though she worked her fingers to the bone at the plain sewing, which seemed the only employment open to her without going out to seek it? Oh, for the strong arm and willing hand that used to stand between them and want! Oh, for the brave heart, so loving and so true, whose pulsings were now stilled for ever!

Ruth was scarcely seventeen, a timid gentle girl, though resolute enough where there was duty to be done. But she was inexperienced in the ways of this troublesome world. Her life had been so sheltered hitherto, and now she felt as though tossing about, a rudderless bark, upon mid-ocean. What should she do! what should she do!

And one afternoon, when she had been asking herself the question for the hundredth time, and racking her brain in vain for some solution of the insoluble problem, how to go on much longer living upon nothing, Master Dan came in and solved her difficulty for her.

"Mrs. Tredegar," he said, "why not keep a shop? There has not been one in the village worth mentioning since Dorothy Holmes married and left Pengarva. Half the folks walk the five miles to Bexmouth for the best part of what they want, because there is

nothing good to be had at old Luke Robson's, who is drunk three days in the week, and is letting his business go to ruin, and driving all his customers away. Open a shop, and keep a trifle of all sorts in it. You will turn a pretty penny by that, I'll warrant; for you will know both how to choose and how to sell your goods, and every one will be glad to come and buy."

Ruth shook her head. "But how could we stock a shop?" she said. "It takes money for that, and ours is all gone."

"Nay, if that be all, we will manage that," answered Master Dan, cheerily. "I studied it all over as I sat smoking my pipe last night. It is a rare thing, is a pipe, for putting a man's thoughts together; and I made up my mind about that, and other things as well. I will stock the shop, and we will call it money lent. A matter of twenty pounds or so will do it, and you shall pay it me again when I come back at the two years' end, unless we manage to settle matters some other way. It is the very thing for you, Mrs. Tredegar, and for Ruth as well; and what is more, it is the only thing, so don't you try to put me off my course when I see plain sailing before me. Good of me? Nay, Mrs. Tredegar, there is no talk of goodness. I haven't a power of words at my tongue's end, same as a many has; but there is a bit of a verse I have read over to myself, while I think I have got at something of the meaning of it. 'Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.'

"I aren't so clear about that last part, but it seems to me that if a man goes visiting the widow and the fatherless in their affliction, and has a bit of loose money that he could help them with, and keeps it in his pocket for the pleasure of having it to chink, instead of bringing it out and putting it to a use, religion is only a half-and-half sort of a thing there. So we will say no more about it. My old mother was left a widow herself when I was a little lad, over young to help her, and I know something of what it all means."

The captain winked hard, and blew his nose violently, and Mrs. Tredegar wiped away with the corner of her apron the tears of gratitude that were swimming in her eyes, and mingling with the thanks that she was pouring forth.

"Oh, Master Dan," was all that Ruth could say; but her looks spoke the rest, and the captain seemed content without further assent.

"There are three weeks ashore yet, and we will have the things bought in, and a bit of a counter knocked up, and all afloat before the *Ariadne* sails, and I will be the first customer. It is a bargain, Ruth. Come, child, give me your hand upon it."

Ruth smiled through the mist of tears that had dimmed her eyes, and put out her hand. Master Dan took it and held it fast in his big rough palm; held it so fast and so long, that Ruth's smiles turned into blushes as she drew it away at last.

(To be continued in our next.)

AUNT FANNY'S TALES.

NO. II.

CISSY'S FIRST TROUBLE.

"WHAT is the matter with Milly?" I asked one morning, as I went into the nursery, where I usually found a lively party ready to welcome me. The younger ones ran up to me, but Millicent, "the eldest of the little ones," stood looking out of the window, the picture of melancholy, now and then wiping away the tears that would come, in spite of ten years.

"She is going to school, auntie," cried Tom, answering my question for his sister.

"And she doesn't like it; but I should," added little Mabel.

"I wish you'd speak to Miss Milly, ma'am," said nurse, who sat sewing at the table. "She has been going on like that all the morning, and it vexes her papa and mamma, and will make her ill. Why, I tell her she will be as happy as a lark in a week's time."

"I shall not, auntie; I shall never be happy at school," exclaimed Milly, passionately, a few minutes later in my room, into which I had coaxed her, and where she poured out to me all her grievances. I did not attempt to argue the matter. I knew that it was a wise and right decision that my little niece should be sent to school. I knew that in all probability nurse would prove a true prophet, for Milly was quite sure to make friends. But I also knew that the sorrows of little folks are very real sorrows, and not to be talked or reasoned away easily. So I said little, but invited Milly and her brothers and sisters to come to my room in the evening, to see some sketches and hear a story.

At the appointed time they gathered round my table, where an old portfolio lay, and soon its contents were spread out, drawing forth many an amusing comment and eager question.

"Oh, auntie, what is this little girl doing?" cried Milly, her troubles for the time forgotten; "why is she hiding her face?"

"Tell us about her," petitioned all.

"That," I said, "is the picture of a little girl I once knew—a little girl who thought a great trial had befallen her, but who soon found that what she had fancied a trial, became, on looking closer, no trial at all; as sometimes you see, children, in the dim twilight on a summer's evening, a strange and fearful-looking object, which you are inclined to run away from, but on going bravely up to it, you find it changes into the familiar old cow grazing in the meadow, or the tree you have known and climbed up all your lives. Some wise person says our worst trouble consists in the dread of what never comes; and certainly we so often find things turn out much better than we expected, that we may well learn a lesson of faith in our heavenly Father's goodness. But now for my story.

"Cecilia Maitland, or Cissy, as she was always called, had been for six years an only child, and a very happy life she had found it. Her father and mother were sensible people, and had not spoiled her, or she would not have been happy; for an over-indulged, spoiled child is not only a nuisance to every one else, but a misery to itself. Nevertheless, being the one child in the house, no doubt little Cissy had more petting and more attention than falls to the lot of some. The servants, from old nurse down to Billy the stable-boy, would have done anything in the world to please Miss Cissy. The child spent some of her happiest hours perched on a high stool by the great kitchen dresser, while cook supplied her with a small piece of pastry and a rolling-pin, wherewith to make a real pie for her papa; or when under Billy's care she made friends with the horses in the stable, her pockets filled with bread for 'Puck,' her pet pony, while the boy found for her the last litter of kittens that the stable cat had hidden in the hayloft—such a warm, cosy place, that Cissy longed to sleep there herself.

"Then her father, however tired he came home at night, would always brighten up when he saw his little daughter, and was never too tired for a romp with her.

"As for her mother's love, it was so constant, so unailing, and so tender, that like the air she breathed, Cissy lived upon it without

thinking how or why it came. She only felt in a dim unconscious way, when her childish prayers were daily said, with her curly head pressed against that mother's heart, or when in the evenings mamma would talk to her so beautifully, or tell her stories, or when she came to kiss her the last thing at night, that she was a very happy little girl. For Cissy was an affectionate, warm-hearted child, repaying by her merry ways and loving words the kindness that met her on all sides.

"A day came, however, when she thought that all her happiness was over, when, had she been asked, she would have said that of all children she was the most miserable.

"It was a bright autumn morning, when the little girl, according to her daily custom, was preparing to run to her mother's room, but was stopped by nurse, who told her with a grave face that 'Mamma was asleep, and that Miss Cissy must not go to her.' The child turned back, dissatisfied and wondering.

"Now Cissy, from having been so long an only child, was an independent little person; that is, she was more accustomed to think and act for herself than if she had had plenty of brothers and sisters to consult and be advised by. And she now made up her mind. 'I will see what is in mamma's room,' she said to herself; and subsequently, seizing her opportunity, she softly opened the nursery door, and crept on tiptoe to her mother's bedroom. She paused at the door, and listened. All was quiet. Then slowly, and with some difficulty, she managed with both little hands to turn the handle, and the door opened.

"There was the old familiar room, where the child had spent so much of her time; there was the great bed where she had so often climbed; the firelight flickering on the white closed curtains, and casting fantastic shadows over the walls, and lighting up the form of some one sitting in a low chair by the fire, with her back to the little intruder. Afraid to move, but intensely curious, and fascinated as if by a spell, Cissy stood, her hands clasped, and her great startled eyes taking in more and more of unfamiliar details that at first she had not noticed. What were those odd little long white dresses hanging over the back of a chair, too small, Cissy was certain, for her? And that pretty pink and white basket on the table, and in it a little brush, a little bit of sponge, and a little pink flannel shawl! 'Has mamma been getting me a new doll?' thought Cissy. 'But what is that in the corner, like my dolly's cradle, only bigger?

What is there in it?' At this moment the occupant of the cradle moved, and uttered a little fretful cry. Cissy turned and vanished; while the nurse got up, rubbed her eyes, and shut the door, muttering, 'Those tiresome servants *will* leave the door open.' Poor Cissy returned to her lonely nursery more bewildered than ever, and thoroughly tired out with her excitement, she curled herself up on her little bed and went to sleep; at least, so nearly asleep, that when Ann, the under housemaid, and Betsy, the under nurse, came in and sat over the fire, Ann said, glancing at the bed, 'She's asleep. poor thing, that's a comfort.'

"'Ah,' said Betsy, in a loud whisper, 'she'll find a difference. Missis won't think so much of her now!'

"'What nonsense are you idle girls talking?' said nurse, coming in and stopping further foolish remarks. 'Go to your work. Is Miss Cissy asleep?'

"'Sound as a top, nurse,' exclaimed Ann. 'Lor, Betsy, there's that blessed baby crying; shut the door quick.'

"Banging the door, they went off, while Cissy, who had heard it all, sat up and burst into a violent fit of sobbing, which defied all attempts to comfort her or to stop her tears. It flashed upon her all at once. A baby had come; and all her fear now was that mamma would never care for her any more. 'I hate the baby!' she exclaimed, passionately. 'I didn't want a new little brother!' Nurse petted and soothed her, reproaching herself for having left her, and the child went to bed in happier spirits. Next morning she said nothing about her troubles, but looked graver than usual. Presently nurse came in, smiling. 'Miss Cissy,' she said, 'you may come and see your mamma.' But Cissy's face did not show any corresponding delight.

"'I don't think I want to see mamma,' she observed.

"'What, miss? Not want to see your own mamma?' said nurse, astonished.

"'Well, nurse,' returned Cissy, decidedly, 'I won't look at that baby.'

"'Oh, don't talk so, Miss Cissy; God sent the dear little baby.'

"'Then I hope He'll take it back again,' said Cissy.

"'That's very naughty,' said nurse, properly shocked.

"When they entered Mrs. Maitland's room, Cissy resolutely turned away her head from where she knew the cradle was. She felt angry with the baby and her mother and every one. But when she saw

her mamma once more, and heard the beloved voice asking for her, Cissy's naughty feelings partly went away, and climbing on the bed, she put her arms tightly round her mamma's neck, without speaking. Mrs. Maitland guessed the child's feelings, for she had heard all from nurse, and knew that her intention of telling her little girl herself about the new comer was frustrated. So she did not talk about the baby, but said how she had missed her dear little Cissy's kiss, till Cissy looked up smiling through her tears. And even though the child hid her face again when the baby was brought, the mother did not seem angry. She only said, 'Let no one make you think, my child, that I shall love you less because I have another to love. Ah, Cissy, you little know how much room there is in mamma's heart.'

"That evening, as Cissy was sitting very quietly by the nursery fire with her doll, she heard a noise and bustle in the house, and looking into the passage, saw Betsy carrying a pail of hot water.

"'It's for a bath for the poor baby, miss,' said the girl. 'It's as bad as bad can be, and will die if the doctor don't come quick;' and she hurried on.

"Cissy's heart beat and her eyes filled with tears. She had thought she would be glad to have it taken away; but now she only said to herself, 'Poor little baby; and I wouldn't look at it;' and then once more she crept to her mother's door.

"'You mustn't go in,' whispered Betsy.

"'Come away, there's a dear,' said nurse.

"'I *must* see the baby,' exclaimed Cissy, struggling. 'Oh, nurse, is God going to take it back because I wanted Him to?'

"The child was so distressed that nurse, signing to her to be quiet, took her for a moment into the little inner room where the sick infant lay: its eyes were shut, and it was as white as a little faded snow-drop. As Cissy knelt down by the cradle and gazed awestruck at the small pale face, she thought it must be dead, but presently it opened its eyes and seemed to look at her, while the tiny fingers closed round hers, which had ventured gently to touch the little hand lying outside the counterpane. At that moment all Cissy's foolish fears and unkind thoughts vanished, and she loved the little helpless creature. She followed nurse obediently back to the nursery, and after a little while, said, 'Nurse, I have asked God to let my little brother live, and I think He will.' You may be sure that nurse gladdened the mother's heart by repeating these words, which *she*

herself thought very wonderful, and quite believed would come true.

“And they did come true. Baby got quite well, and when next Cissy paid a visit to her mamma’s room, she was, I think, happier than she had ever been before. Sitting on the bed, the little pink shawl with its precious occupant was placed carefully in her lap, and while Cissy kept discovering fresh beauties and wonders in the diminutive form, mamma lay smiling at them both. As the baby boy grew older he became more and more a source of interest and delight to Cissy, who was proud to call herself an elder sister; and when I went to see them a year or two afterwards, the two children were inseparable, ‘sister,’ as little Willie called her, being as essential to his happiness as he was to hers.”

The children expressed approval of my story, and Milly laughingly remarked that she quite understood the moral. And as no more complaints were heard from her till the holidays brought her home, full of the delights of school life, I think we may conclude that she profited by it.

JOHN FALK.

THE old palatial building, parent of all the Reformatories in Germany, still stands in Luther’s Lane, as John Falk left it five and forty years ago, when boys bore his bier to the churchyard, and girls strewed flowers along the pathway, all the while singing his own words:—

“When the little children round
Stand beside this grassy mound,
Asking, ‘Who lies under ground?’
Heavenly Father, let them say,
‘Thou hast taken him away,
In the grave is only clay.’”

It was after the sunset of a February day in 1826, that the good Father Falk’s lips were sealed and his eyelids closed. His epitaph, in German, runs in English thus.—

“Underneath this linden tree,
Lies John Falk, a sinner he,
Saved by Christ entirely.”

PREACHING TO THE HEART.

WE hear a great deal about preaching to the times ; but what is wanted is preaching to the heart. When Dr. Merle D'Aubigné was a student at Geneva, he was a leader of those who opposed and ridiculed the distinguishing doctrines of the Gospel, and in 1816 he presided over a meeting which indignantly protested against a pamphlet then recently published in defence of the truth of our Lord's divinity. In 1817, Robert Haldane came to Geneva, and at a private house Merle D'Aubigné heard him read and expound a chapter in the Epistle to the Romans, concerning the natural corruption of man. The student was startled, carefully examined the subject, and then, seeking an interview with Mr. Haldane, he said : " Now I do indeed see this doctrine is in the Bible." " Yes," replied Mr. Haldane ; " but do you see it in your own heart ?" It was a simple question, but it came home to the young man's conscience. From that hour he saw and felt himself to be a sinner, and learned that he could be saved by grace alone, through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

THOMAS BINNEY.

MR. BINNEY was born in the month of April, 1798, at Newcastle-on-Tyne. About the time he attained his majority he had served his seven years in an establishment in his native town as a printer, bookbinder, and bookseller. For two years he had been engaged from seven in the morning till eight at night, and for the other five from seven till seven ; yet, " somehow," he said, " I found opportunities for much reading and a great deal of composition. I did not shirk, however, my Latin and Greek, for I went for some time two evenings in the week to an old Presbyterian clergyman, to learn the elements of the two languages, and could read Cæsar and St. John ; but my great work was English. I read many of the best authors, and I wrote largely both poetry and prose, and I did so with much painstaking. I laboured to acquire a good style of expression, as well as merely to express my thoughts. Some of the plans I pursued were rather odd, and produced odd results. I read the whole of Johnson's ' Rasselas,' put down all the new words I met with—and they were a good many—with their proper meanings, and then I wrote essays in imitation of Johnson, and used them up. I did the same with Thomson's ' Seasons,' and wrote blank verse to use

his words, and also to acquire something of music and rhythm. And so I went on, sometimes writing long poems in heroic verse ; one on the 'Being of a God,' another in two or three 'books,' in blank verse, in imitation of 'Paradise Lost.' I wrote essays on 'The Immortality of the Soul,' sermons, a tragedy in three acts, and other things very wonderful in their way, you may be sure. I think I can say I never fancied myself a poet or a philosopher, but I wrote on and on, to acquire the power to write with readiness ; and I say to you, with a full conviction of the truth of what I say, that having lived to gain some little reputation as a writer, I attribute all my success to what I did for myself, and to the habits I formed during those years to which I have thus referred."

Such were the beginnings of a life that developed itself into both usefulness and honour. "Mr. Binney," said Rev. J. Harrison, at the grave of his friend, "possessed a massive brain and intellect, which he brought to bear, glowing with fire and passion, upon the exposition of pure truth, always loving to approach it from the intellectual side. When he first came to London, he adopted a bold, original, manly style of preaching, not then in vogue ; he endeavoured to make the Scriptures themselves speak to his audience, never treating the word of God as if it were merely a repository of felicitous or impressive mottoes ; he spoke with a dramatic force that often convinced young men who were inclined to doubt. He was remarkable for his broad, sympathetic nature, which enabled him to put himself in communication with and understand all sorts and conditions of men ; he was quick to perceive what there was good in other opposing systems, and could therefore never be relied upon as a strict partisan, albeit he took part in the leading ecclesiastical questions of the day, leaving pamphlets which are fine specimens of vigorous reasoning. He also took great interest in the worship of the Church, and wrote in its behalf a work on the Service of Song. He was the same large-hearted, ample-headed man at the end as at the beginning."

"In Mr. Binney," says a critic, "Nonconformity has lost one of its ablest representatives, and he will be missed beyond the limits of his own communion. He was a Dissenter and something more. The graces of physical form act with more force than we are usually willing to admit, and Thomas Binney was eminently favoured with that mark of distinction. Tall and shapely, he had a head like an Apollo, and he gathered a strangely impressive power in later years, when his locks had grown scanty and grey. He might have sat as a

painter's model for a hermit or a sage. When the tall commanding figure appeared in the pulpit or on the platform, with its high and thoughtful brow and its look of nameless dignity, it won a peculiar favour from the audience.

"Nor did his words belie his looks. He was not precisely eloquent, nor when dealing with the higher themes of human thought did he ever say much that a trained speculative thinker would have deemed of high account. But he was eminently shrewd, pointed, clear, and free from clerical slang. . . . Although reared in the strictest sect of the Nonconformists, he talked like a man of the world. Nay, flinging aside the prejudices of the old conventicles, he boldly wrote a book to show that a man might make the best of both worlds. So sensible a clergyman charmed sensible laymen, and he made the Weigh-house Chapel in Eastcheap a favourite resort even of people who had never bowed the knee before the theological gods of Nonconformity. He had travelled much, and had made himself as well known in Canada, the United States, and Australia, as he was in England. Everywhere he was the same shrewd, rather hard-headed man, armed with a homely, pithy diction, ready to throw new light on old texts, prone to find English meanings in Biblical precedents, passably yet not ostentatiously orthodox, and able to command the respect of the most irreverent worldling. His clear head would have fitted him to shine in the House of Commons quite as much as in the pulpit; and if he had been caught early enough, he would certainly have become a minister of state. We hope that his admirers will not be displeased if we add that, despite his contempt for Episcopacy, he would have made a capital bishop. And, in truth, he was a bishop, although no apostolically-ordained prelate had ever subjected him to the imposition of hands. He was one of those bishops who are consecrated in every Church by their own ability, whose diocese lies in the hearts of their followers, and who wear no mitre save the esteem of their fellow-men.

"Although far broader than the Dissenters of the old style, who might have suspected his free and easy speech to be the sign of an unsound faith, Mr. Binney was, nevertheless, a Nonconformist to the core. He did not like the State Church of England, her doctrines, her episcopacy, her subserviency to the Government of the day, or her fashion of going through a form of tremendous sanctity, in order to seal any choice of a bishop that may be made by the prime minister; and he said so with the utmost plainness. No

man was prouder of the clergy who left the Church rather than conform to her usages and sign her formularies. No man was more hostile to the idea that the Christian ministers are a priesthood, or that they should claim any homage beyond that inspired by their personal virtues. No man was more eager to maintain that Dissent was not schism, and that the Nonconformists of England had as much right to be called Churchmen as the members of the Church of England herself. He was a valiant soldier of the faith as it was taught by Baxter, Bunyan, and Howe. Like the fathers of Nonconformity, he would not play a silent part, but lifted up his testimony both by pen and tongue. If his pen lacked the finer graces of rhetoric, it was racy and forcible. Mr. Binney had the knack of writing pamphlets, and he made much use of that dying form of literature. No doubt he drew his taste and his aptitude for pamphleteering from study of those Nonconformist fathers who believed in the evangelical use of hard-hitting, and whose resounding blows rang through the theological war of the past. In the time of Cromwell, he would have dealt out hard measure to the followers of Laud. In the time of Charles II. he would have sturdily attacked those sycophantic prelates who displayed the fervour of their Christianity by licking the dust of the court, by praising the protector of Nell Gwynn, and by persecuting Dissenters. He was, in fact, a man of war from his youth.**

Mr. Binney's last sermon was preached on the first Sunday of November, 1873, at Westminster Chapel. On that day he was the guest of an old friend, a lady, who in conversation expressed a wish that she might have the privilege of hearing his last discourse. After the sermon he said to her, "Well, you have had your wish. I shall never preach again."

THE BAR CHURCH, SCARBOROUGH.

PERHAPS few churches in the United Kingdom are better known than the church represented in the annexed engraving. Thousands living in all parts of the country who visit this far-famed watering-place have heard in it the good word of God; and only the great day will make manifest of how many it may be said, "This man and that man was born here." In the year 1850 a few earnest men, Sir W. Lowthrop, Mr. M. Heck, and Mr. R. I. Morley, taking

* The writer of this estimate of Mr. Binney's powers is believed to be Matthew Arnold.

the lead, said, "Let us arise and build." Though generally looked upon even by their friends as men who had taken leave of their senses, they were not afraid of the "world's dread laugh," and they were not afraid to make themselves responsible for some £4,000; but boldly pressed forward with the work till "the top stone was brought forth with shoutings of Grace, grace unto it!" and the Revs. Dr. Raffles and Newman Hall opened the church on the 20th of August, 1850, for the public worship of God.

Many a time the good men who began this work of faith, surprised at what God has wrought, must have exclaimed out of their hearts'



THE BAR CHURCH, SCARBOROUGH.

fulness, "Now unto Him who hath done for us exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think."

Under the faithful and earnest ministry of the Rev. R. Balgarnie, extending over a period of seventeen years, large congregations were gathered, the debt was soon paid off, two large school-rooms were built, the new church on the South Cliff was erected, at a cost of £14,000, and all paid for; the gospel was preached to thousands of visitors, and six hundred souls were added to the Church. On the third Sunday of February, 1869, the Rev. J. Sidney Hall became pastor

of the Bar Church, succeeding the Rev. R. Balgarnie, who in April, 1868, commenced his ministry at the South Cliff Church, taking with him some fifty members of his old Church, to labour with him there in spreading the kingdom of God.

Having just closed the fifth year of his ministry, the Rev. J. S. Hall has reason to "thank God and take courage." The gap made in the Church roll by the fifty members transferred to the South Cliff Church has been more than filled up; a new vestry for the minister, a new residence for the chapel-keeper, a large school-room, capable of holding four hundred adults, and seven senior class-rooms have been built. The church has been enlarged to the extent of three hundred additional sittings—twelve hundred in all—by taking in one of the old school-rooms and making a second transept; the cost of the whole, including the land, being about £4,000.

The population of Scarborough, 13,000 twenty-three years ago, has now risen to 28,000, which during the season is increased to 40,000 by the influx of visitors.

At the opening of the year 1850, the old meeting-house in East-borough, holding less than five hundred, was the only Congregational church in the town. Now there are three—a new and commodious one on the site of the old one, with school-room and class-rooms adjoining; the spacious and handsome church on the South Cliff; and the Bar Church, erected in 1850, and enlarged in 1874. The three Churches contain sitting accommodation for three thousand persons, and cost about £30,000, all of which has been paid, except some £2,000 still due for the recent alterations of the Bar Church. It may truly be said of the population of Scarborough, and also of Congregationalism in this queen of watering places, "that the little one has become a thousand, and the small one a strong nation."

HAUNTED.

FOR the last few months I have been haunted. Haunted by a spectre, in the shape of a child—a little ragged miserable waif.

Some months ago I was walking in great haste through Regent's Circus, when my attention was arrested by what at a distance appeared only a bundle of rags. He was a little lad of perhaps nine or ten years of age, it may be rather more, for the growth of these outcasts is stunted by privation and want. Bare feet, one on the

top of the other for the sake of the warmth ; trousers ending at the knees in a fringe of rags, held up by strings across the shoulders ; sleeveless jacket, open to the waist in front ; no shirt ; one shoulder pushed out, showing plainly red marks caused by the strings that served for braces ; a head covered with rough fair hair, thick and wavy ; covered with dirt, but with pretty, regular, childish features ; eyes gazing into vacancy, dull and expressionless ; doing nothing, and thinking—ah, God only knows what the little one was thinking of ! This is my spectre. It was impossible then to stop and question him, so the name and home of my little spectre will for ever remain unknown. For half a minute we stood and watched him, as his thin fingers closed eagerly over all our pocket contained—a penny and a big peppermint. For a moment or two he did not look at what he so eagerly grasped, but clasped his hand tightly, as if afraid the treasure would be taken away. Then the thin fingers slowly unclasped, and he gazed at the coin and its companion. I expected a gleam of childish pleasure, perhaps a smile, but he turned his head as we slowly passed on, and looked at us with an expression of utter astonishment. There was no pleasure in the wistful little face, only wonder. Why had we given him anything, he had not begged. He little knew the silent appeal he was making ; silent, but pathetic and powerful in its very silence.

I looked back as we turned the corner, and there he stood, in the same listless attitude, with his face turned toward us, and it photographed itself then on my memory. I wonder what he was thinking of. Did a vision of childish joys pass before him ? Was he calling to remembrance the gay laugh and merry play of the well-dressed happy-looking children he had seen in some unwonted ramble in the parks ? Did he wonder why they were so different from what he was ? Was he thinking of that night last winter when he climbed the rails and peeped in the curtained window before the blinds were drawn, and watched the children at play—papa in the midst, as noisy as the noisiest, but always taking such care of the tiny fair-haired maiden, whose rough strong brothers sometimes forgot her, and tumbled over her in their boisterous fun. And the mother sat in the big arm-chair, which looked like a throne to the longing watcher, and enjoyed the fun as much as any of them. Did the little hand brush away the unbidden tear from the dim eyes as he asked himself, “ Where is *my* mother ? where is *my* father ? Why have not I a happy home, and nice things to eat, and clothes to

wear? Where are my brothers and sisters?" Alas! desolate little thinker, such thoughts as these have perplexed many a brain older than yours. Was he thinking of that wonderful place, "the country," where actually such ragged children as he could play on the green grass and under the trees, and gather flowers and fruit.

Strange thoughts pass through a child's brain; who shall divine them? But perhaps he was only thinking of his dinner, pondering over the best means to procure something to eat. Nothing for breakfast but half-rotten turnips. Nothing for dinner but what he can beg or steal or pick up from the gutters. Tea! a meal unheard of. What is it? Supper, alas! a rarity. Then *bed*.

Fathers and mothers, put the cherished darlings to bed, kiss the rosy lips, put out the light, say the last "good-night," and come with me to other bedsides. Not in warm, comfortable rooms, protected from the cold night air, but down dark, dirty alleys, in filthy cellars reeking with damp poisonous odours. Under dim arches, down by the river side.

Look at this bed, an old barrel! Stoop down, look at the occupants, two little lads clasped in each other's arms. Eyes closed, limbs still; the children are asleep. Look at the blankets, the sheets, the pillows. Dirt and rags! Draw close the curtain of thick river fog, wish them "Good-night." Hush! Don't make a noise, you will awake the children! What will the awakening bring? Listen, I will tell you. Hunger and cold; theft or starvation; misery and sin. Little hands growing daily more expert at their dangerous employment. Little hearts growing daily more callous. Then dark prison walls put for a time a barrier in the rapid downward course; but their re-entrance into the busy, noisy world, brings fresh crimes, new sins, and at last all that is good seems to have faded away, leaving only the semblance of a man—a man with the heart of a fiend. A curse to his country, a curse to himself, whose end—what can be the end of such a life!

"Feed My lambs." Christians, is this command binding on you? Do you admit the claims of these little ones on your sympathy and aid? Are you doing your utmost for them? When your children are clustering round you, speak to them of their brothers and sisters who are homeless and friendless, whose lives are so joyless and sad. Teach them to sympathise with the sorrowful. Tell them the dear Saviour has promised an especial reward and blessing to the children's friend. And when at night the little hands are folded

and the eyes closed in prayer, teach them to pray for the outcast, and surely the children's prayer for the children will reach the Father's ear.

Friends of the children, remember, "Whoso receiveth one such little child in My name receiveth Me."—*The Children's Advocate.*

CHRISTIAN GIVING.

IN a certain part of the valley of the Trent the river makes a magnificent sweep of nearly a mile. In the centre of the land thus belted by the water is a church with a prominent tower; and walking on the river side, this tower seems never to change its relative position. It is always before you; and a stranger, unacquainted with the secret of the river's bends, is bewildered by finding that, after he has walked a mile or more, he cannot get out of the view of the tower.

This is a parable of one aspect of Congregationalism. For in the very centre of our Church life stands the question of Finance, and while we "walk about our Zion, and go round about her, and tell the towers thereof," this tower dominates above many others, and we cannot lose sight of it even if we would. The reason of this is that we are voluntaries, not only in high spiritual matters, but also in matters of finance. We receive no extraneous aid for the conservation of our institutions, but depend solely on the gifts of a free and loving will. The question of ways and means is always turning up with us, because we have no tithe-charges to fall back on, and no Ecclesiastical Commission to dispense for us large endowments, and commutation funds, and parliamentary subsidies. In a way of speaking, we live from hand to mouth; but of course it is in that high sense in which Elijah, when supplied by ravens, and the Israelites, when fed with manna, lived from hand to mouth.

There may be amongst us different views on the subject of endowments. Nobody supposes that they are an unmixed evil, even though we could easily put our finger on Churches to which they have been the veriest curse. But for good and for ill, for better and for worse, by a deliberate and conscientious choice, we have become voluntaries. Whatever our practice may be, and however lamentably below our high ideal, we do acknowledge that Christian giving is an act of worship and a means of grace, a part of our

highest life, and one manifestation of the greatest of the three abiding Christian graces, "faith, hope, and love." When we remember this, it seems strange that we should have been so long content with financial methods which contained the minimum of opportunity for the exercise of the best feelings. We have not always provided decent and orderly ways in which our Churches might find all the joy of Christian liberality. We have been too hard and fast in some points, and too loose and haphazard in others. The ready perception of means to end, the quick discernment of the right man for a post, and the methodical and punctual discharge of offices which are common characteristics of our business men in their business, all seem to have been left in counting-houses and warehouses when there was any business to be done for our Divine Master. But, of late, things have taken a turn. We are more earnest and practical. We are being lifted into a higher state of consciousness, and we see our voluntarism revealing new beauties and new energies.

It is always difficult to detect the beginnings of spiritual influences, because so many subtle forces work together, and so many unforeseen circumstances contribute their causes to the effect. A river receives the tribute of a thousand rivulets. Therefore we have no wish to try to put our finger on any one man or circumstance as the only spring of our higher sentiments concerning Christian giving. But it is due to the Rev. John Ross that his name and work should be mentioned with a special emphasis. With the enthusiasm of a reformer, and the fertility of a genius, and the faith and fervour of a prophet, and the persistence of a man of one idea, and the self-sacrifice of a Christian, and the zeal of an apostle, he has gone among our Churches as the expositor of the scriptural principles of Christian giving. He has devoted himself to this work as one called of God. I shall not soon forget once hearing him, in a meeting of ministers and deacons, declare how he had been constrained by Divine impulses to give up his pastorate and enter upon his special mission. He said he had often to suffer undeserved reproach, and to receive the open opposition of some and the supercilious contempt of others. Then, with the simplicity of a child and the emotion of a man, he asked for the prayers of his brethren, that he might be sustained of God. We cannot be surprised that he has been compelled to retire from active work, for he is no longer young, and has spent much of his strength in the Master's service. But he has rallied many to his standard; and, before taking off his armour,

he can see a goodly array of recruits, eager to carry on to victory the warfare he has so bravely begun. Mr. Joseph Whitaker, formerly of Nottingham, and now of South Norwood, has for a long time rendered Mr. Ross valuable co-operation; and he is recognised as a leader in a movement which seeks to inform and stimulate our Churches in the right principles and methods of Christian giving.

There is no more remarkable instance of the transfiguring power of the Christian religion than the influence it has had upon the use of money. We have learned at last that it is not "common or unclean." It must have had a place in that great sheet, knit at the four corners, which appeared in a vision to the Apostle Peter. "The love of money is the root of all evil;" but the Christian use of it is the spring of a thousand blessings and a thousand joys. When consecrated by prayer, and refined with love, it can dry up the orphan's tears, and put a song into the widow's mouth. It need no longer be a spectre haunting the miser; but it may become the ministering angel, sent here and there to care for the poor, and to strengthen the walls of that spiritual house which is built of living stones. The words of Mrs. Charles touch the right chord when she says: "Is not money what *we* make it? Dust in the miser's chests; canker in the proud man's heart; but golden sunbeams, streams of blessing, earned by a child's labour, and comforting a parent's heart, or lovingly poured from rich men's hands into poor men's homes."

There are two main channels into which the Christian Church pours her gifts. We have first to take care of the house of God, to fill the treasury at the door of the temple. This channel may receive all gifts intended for evangelistic purposes, and the support of Church ordinances, and the organisation of societies, and missions to the heathen, and the defence of the faith, and necessary buildings. All these are the war material of the great army which does battle with the powers of darkness; and money is the sinews of this war, as truly as it was of the great Franco-Prussian war. The other channel is that which carries Christian gifts to the poor. This will receive all money for building and supporting hospitals, and refuges, and lodging-houses, and almshouses; and for benevolent societies, and the training of nurses, and the care of discharged prisoners; as well as the money expended in private charity in a thousand ways, which will be kept secret until we hear the Lord say, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these, ye did it unto Me."

We are called sometimes to replenish one of these channels, and

sometimes the other ; but in either case the principles which should control our action are the same. These principles are of so much importance, that we propose to speak of them more fully in our next number.

THE IRREVOCABLENESS OF LIFE.

A WORD once uttered is doomed to keep working for ever. It is a power let loose on morals, a thing of life no time can kill, no effort exhaust. We never speak or listen but for eternity. In this mysterious gallery, the faintest whisper is not merely heard at immense distances, but is strangely echoed, and re-echoed again and again, without possibility of stopping. Not a syllable escapes — not a thought, a wish, or a sigh. The lessons, sermons, books, conversations, adventures, dreams, with which we have had to do, however completely forgotten for the time, still tell on us, and indirectly on all with whom we come in contact, and all whom they in their turn may influence. No need of registering the successive motions of a sculptor's chisel, or a painter's brush, or a mason's trowel, or a weaver's shuttle, or a sempstress's needle. The statue, the picture, the building, the cloth, the finished garment, is its own sufficient witness. As in the slow filling up of a reservoir, the separate drops of a thousand rills part with their seeming independence, only to mass themselves in a larger kind of unit ; so in the capitalised life-items called experience, the aggregate result can never be anything else than a bare summation of the causes. So — "Whatsoever a man sows, that he shall reap," — and as he sows, whether abundantly or sparingly. It may be that his specific expectations are never to be realised, owing to perturbing forces on which he cannot calculate ; but the doings or efforts to which those expectations prompt, however seemingly frustrated, are none the less deep or permanent in the impression they leave on the character. Not an act of kindness, or shade of ill-temper, or slightest virtuous resolve, or faintest ruffle of the spirit, can, by any possibility, pass into oblivion. As having once been, they must be for ever. They have given a tinge to the doer's immortality, and so far made him a different being, long as, and wherever, or however he may live. He can never become again as if they had not marked him. Thenceforth he is irrevocably theirs. To that extent they not simply decide, but actually constitute his future.—*Rev. H. Griffith.*

CHURCH AND STATE.

IN the judgment of Richard Hooker, the most illustrious of the long line of apologists for the existing constitution of Church and State in this country, "there is not any man of the Church of England but the same is also a member of the commonwealth, nor any man a member of the commonwealth which is not also of the Church of England." To him the English Church and the English nation were not two separate powers or societies, but one and the same, considered under different aspects. The theory of Hooker is supported by the high authority of Edmund Burke, who in a well-known speech, delivered in the House of Commons in 1792, used these remarkable words: "An alliance between Church and State in a Christian commonwealth is, in my opinion, an idle and fanciful speculation. An alliance is between two things that are in their nature distinct and independent, such as between two sovereign States. But in a Christian commonwealth the Church and the State are one and the same thing, being different parts of the same whole."

This principle of the identity of the English Church with the English nation has determined the whole structure of our national ecclesiastical establishment. The Queen is at the head of the Church. The Prayer-book is a schedule to an Act of Parliament. The Ecclesiastical Courts are constituted by the same authority as the Court of Chancery and the Court of Queen's Bench. The parish church is the property, not of a sect, but of the parish. The revenues of the Church are intended to provide religious instruction and the institutions of religious worship for the nation. There is no concordat between the Church and the State in this country; for a concordat or alliance, to quote Burke's language again, can exist only "between two things that are in their nature distinct and independent," and the English Church has no distinct and independent existence. There is no such corporation known to English law as the Church of England. The Church cannot sue or be sued. It can hold no property. In the event of its disestablishment, it may be necessary to create a corporation to receive whatever portion of the existing ecclesiastical revenues may be appropriated to its use. The theory which identifies the nation with the Church was carried out in former times with relentless severity. To refuse to submit to the National Creed was made a crime.—*Rev. R. W. Dale.*

CHRISTIAN DECISION.*

“IF we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.” You may have kept Christ waiting long; you may long have been wavering between Him and the world; you may have “sinned against light and knowledge;” yet, oh, repent now, and for your comfort the words stand out graven more firmly than if written in the rock—“Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out.” No, “in no wise.” Let past sin have been as guilty as it may, as black as it may, as prolonged as it may; yet, if you now return, there is pardon for you in less time than it takes us to write of it. God’s mercy is waiting to flow out towards you. All things are ready. On your “deciding for Christ”—all bygone sin shall be forgiven and forgotten, and you shall be welcomed with a Father’s love, and enriched with a Saviour’s grace. The Spirit will have communion with you, and all heaven shall rejoice over you, as another trophy of the conquering love of God!

“It was my happiness,” said one, “to know something of the enduring character of a ‘mother’s love.’ She had much trouble when I was young. My father died early. He died a bankrupt. Things had to be sold. One trouble came after another, and my widowed mother had as much as she could bear. At last, to crown all, her eldest son ran away. Sitting by the fire in the long winter nights, my mother would speak to me and the other children calmly and quietly of our poor father that was dead; but if anybody named the wanderer, she could not endure the anguish. I remember how in the night I used to hear my mother, for her bedroom was over mine, pacing the floor all night, sobbing and praying for her lost boy. She did not know where he was. Fourteen years passed away. All of us were scattered except two, who were twins, now men, but little more than babies when their brother went away. ’Twas early summer, and they and mother were sitting in the little

* “Decide for Christ.” By Clement Clemance, B.A., Nottingham. Price Threepence. Hodder and Stoughton. This valuable little work has at once had, and deserved to have, a large circulation. We commend it to the special notice of all our readers.

parlour, with the window open. To the window, with halting step, came a great dark-bearded stranger. He looked in, leaning on the window-sill. My mother looked at him, and did not know him at first. But the big tears were running down his face, and she knew him through the tears. She sprang up and bade him instantly come in. 'No, mother,' said he, 'I shall never cross your threshold till you have told me that you forgive me everything.' My mother said, 'Why, dear, I've forgiven you long, long ago. There's now nothing to forgive, save that you have stayed away so long. But now that you have come back, there's nothing, nothing to forgive.'" Not less freely, not less fully will you be forgiven, if you now decide for Christ.

CHURCH NEWS OF THE MONTH.

THE recent alliance of the publican and the parson, by means of which the present government has been carried into power, has given rise to many comments, to much exultation, and to some regrets. A publican of Burslem has exultingly displayed this placard:—"We have been taunted by our opponents that we have carried all the recent elections, in collusion with the Church, of which I, for one, am very proud. Let us stick to the taunt of Beer and the Bible, and stand by a National Church and a National Beverage." On the other hand, a satirist has well sung:—

"Now safe will be our Church and State,
Nor botheration
Be made 'bout spending of the rate
For education.

"Clause twenty-five the storm shall brave,
And, spite of schisms,
All of our 'Ms or Ns' shall have
Their catechisms.

"Farmers shall still of landlords' game
The cost defray,
And ploughmen never speak, for shame,
Of better pay.

“ Their rights from guild and livery
 No power shall sever,
 And Common Councilmen shall be
 Common as ever.

“ So shall our might and beer remain,
 And both be stronger;
 While Whigs their bitter cup may drain
 All night—and longer! ”

We do not wonder, however, that eighteen clergymen of Bath have signed a document in which they say that recent events will “leave an abiding sense of dissatisfaction in the minds of those who are most deeply interested in the welfare of the community.”

With regard to the recent “Mission” in London, the Rev. J. C. Ryle expresses the hope that the result will be that many clergymen will “lay aside that orthodox prosiness, that respectable dullness, that leaden heaviness, that first-person-plural vagueness, that guinea-pig-like tameness, and those dreary common places, which the laity too often complain of as the characteristics of the modern parson’s sermon.”

The Romanising tendencies of the “Mission” are referred to by the Protestant “Rock:”—“Satan has really excelled himself, for, under cover of a movement for saving individual souls, he has placed an entire community in the most imminent peril! And, strange as it may sound, the arch-enemy finds in three of our bishops most convenient tools, ready to carry out his views at all points and at every hazard. How, for the future, can any one denounce Ritualism and Sacerdotalism, and the thousand evils they bring in their train, unless at the same time he be prepared to denounce the bishops who have caused the present distress, and the weak-minded though well-meaning Evangelicals, who will be its first victims? The whole thing is enough to make the angels weep.”

It seems to be getting clearer every day that the Ritualists are, however, the Irrepressibles. Some even of their old friends are looking shy at them. For instance, the “John Bull,” which has had a mild inclination that way rather than the other, writes:—“Surely the rector and school managers of Ryedale, in Yorkshire, must be secret agents of the Secularists, or they could never allow quite

young children to be taught in school a hymn with such words as these :—

‘ How shall I get my sins forgiven ?
How cleansed from every stain ?
Baptismal purity brought back ?
My soul restored again ?

‘ First to confession I must go,
And tell out all my shame ;
My list of sins, all, one by one,
In penitence must name.’

“It is inconsistencies like this on the one side, and like that of the Kentish Protestants on the other, which do incalculable mischief, and give the enemy a position which, but for our own folly, he would never hold.”

The scholars and theologians who are revising the authorised version of the Scriptures do not expect to get through their work in less than six years. They are adopting as nearly as possible the arrangements which were in force when the last translation was made—that of the time of James I., which we now use. No public funds have been voted to them, but they expect to receive ample pecuniary compensation for their labours by selling the copyright of the new version. Already they have received one offer for a large amount.

The Edinburgh “Daily Review” says:—“I met, in the Infirmary the other day, with one of the fruits of the Moody and Sankey meetings, of a very pleasing kind. Two ladies came into the ward where I was visiting, and sang several hymns to the patients. They were both excellent singers, and made a duet of it, one taking the melody and the other the second part. I understand there is now a regular staff of these visitors, and they are most cordially welcomed. Since they came to the ward which I happen to know best about, there is quite a change in the place. The patients are not only patient, but cheerful, and some of them even radiant. One of them has been encouraged by the successful visits of the ladies to keep up the exercise, and reads a chapter of the Bible and sings a hymn morning and night. Another little fellow sings hymns from morning to night. I verily believe that there are patients who can

say they never were so happy in their lives as they have been in that ward, and who will almost regret to leave it."

The Church and congregation at Newland Chapel, Lincoln, have resolved to erect a new church, and have converted their old chapel into a commodious lecture-room and school-rooms. The cost of the undertaking is about £9,000, towards which rather more than £3,000 have been promised.—The centenary of the High Street Chapel, Lancaster, has been recently celebrated by a series of meetings and services. The chapel has undergone a complete renovation, and memorial windows have been introduced.—A mission school-room, capable of holding two hundred persons, has been erected at Cage Green, Tonbridge, at a cost of £500, of which Mr. S. Morley, M.P., generously contributed £200. It was erected on the site of a cottage where, for forty years, mission services and a Sunday-school have been conducted by the Congregationalists of Tonbridge.—The independents of Caterham, Surrey, a picturesque and healthy spot, fifteen miles from London, have resolved upon the erection of a new church, suitable to the requirements of the beautiful and improving locality. Nearly an acre of land has been purchased in the most prominent position in the valley, and the entire cost, together with the erection of the church, to hold five hundred, and vestries, is estimated at not exceeding £4,500.—The church at Tynemouth has recently been completed, by the erection of the spire, at a cost of £1,258.

Rev. Geo. Nicholson has resigned the pastorate of Union Church, Putney.—Rev. J. H. Bowhay, through failure of health, has resigned the ministerial charge of the Church at Dartford.—Rev. W. Axford, of Peasley Cross, St. Helens, after three years of useful labour, has been compelled, through illness, to resign his charge.—Mr. William J. Woods, B.A., London, student and scholar of New College, has accepted a unanimous invitation to the pastorate of the Church, Spence Street, Leamington.—Rev. J. R. Wolstenholme, M.A., of Eastwood, Notts, has accepted the pastorate of Zion Chapel, Wakefield.—Rev. J. D. Thane, of Brill, Bucks, has accepted the pastorate of the Church at Bottisham, Cambs.—Rev. G. T. Coster, of Hull, has consented to become the pastor of the Church at South Norwood.—Rev. J. P. Driver, of Castlegate Church, Shrewsbury, is about to become the pastor of Tettenhall Wood Church, Wolverhampton.

RUTH TREDEGAR;

OR, CLOUDS AND SUNSHINE.

BY MARY SHERWOOD.

CHAP. V.—A LONG FAREWELL.

THE new plan took a good deal of talking into shape. Master Dan found it necessary to go down most evenings during the next three weeks to smoke a pipe by the cottage hearth, and help the Widow Tredegar and Ruth to arrange and debate and consider all the various details involved in setting up in business.

Perhaps it was as well for Mrs. Tredegar that the need for bestirring herself to some degree had arisen. It turned her thoughts a little from the constant brooding over her losses, which had called forth the animadversions of good Mrs. Ketteridge. And Master Dan was wise enough to see this, and took good care to appeal to her on every matter, great or small, that had to be considered.

But truth to tell, Master Dan did not spend all his time in talking about the shop. Jack and Bob loved nothing better than to get one on each side of him, with Dolly perched upon his knee, and listen to the stories of which he had such an inexhaustible supply. All true ones, of course, concerning his adventures and disasters at sea, or the things that he had seen and done in those far-off lands to which he had voyaged in the *Ariadne*. Ruth, too, as she sat bending over the work that was never absent from her busy hands, listened silently to his narrations, liking those best that were most about himself, and feeling at the bottom of her sorrowful, heavy-laden heart, a shy, strange sense of comfort and content whenever he sat there, cheering the desolate hearth by his strong and kindly presence. Perhaps, too, the captain was not averse to the opportunity of recounting his exploits in Ruth's hearing; though it was true, as he had said, that he was not very fluent of speech when it came to talking to her himself. Then he did not often wander far from matters of the shop, though indeed that was subject enough for discourse between them.

For the shop was to be a very comprehensive affair, and the articles which one by one took their place on the list of purchases for the stock-in-trade, included pretty nearly everything that could be mentioned in the way of village housekeeping requirements. Groceries, of course, had to be laid in, and a small assortment of calicoes, prints, and ribbons; also a few conspicuous glass jars filled

with peppermints and sugar-candy, by way of relief to little urchins who were troubled with pence in their pockets. Pins and needles, buttons, tapes, pegtops, string, candles, beeswax, ginger-beer and gingerbread, tin-tacks, and slate pencils, paper and envelopes; in short, everything that was likely to be wanted in a small way by man, woman, or child in Pengarva village, was thought of and put down on the list of articles in which the captain's twenty pounds were to be invested.

A small deal counter was put up, and a nest of tiny drawers and shelves for the bestowal of the goods. Pegs and hooks without number were fitted behind, and all was carried on with such despatch, that at eight o'clock on the morning of the day before the *Ariadne* was to sail, the shop in all its glory was opened, and Ruth took her place behind the counter to attend to her customers.

The captain, according to his promise, was the first, and the number of things that his mother and her maid Betty wanted seemed interminable. But, as he said, it was good practice for Ruth though; indeed she served him as deftly as if she had stood behind the little counter for a year. After him came first one and then another of the village folk. Indeed it seemed to Ruth that half the people in Pengarva found out that they wanted something, and came to the new shop for it; for she was kept on her feet, from morning to night, serving first one and then another, and entering the payments, every penny that she took, in the ledger, which had not been forgotten among the things to be laid in.

Of course this first day was not to be taken as a fair specimen of others that should follow, for many came from curiosity as much as for the sake of what they bought. Still it proved Ruth's capacity for business, and it showed that there was custom to be had in Pengarva, and that the shop, with proper management and care, was likely to be a means of comfortable livelihood for them. Jack and Bob were away all day at school, and Mrs. Tredegar was able to look after the little matters of the house, so as to leave Ruth free to attend to the shop. Altogether the first day's trial had proved the wisdom of the captain's plan, and cheered both Ruth and her mother with hopes of future success.

Master Dan had looked in upon them in the course of the afternoon to hear how they were going on, and to express his satisfaction at the prosperous turn which things were taking. He came again, however, in the evening, to say good-bye; for the *Ariadne*,

as we have said, was to sail the next day, and he was going off to Bexmouth quite early in the morning. It was good to see his big bronzed face when Ruth told him what she had taken; and when Mrs. Tredegar, with tears in her eyes, thanked him for putting them in a way of earning an honest living, he took her hand in both his own, and shook it as if he never meant to give over.

"And about that twenty pounds, you know, Mrs. Tredegar," he said, after long talk, all of them together, "don't let it lie upon your mind in any way. There is no call to pay it back at the two years' end, unless you find it agreeable to do so. It can stand over another two years, and two years more to the back of that; and, indeed, if it should not be convenient, you need never pay it at all. Nay, nay! don't talk of thanks;" and Master Dan brushed his coat sleeve across his eyes as he spoke. "John Tredegar was not the man himself to see any one in trouble, women folk especially, and not put out a hand to help them; and he deserves that them that belong to him should have a bit of a lift now that the Lord has been pleased to take him away from them. I have done no more than was my duty under the circumstances, though I don't say that I did it because it was my duty, but because I had a pleasure in the doing of it, and could not help myself. Never twenty pounds did I lay out in my life that I had more satisfaction in than this, and if it don't come back to me one way, I trust it will in another."

Master Dan did not stay to smoke his customary pipe, though he seemed as if he would have vastly liked to do so. It was his last night on shore, he said, and his old mother would be thinking lonely of him. He must just wish them well now for the last time, and say good-bye till the *Ariadne* put into Bexmouth port again.

But the good-byes took a long time saying. Jack and Bob had each a hand, and would not let it go till Dolly pushed in between them, and must needs be lifted in his arms again to give him another kiss; and as the little one pressed her face against his thick brown beard, and twined her chubby arms about his neck, Master Dan seemed loath to set her down again.

"Master Dan go away? come again some day," said the child.

"Ay, my pretty! Come again some day. Master Dan will come again." And he put her down gently on the floor. It was strange, Ruth often thought, how gentle this rough strong man could be with women and children. "Good-bye. God bless you all! It is long time, is two years, but I will come again, I will, please God! Let me

go, Dolly, let me go, there's a dear!" for Dolly was clasping him by the knee now, holding him with all her small might, as though she were determined to keep him to the last. "Good-bye, Ruth."

He had taken her hand again, and was looking at her as though he would fain, if he dared, say something more, with a look that made her soft eyes droop suddenly beneath their veiling lashes.

"Good-bye, Master Dan," was all she said, but in her voice there was the trembling of a sigh, and the shining of a smile. And then for an instant glancing up again, their eyes met, and Ruth knew the secret of the captain's heart.

Master Dan was off before daybreak the next morning. The *Ariadne* was to sail from Bexmouth at noon that day, and at the appointed time she glided slowly, with all her sails spread, out of the harbour, and bore on westward, passing within sight of Pengarva an hour or two later. Ruth saw her from the top of the cliff. She had run out for a moment from her place behind the counter of their little shop, just for one look at the bonny barque. How bravely she sped along over the glancing waves! How bright she looked, away in the shining distance, with her sails glistening in the full flood of sunshine that was pouring down on earth and sea! The bonny barque! And Ruth knew, although she saw him not, that the captain stood upon her decks, looking out towards the Pengarva cliffs, saying in his heart farewell to her, even as she was saying it to him.

And then, through the sunshine there came suddenly over her the remembrance, never very far away, of that other day, when she had stood upon the same jutting headland, looking out through the dim mists of dawn, over the vast grey sweep of sea, whose cruel waves even then, though she knew it not, had closed upon their prey. Somewhere beneath that rippling, treacherous expanse, the *Bonny Bess* was lying, a shattered, sodden wreck, upon the ocean floor, and quiet in the Pengarva churchyard the hands that had trimmed her sails but a few short weeks ago were folded in the sleep of death. A shiver went through her heart, and the sunshine grew chill around her. What if the *Ariadne*, too, never came back again? What if that warm true hand, whose clasp she still felt upon her own, were never to close round it again, and the secret were to remain unspoken which that last moment had revealed!

For Ruth knew, by the trouble and the joy within, that the secret was her own as well.

(To be concluded in our next.)

CHURCH OR CHAPEL?

JACK.—Well, Tom, how are you to-day? I wish you joy, old chap. Then you are really going to be married at last? Why, I can't remember the time when you were not engaged.

Tom. Yes; I really am, I am happy to say, and thank you. Why, the truth is, things are so dear, and grow so much dearer every day, that my Polly and I have sometimes doubted whether we should ever be able to marry at all in England. We have often thought we should have to leave the old country, and try our hands somewhere else. But, however, I have been getting on a little better lately, and seem to see a few yards before me: so we are really going to be married now.

Jack. Well, I wish you all joy and happiness, I'm sure; and I don't doubt you'll have it, either. From what I see, though a man gets on better no doubt in some respects where food is cheaper and labour dearer, it's much the same kind of man that gets on in either place. And you know the old saying, "A man must ask his wife's leave to thrive."

Tom. I sha'n't have to do that, any way. Why, man, my Polly is——

Jack. O yes, of course, we know all about that. But when is it to be? Because I shall certainly knock off for a morning and come down to the old chapel and see my old friend married.

Tom. I'm sure you won't—at least I don't think you will.

Jack. Why, what do you mean? I thought you said it was to be——

Tom. Yes; but I didn't say *where* it was to be.

Jack. Why, you don't mean to say you're going anywhere else to be married than to the place where you always attend? Besides, you're a member of the Church, ain't you?

Tom. No; I'm not, but Polly is: and she wants me to be, and I think I shall when we're settled down again.

Jack. Well, I can't understand it a bit. Why, of all the times when one would like one's own minister and one's own Christian friends to take part in one's pleasure, I should think that's the time. I'm sure it really did me good when I was married, to see how many kind souls there were that had thought about us; and I tell you I

walked out of the place not a little bit proud, with my wife on my arm for the first time. Whatever do you mean ?

Tom. Well, you see, Polly, she's a bit modest like, and she says, it's ever so much better to go to church, where nobody knows us, not even the clergyman. But I can't quite see that ; I can't deny there's something in what you say.

Jack. Of course there is. Why, man, it looks as if you were ashamed of one another, shirking off like that. And I know you're not that.

Tom. No, indeed, God bless her. She'll never make anybody ashamed of her. But, you see, it's more respectable like, ain't it now, to be married at church ?

Jack. Why ?

Tom. Oh, well, I don't know. All the great people are married at church.

Jack. Well, but you're not great people, as you call them. Besides, if they commonly go to church, great or small, it's quite right and reasonable they should be married at church. I like a man who is thoroughly what he is.

Tom. Why, so do I ; and I must own it has been sometimes a little question with us what our minister would think and say about it ; because, though we are not both members, as I said, we like his preaching very much, and like him even better than his preaching.

Jack. I think I can tell you what he will think. I don't expect he'll say anything, except perhaps to his wife. But he'll think it was a pity, for many reasons. You may depend it will grieve and weaken him in his work not a little.

Tom. How ?

Jack. Why, don't you see he's a Nonconformist as well as a Christian, and a Nonconformist because he's a Christian.

Tom. Well, what then ?

Jack. What then ? Why, one of the principal things he has to do as a Nonconformist is to show some better way of doing these things than the Prayer-Book way.

Tom. I think he'd be puzzled to do that. I think the church service is beautiful.

Jack. Do you ? Some part of it is, no doubt. But have you read all the service for the solemnisation of matrimony ?

Tom. No, I don't know that I ever did.

Jack. Well, now, you just read it through, and then tell me if it would want a very wise man to make a great many improvements in that. As to the beginning of it, it seems to me pretty nearly indecent, under the circumstances. And what with obsolete words and legal fictions, some of the rest is utterly absurd.

Tom. What do you mean ?

Jack. Why, are you going to worship your wife, for instance ?

Tom. No, indeed, dearly as I love her.

Jack. Well, you'll have to say so.

Tom. Oh, that only means "honour."

Jack. Of course it really means honour. But, you see, such a plain man as you, to say nothing of our minister, could easily make an improvement on that.

Tom. Well, so I could ; and really I think a good deal of the Prayer-Book wants improving.

Jack. So does our minister ; and I can tell you, if you don't know, that the marriage service he uses is made up of the best parts of the Church of England service, with just those improvements you would like. But now, let me tell you, I believe you have not given me the reason that lies deepest in your hearts about this.

Tom. Well, I don't know that I have.

Jack. No, I thought not. I fancy you and a good many other people believe you are not so truly married at chapel as if you went to church.

Tom. There, you've hit the right nail on the head this time. I know Polly's friends think so, and I hardly know what to think myself. You see, they tell me you can't be married at chapel without the registrar, and at church the clergyman alone can marry you.

Jack. I am sorry to say that it is true.

Tom. Well, don't that look as if the law did not believe the Dissenting minister could really marry people ?

Jack. No, certainly not. It is an instance of the half reforms of which England has made so many, and it ought to be altered and will be altered. But the marriages at chapel are precisely as binding in every respect as they are at church.

Tom. Are you sure of that ?

Jack. Sure ? Why, can any law in England be surer than an Act of Parliament ? Don't I recollect, though I am not so very old, what a triumph it was thought, when the Act was passed that enabled us

Dissenters to be married without going to church? And it really was a very important thing, though, like so many other things, it was only about half done, and wants improving. However, there it is; and depend on it, any couple that are married at chapel in proper form are as legally and really married in the sight of God and man as it is possible to be.

Tom. Well, I suppose you are right: but do you know what a clergyman told a friend of mine about it the other day?

Jack. No: what?

Tom. Why, that he and his wife were living in sin, and would be, until they went to church and were married again.

Jack. Well, all I can say about that is, that a man who says such things should be prosecuted for contempt of the law of the land. Only perhaps, poor fellow, he was as ignorant as he was bigoted. Those two things often go together. But I am really sorry when I hear of Nonconformists going to be married at church.

Tom. Why? what harm does it do?

Jack. Do you ever read the debates in the House of Commons, or the lectures of the clergymen against the Liberation Society?

Tom. Not very often; but what has that to do with it?

Jack. Why this: that this inconsistency of Nonconformists supplies the advocates of the Establishment with the nearest thing they have to an argument against the unquestionable fact that, counting heads, the Church is in a minority of the whole worshippers in the nation. For they point to the other unquestioned fact, that a large majority of all the marriages take place at church, and therefore that the affections of the people are with them; and they will always be able to do it while couples like you and Polly go and get married in that way.

Tom. I say, you're getting serious, old fellow.

Jack. Well, it is rather a serious matter. It's a thing most of us only do once in a lifetime—and I am sure I hope and pray neither you nor I may ever have a chance to do it again. It should be done, as everything should be, in a really Christian way, and if we are what we call ourselves, it should be done in the company of those people with whom we have most religious sympathy.

Tom. Well, good-morning. I can't stop any longer, but I shall have a good talk with Polly about it.

Jack. And I think I shall come to your wedding at our old chapel, yet. Good-bye.

AN OLD MAN'S DREAM.

BY ROBERT PASTOR.

"I SEE the way of salvation now, sir," said an aged man, whom I met in the street. He had been very strong and active in past years, but he was beginning to stoop under the burden of the four-score years which had left many traces upon his frame. "Yes," he went on, "I see it clearly. Strange, very strange, that I have lived all these years and never saw it before. I never used to think about it, sir."

"I am very glad to find you thinking about it now. Do you think you are really saved?" I asked.

In a low voice, and evidently with deep feeling, he replied, "I believe in Christ, I love Christ; He has saved me."

I left my aged friend, after giving him a promise that I would soon call and see him in his own home. An evening soon came when I could call and redeem my promise. As we sat by his fireside, talking about Christ and His redemptive work, he said—

"I am always thinking about Him, and indeed I often dream about Him. If you will not smile and think me foolish, I will tell you a dream I had a few nights ago; I often think about it."

"I shall be glad to hear it," I replied.

"Well, sir, I dreamt I was on my way to heaven. I was climbing up a very rough and hard road. I had often to sit down by the roadside and rest. After a while I saw a gate, which I felt sure was the gate of heaven. I went up to it, and knocked. An angel came and opened it. He seemed to me to look very sternly at me, and said—

"'What do you want here?'

"'Is not this the gate of heaven?' I asked.

"'Yes, it is,' he answered.

"'I am very anxious to enter, then,' I said.

"'No one can enter here without a certificate,' he replied. 'Have you brought one with you?'

"'Yes, I have one.'

"'Where did you get it?' he asked.

"'FROM JESUS,' I replied. The moment I said this, he smiled and looked very kindly upon me, and said—

"'Give it to me, and wait here until I return.'

"I drew my certificate from an inner pocket, where I had carefully placed it, and gave it to him. He went away, but in a very short time he came back, and said, 'You can enter; the King commands me to take you to Him.'

"I passed through the door into the glorious city. I had hardly done so before I found myself in a very dark room. It seemed to me that the room was over a great furnace, it was so hot. But I was only in it a moment, and when I came out I was amazed to find myself as white as snow—not a spot, not a stain, not a speck could I see on myself. The angel took my hand, and said, 'Come with me.' He led me to a great white throne, and I saw Jesus seated upon it, and God was just about to place a crown upon my head, when I awoke. I was very sorry I awoke just then."

As I took the old man's hand, I said, "Your dream will be more than realised before long. You will pass through the gate into the city, you will be freed from every spot, every stain of sin; and you will see the King in His beauty. But the certificate—what do you mean by that? and why did you say you had got it from Jesus?"

"By the certificate I meant my title to heaven, and we get that only from Jesus."

"Yes," I thought, as I left the old man, "you do understand the way of salvation better than many who think themselves far wiser than you. To use your word, many are seeking their 'certificates' from any one and anything but Jesus. Dukes and lords are seeking it by a pilgrimage to some, what they deem, sacred shrine; some are seeking it from self-constituted priests, who impiously thrust themselves between the soul and God. Some are seeking it from their own fancied good works. But you are right, my aged friend; only Jesus can give a title to heaven; only Jesus can remove the sin that bars our way, and open for us the gate of everlasting life. 'He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.'" Can you, my reader,

... "read your title clear
To mansions in the skies"?

Have you received from Jesus what Bunyan calls the roll—the sweet assurance of pardon and of "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ?"

Love can neither be bought nor sold; its only price is love.
He that is not open to conviction, is not qualified for argument.
Confidence furnishes conversation with more than wit does.

JUSTIFICATION AND SANCTIFICATION.

THE evangelical process of justification is pronounced arbitrary, unnatural, artificial, unreal, false, and I know not what by some professed teachers of theology. One of the supposed merits of their doctrinal innovation is, that it is said to call a man what he is, and to treat him as such, namely, righteous. He is acquitted, because—one must suppose—he is entitled to acquittal. The evangelical doctrine, on the other hand, it is asserted, names people what they are not, and treats them as such; that is, names and treats them as righteous—although they are avowedly penitents, “justified,” acquitted, treated as righteous, “without the deeds of the law.”

There is nothing substantially novel in the doctrine, on which some are insisting with so much urgency. It is practically indistinguishable from the dogma of the Papacy, as finally shaped by the Council of Trent. It is only a more insidious and disguised Pharisaism than that of old. Extremes meet. In the propagation of this subtilised self-righteousness Romanists and Socinians join hands. It renders atonement unnecessary. The most ignorant and unguarded evangelicalism never separated atoning sacrifice so completely from a life of godliness. Not a single root of religious practice is anywhere struck into our Lord's propitiatory work, except that the grace which produces personal righteousness is asserted by some of these parties to be dispensed through our Saviour's merits.

Besides many other and weighty objections which we might urge against this unsatisfactory theory, it is exposed to every particular charge which it brings against evangelical dogma. It calls a man what he is not, namely, righteous. It treats him as what he is not before the law and before God, that is, righteous. It does not treat him as what he is according to hypothesis, namely, imperfectly righteous. One imperfectly righteous is a sinner, and under penalties of law, and out of Divine favour. If it be replied that such a one is confessedly imperfect, but that the mercy of God turns aside the penalties, and receives him to favour, what is that but treating him as what he is not? He is a transgressor, and is treated as though he were not. What advantage is there in giving up the old doctrine and accepting the

new? None. The terrible disadvantage is, that there is no Divine self-vindication, and the sinner is left to gravitate to low views and superficial feelings regarding the nature of sin and holiness, death and life, and law and God.

Possibly uninstructed teachers of evangelical doctrine in some quarters may have represented too exclusively that justification is entirely prior to sanctification, and that the sole connection between them is, that holiness is prompted by nothing but the gratitude excited in the pardoned. It must be remembered, however, that God justifies the penitent only. Indeed, only the penitent can be justified. To pronounce acquittal and forgiveness over the rebellious could convey nothing to them. You cannot acquit and forgive men who do not desire acquittal or forgiveness. They would not have these things. Were it possible to justify the impenitent, it would be an act of immorality on the part of the Divine government. All the germs of holiness lie in penitence. The seeds of holiness are in every justified man. Sanctification, therefore, in this seminal and germinant form, goes before and accompanies justification, as well as follows after it in ceaseless growth and expansion. In setting forth Christian doctrine, we have to handle not only theological apprehensions, but vital processes; and it is not easy to exhibit both in their natural harmony. Sanctification commonly means the after life of holiness, but we must not fail to recognise that a believing man always comes to the blood of atonement with a purpose of amendment within him. He is justified, not for the sake of that root of purity on its own account. That is not the justifying cause and property in his case. But he could not be justified without it as a matter of fact, nor could he as a matter of principle. If you cut a bulbous root into two halves, you will find the microscopic lines of the flower for next season within. Sanctification, if you go to the core of the question, is like the flower in the heart of the bulb. It is already in the penitent when he sues for justification; but the gratitude of forgiveness will act like tropical sunlight to quicken the plant to luxuriance, evoke its hidden beauty, and scatter delicious perfume.

So under the ancient ritual. Was a devout and believing Hebrew bowed down with a sense of sin? Was he anxious to be harmonised with the broken law? Most assuredly his distinct intention would be to be loyal to Jehovah afterwards. But this

could not justify—could not legally acquit him. He therefore came with sacrifice, and sought atonement. The consciousness of Divine mercy would, of course, stimulate more circumspect and devoted obedience in days to come.

If we represented that immoral and ungodly men were justified, and remained in their immorality and ungodliness, assaults on evangelical doctrine would be matters of tremendous gravity. If any insinuate, as some do, that such is the import of evangelical faith, we pass over their calumny in silence. Ever since Paul preached this gospel, there have not been wanting some who have libelled our message. But it is impossible to the moral consciousness of a sane human being to cry for pardon on the basis of our Lord's atonement with a purpose of an evil life in the heart. Impenitent sinners keep as far away from Christ and His cross as they are able.

The man who feels the need of atonement the most deeply, and who daily renews his trust in the great propitiation the most constantly, will make most progress in sanctification. The organ of sanctity in the soul is a tender conscience, and from habitual contact with the atoning Saviour, it acquires all its spiritual sensitiveness and delicacy. This is the chosen instrumentality of the Holy Ghost. The saintliest and most heroic lives which the world has seen were made all that they were by the blood of atonement.—*Rev. Henry Batchelor.*

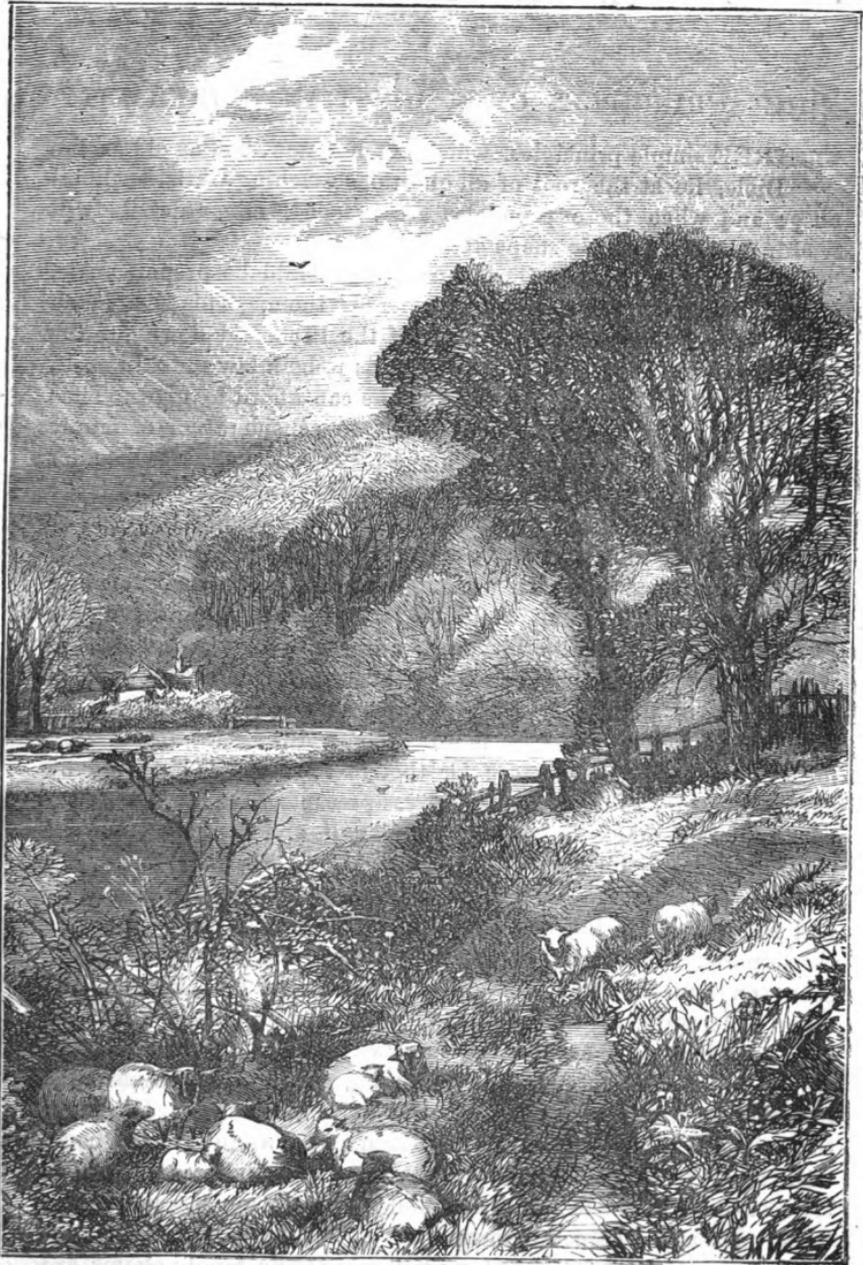
THE MONTH OF MAY.

A COUNTRY walk in May is surely the most enjoyable of all country pleasures. The dew of its youth then rests on the year. We still feel the exhilaration of spring, and as yet feel none of the languor of summer. There is a freshness and bloom on the landscape which vanish as the year advances. The cowslips transform the grass land into a field of cloth of gold. The hawthorn walls of partition are covered with summer snow, and as the breezes leap them, they throw out odours like a garden of spices. Under the tall trees of the wood the hyacinths spread their purple carpet. The symmetrical and stately chestnuts hold fair blossoms on the palms of their long-fingered hands. The sweet-voiced birds make

music everywhere, and brook and river smile in the sunlight with all the play and change of a living face. At every turn a thousand sights and scents and sounds charm away all gloom. May is, without controversy, the poet's month, for everything now invites to pure thought and lofty sentiment. The dullest natures are conscious of a glory in the earth; and quicker spirits, while they read God's great world-poem, and while they think over again the thoughts God had in creation, feel themselves brought into mysterious tune with God and Nature.

The change from May beauties to May meetings is great, but not discordant, for the flowers and songs of the country are a living parable. What they are to the face of the earth, so are the powers and healthy excitements of the town to the face of the kingdom of heaven. This month, by common consent of the Churches, is set apart for solemnities and festivals; and we cannot agree with those who sneer at the May meetings by calling them "a course of religious dissipation." They are rather the Christian Pentecost, the Feast of Tabernacles, when "the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord." They enable us, as nothing else can, to realise the abounding fulness of life in the Church; and they reveal, as nothing else can, the way in which the Church, the body of Christ, having all its members "knit together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

Since last May many of our Churches, in various localities, have been visited with unusual and glorious outpourings of Divine blessing. And over all the country there are the longing and the hope for yet grander visitations of God. "There is a sound of abundance of rain." Then may we not hope that our May meetings this year will be fuller than ever of Christian benefits; that the Church will be enriched on every side; and that many humble hearts who now pray without ceasing, "Thy kingdom come," will see the answer to their prayers? And so "the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." Oh, that all our hopes may be realised! And may our Father's benediction, pleasant as morning light, and mighty as noonday heat, rest on all the gatherings of His people. "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity."



THE MONTH OF MAY.

THE PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIAN LIBERALITY.

THREE simple principles, which are not new, but as old as the Bible, lie at the root of all questions touching Christian liberality; and when these principles are grasped, minor details will readily fall into suitable shape and order.

I. **The first is**, that all Christian giving should be proportionate. Men should give "as God hath prospered" them. This is a much more elastic principle than the law of the tithe laid down for the guidance of the Jews. Every Christian is to be a law unto himself, to assess himself, and to give all that he can afford to give. Thus there will be room for the most delicate consideration of family claims and the most subtle workings of conscience, as well as for the most generous impulses, and large-hearted, and even enthusiastic liberality. This principle controls the munificence of a Peabody or a Croesley and touches with beauty the trembling, hesitating offering of a few pence by a poor woman struggling every week to make both ends meet. Nothing could be farther from the spirit of the New Testament than to lay down a line below which, or above which, we need not go. The tenth is often a convenient proportion, but there are thousands of Christians who cannot set apart four directly religious purposes more than a twentieth, or even as fortieth part of their income; for though the tenth is hallowed by ages of use, no less than by the express precept of God to the Jews, yet there is no magic charm surrounding it, and not even God will regard it as a binding measure. A friend of mine, who has been marvellously prospered of God, once gave me the law he had formulated for the disposal of his income. He divided it into three parts. The first, consisting of a clear half of the whole, he spent on household expenses, the education of his children, and other constantly recurring claims. One-fourth of the whole he invested as savings, considering it only right that he should lay up for his wife and children. The remaining part, which was also one-fourth of his whole income, he devoted to religious uses. Of course this was a large proportion for any man to set aside; but he could well afford it, and his conscience would not have been satisfied with less. But we ought to be very careful how we judge one another in these matters. There are men with generous hearts who cannot spare so much as a few pence a week, after their family claims are

met. Only a few weeks ago I met a poor man whom I had missed of late from his accustomed seat in chapel, and I had begun to suspect there was some delicate reason for his absence. So I encouraged him to talk of the matter; and he told me that for some weeks past he had not, before God, felt himself able to bring his usual weekly offering, and had been shy about coming, lest he should seem singular. In human judgments he would stand far behind his liberal brother who could devote a fourth to the Lord; but perhaps our Lord Jesus Christ, who commended the widow's gift, looked with mercy on his conscientious misgivings, and his anxiety to do the right that was beyond his power.

The principle of proportionate giving, if fairly carried out, would at once remove all the difficulties which gather about Church finance. The hard-and-fast line of a pew-rent would disappear, giving way to that system which calls on a man to say how much he feels able to contribute, and accepts that as sufficient, whether it be little or much. For it cannot be right that a tradesman with several children, needing many sittings, should be taxed more heavily than a well-to-do bachelor, who needs only one. Our Father's house should not be a house of merchandise, where men drive a bargain for so much room: it should be a house of prayer, where poor men find equal benefits with rich men, and where every courteous consideration and every delicate attention can be manifested. The gift of the poor should be looked at with the eyes of Christ; and what is lacking in one man should be supplied from the fulness of another. It may be very true that some men would use their Christian liberty selfishly, and because they were bound by no other cords than cords of love, would refuse to be bound at all. But such men have yet to learn the nature of a Christian conscience, and the mighty forces of the love of Christ. Love is stronger, not weaker, than law. Its influences may be more subtle, but they are none the less potent; and a heart that knows anything of the secrets of Gethsemane and Calvary, can never shirk this question of the devotion of property to religious uses.

II. A second principle we insist on is that Christian giving should form a part of family life. Mr. Ross happily expounds this thought in a little tractate called "Uncle Ben's Bag." Uncle Ben stores a portion for the Lord, the amount depending on what he has received. "He does it at Sabbath family worship. 4s., the tenth of £100 a-year; 6s., of £150 a-year; 8s., of £200 a-year; 16s., the eighth of £300 a-year;

£1, the seventh of £360 a-year; is divided among the members of the family, and each one drops a part into a box carried round by the youngest, the depositor repeating a passage of Scripture, such as, 'Of Thine own, O Lord, have we given Thee;' 'God loveth a cheerful giver;' 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' Uncle Ben began to act thus because he found it in the church-organising epistle of the Apostle to the Gentiles. He has continued it because he never heard of a better plan. . . . He finds it cherish in his spiritual life a sweet sense of simplicity and sincerity before God; to make property valuable chiefly as an agency to glorify the Saviour, and win souls to Him; and to train children in like habits from their own private funds." These wise and pleasant words so well express what I mean, that I could not forbear making use of them. Surely the children should have their part and lot in the matter. It is very true that they are full of generous impulses, and that they readily respond to every appeal for help; but is it not also true that unless they are early taught to cherish and cultivate these kind dispositions, they will gradually lose them, and harden themselves into selfish disregard of other people's lives? Then let every part of family life be sanctified, and the children taught that not only in hymns and prayers do their parents seek to honour God; but in the wages that are earned, and the arrangements that are made for saving and spending, and the sacrifices that are now and then made for God. Surely such a house would be like the house of Obadedom, which was blessed for the sake of the Ark which rested there; or like that quiet house at Bethany, where the Son of man found somewhere to lay His head, and Mary, sitting at His feet, felt the tender impulse to pour on those feet the "alabaster box of ointment of spikenard, very costly."

III. The third principle is that Christian giving should be an act of public worship. We have often so completely lost sight of this, that all mention of money matters on Sundays has become distasteful, and a collection is resented as if it were a mercenary, worldly break in our Sabbath calm. I cannot think that Jesus would so regard gifts offered to Him. He still sits "over against the treasury;" and loving, believing souls may see Him there, and feel the grateful glow of hearts conscious of His approbation. Every Sabbath gift is offered to God; and though human channels may receive it and disperse it, yet the Divine hand weighs and measures it. We do not give with enough of gladness and gene-

rosity, and all because we have restricted acts of worship to the singing of hymns and the utterance of prayers. Not so thought David when he brought the Ark of God into Jerusalem, and, amid the sound of psalteries, and cymbals, and harps, and trumpets, sang these glad words: "Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name; bring an offering and come before Him; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." There was not then, and should not be now, any incongruity between the beauty of holy worship and the methodical presentation of gifts.

What plan will best bring our gifts into fit and comely relations to the other parts of our worship it is not easy to decide. It is certain we must more and more use the plan of offerings every Sabbath, whether put into boxes or collected in bags. The use of boxes in conspicuous places is a step in the right direction, but even that seems insufficient to embody all the meaning and illustrate all the beauty and joy of the act of giving. I remember with peculiar pleasure the collection of the offertory in a little country church I once casually visited. While the wardens and sidesmen were moving quietly here and there, the minister read with a distinct voice some of the sentences prescribed for the occasion in the Communion Service. The people gave with such words as these sounding in their ears: "Do ye not know that they who minister about holy things live of the sacrifice? Even so hath the Lord also ordained that they who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel. . . He that soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly. . . To do good, and to distribute, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. . . Blessed be the man that provideth for the sick and needy: the Lord shall deliver him in the time of trouble." Could not some such plan be adopted amongst us, and with the happiest results? But at any rate let us hold fast this truth, that our giving should have a recognised place in our worship, and not be thrust out of sight as something common or unclean.

We cannot look with complacency on the past. Our voluntarism has too often been cool and calculating. The constraining love of Christ has been baffled by our contrary dispositions. The surrender of our life has not always included the surrender of our living. But now let us "forget the things which are behind, and reach forward to those that are before." If we look back at all, let it not be with unavailing regrets, but to catch the holy inspirations breathing from Nazareth, and Bethany, and Gethsemane, and Golgotha. Then let

us look with serious eyes on our responsibilities, and earnestly regard the Church's need and the world's need, the entreaty of the poor and the cry of the ignorant. And so doing, we shall make our Christian voluntarism a reality, and our Churches will be "living epistles, known and read of all men."* F. R.

We have received the following remarks from our esteemed friend the Rev. John Ross, to which we gladly give insertion. We trust that the eminent services he has rendered the Christian Church will be long continued, and that they will yet receive their due meed of appreciation from the Church. [Ed.]

In your generous mention of me in April, you say in mistake, "he has been compelled to retire from active work."

A serious fall in December, and constant reduction of my nervous power in writing—for some months—with the growing weakness of my late beloved wife, have somewhat contracted my work lately.

Frequent losses, through non-delivery of posted letters, have long led me to think of moving from Hackney.

Now that I am a widower, with a household of only two daughters, I intend, D.V., to reside in Bedford, and to work from thence as requested, hoping that some one may soon be raised up to undertake this work instead of me.

JOHN ROSS, HACKNEY.

JOINING THE CHURCH.

JOINING the Church is one thing, but joining the Lord Jesus is quite another thing; and only those who have done the second have any clear right to do the first. The main cause of inconsistency and failure in the lives of too many professors of religion, is that they make a formal union with the Church without any heart union to Christ. They enlisted; they entered their names on the record, and "straightway are heard of no more." They have no tie to anything but an organised body of professed Christians, they did not knit their souls to the Saviour.

But am I not to join the Church? inquires some one who is indulging a hope of pardon and of the new birth. Yes, friend, join the

* See "Church Finance," by Rev. E. R. Conder, M.A., Leeds. Price 5s. per 100. Elliot Stock, Paternoster Row.

"Practical Guide for the Successful Working of the Weekly Offerings in a Christian Church," by Joseph Whitaker. Price 3d. Elliot Stock, Paternoster Row.

"The Best for the Lord," by Rev. John Ross. Elliot Stock, Paternoster Row.

Church, provided you have Jesus. If you unite yourself to nothing stronger than to a company of frail, fallible fellow-creatures, and expect them to tow you along by the power of their fellowship and prayers, you have but a poor chance of reaching the "desired haven." But genuine conversion unites your heart in clinging faith to the Friend of sinners. When you take the step of confessing this faith before men, you literally and truly join the Lord. You join your ignorance to His wisdom, your unworthiness to His merits, your frailty to His enduring might, and your poverty to His boundless wealth. The fair peasant girl who married the emperor of Russia became a sharer of his palace and his crown. When you wed your heart and hand to Jesus, you become a sharer in His kingdom and crown—a joint-heir with Christ! The joint-heir has a promise of the Father's love; of the indwelling of the Spirit; of the peace of God; of the pleasure for evermore; and of the society of all the just made perfect throughout eternity! "Where I am, there shall ye be also."

What a glorious thought this is! What a different conception it is from that of merely joining a Church of fellow-creatures. You really join Christ. Your heart joins His heart. Your life is knit by hidden links to His; because He lives, ye shall live also. Your destiny is bound to His; and ye shall be kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation. If you have a real faith, however feeble, confess it. If you have renounced sin and self, and come to Jesus, then join yourself to the Lord in a "perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten."

Many who have a secret faith in Christ hold back too long from a public confession. Waiting to become stronger, they only grow weaker. They are like the timid child who should learn to walk without getting on its feet.

For fear of a tumble, they lie still. On the whole, I would rather venture with Simon Peter out on the waves. For, though he began to sink, he also began to pray. He found that sinking times were praying times, and when we learn that, we know where to reinforce our own weakness by laying hold on infinite strength. But for a true convert to confess Christ is really not a walking on the water. He has under him the solid rock of God's promises.

How soon should I join the Church? The best answer we can give to this question is: Just as soon as your heart has joined the Saviour. Not one moment before that. When God gives conversion He demands confession. Make the most of your early love.

If your heart goes out to Jesus in loving trust, then stand up for Him, and with Him, joining your hands to His, take the blessed vow of spiritual wedlock. The whole drift of the Bible is in favour of prompt trust in Christ, prompt confession of Christ, and prompt obedience to His every call of duty. The teaching of the Word is, "Whatsoever He saith to you, do it." But the devil's version reads, "Whatsoever He saith to you, delay it."

Our pastoral observation has convinced us that people sometimes commit two great mistakes. The saddest mistake is committed by those who join a Church without joining Christ. This solemn mockery of a faith that is not really possessed, has cost many a one the most indescribable misery and mischief. May God in His mercy keep you from such a false step; it may be a fatal one.

The other mistake is that of delaying the acknowledgment and open confession of that blessed Saviour, who, when He gives us Himself, demands that we give ourselves to Him. Have you given your heart to Jesus? Then give Him your hand in a perpetual covenant, that shall never be forgotten.

T. L. CUYLER.

LIFE'S KEY - NOTE.

BLITHEsome souls are sweetly singing;
Hark! I hear e'en now the strain;
Evermore this word is ringing,
Love, if you'd be loved again.

Angels in the heavens praising,
Far away from earth and pain;
In chorus loud this note are raising,
Love, if you'd be loved again.

Childhood's lips of bliss are telling,
Bliss how free from earthly stain!
Up from each glad heart is swelling,
Love, if you'd be loved again.

Over earth and over heaven
Rings the sweet seraphic strain;
And with every note is given,
Love, if you'd be loved again.

EDWIN CLARKE.

THOUGHTS—GRAVE AND GAY.

FRANKLIN'S EPITAPH.—The body of Benjamin Franklin, printer (like the cover of an old book; its contents torn out, and stripped of its lettering and gilding), lies here, food for worms; yet the work itself shall not be lost, for it will (as he believed) appear once more, in a new and more beautiful edition, corrected and amended by the Author.

The instant your house clock finishes striking twelve, another takes it up a little farther west; then another, and yet another; so that the striking never stops. A great twelve o'clock sound-wave keeps thus running round the earth at the rate of a thousand miles an hour—it never being otherwise than exactly mid-day somewhere. Meanwhile, a few degrees eastwards, a similar eleven o'clock tide is hurrying steadily after it; and, correspondingly behind that, ten, then nine, and all the numbers down to one. In God's ear, therefore, it is always striking every hour, and must continue doing so, without interruption, to the end of the world. Time of day—morning, evening, noon, or night—is thus shown to be purely a creatural fiction of convenience. To the Creator it never can be one hour more than another, every minute being equally all minutes, and all minutes equally any minute to His omnipresence.—*Rev. H. Griffith.*

In conversation with a minister, Dr. Chalmers said, a sermon, properly considered, consists of two parts—exposition and application. The truth lies in the text, like a sword in its scabbard. The business of the minister is first to draw the sword, that is exposition; and next to cut and thrust with it on the right and on the left, and that is application.

"How dismal you look," said a bucket to his companion, as they were going to the well. "Ah!" replied the other, "I was reflecting on the uselessness of our being filled; for, let us go away ever so full, we always come back empty." "Dear me! how strange to look at it in this way!" said the bucket. "Now, I enjoy the thought that, however empty we come, we always go away full. Only look at it in that light, and you'll be as cheerful as I am."

Eagles fly alone; they are but sheep which always herd together. There is a long and wearisome step between admiration and imitation.

"I remember," says the celebrated John Wesley, "hearing my father say to my mother, 'How could you have the patience to tell that blockhead the same thing twenty times over?' 'Why,' said she, 'if I had only told him nineteen times, I should have lost all my labour.'"

A handful of good life is better than a bushel of learning.

A wise man need not blush for changing his purpose.

Little wealth, little care.

The shortest answer is—doing.

Without labour there is no arriving at rest, nor without fighting can the victory be gained.

CHURCH NEWS OF THE MONTH.

THE state of apparently utter disorganization into which what was so recently the Liberal party has fallen, suggests many interesting inquiries which may require time and prescience to answer. There can be no doubt that on vital questions there has been since 1870 extreme divergence on matters of principle and policy between Liberals and Liberals; and no sooner are the bonds of party necessity relaxed, than its fabric breaks in pieces and dissolves into its original elements.

Yet in this we see little to regret. Official Liberalism may be scandalised at finding itself out in the cold shade of opposition; Whig magnates may be outraged at discovering that they now represent only acres and moneybags; a good many people may be chagrined if they have to pay an income tax which the State exchequer does not want: but what of all that? Men who live for principles will care infinitely more for their principles than for the accidents of party; and will see no reason why these should not ripen as fast in this "winter" of Liberal "discontent" as under any other conditions. Since there is no definite policy in the mind even of the leaders of Liberalism; and since they have not condescended even to take counsel with those who form the advanced wing of the Liberal army, it is well that official aristocratic Whiggism should have time to find out their own weakness, and to ascertain on what real and equitable basis a new Liberal party can be formed.

"Those of us," says the "Nonconformist," "who are aiming at the ultimate realisation of great principles, can not only afford to wait,

but can fill up our waiting time with useful, and, indeed, indispensable work. Those who have hitherto shared, or lived in expectation of, the sweets of office, and have usually dealt towards their more forward associates but a scant measure of recognition, will now be compelled to ascertain the fallaciousness of those assumptions upon which they grounded their former proceedings. They were often warned, but they took no heed of warning. They were self-willed, and they have now to digest the fruit of their self-will."

Meanwhile, words of wisdom have been uttered by one who, despite a perhaps too eager temperament, may yet live to make his mark as a statesman on his age. "I believe," says Mr. Chamberlain, of Birmingham, "that we may employ the next few years with advantage in educating and organising the working classes throughout the country; and if we succeed in this we shall be able to do without the Whigs—they can join the Tories. What is to be the character of the new programme? I hold that the first condition of success is a more cordial, a more thorough union between the Nonconformists as a body and the working classes. You won't find the working classes have any sympathy with merely sectarian aims. They want to see some broad principle at stake, involving national interests, before they are deeply moved. It seems to me that it is our first duty to heal the breach—if breach there be—and bring about a better understanding between these two great sections of the Liberal party. So long as the Nonconformists confine themselves to such questions as the Burials Bill and the 25th Clause, so long I believe the working classes will see in this merely a squabble between sects, with which they have no concern. If, however, they would make their policy part of the great national programme; if they would cordially unite with the working classes in their claims for justice; if they would make disestablishment and disendowment one only of a series of great reforms which are to be sought by the alliance of parties, both of which should seek first their own objects, but should be pledged to continue the fight until the whole programme has been achieved; then I venture to say they would have the hearty co-operation of the bulk of the working classes." We will only add that if the Conservative government remain in office four or five years, the next Liberal government will of necessity consist mainly of those who have hitherto sat below the gangway.

The utter defiance of law which has recently characterised the High

Church clergy has led to the consideration of various plans for the vindication of the law. Accordingly it is understood that the bishops have been preparing a measure, "the object of which is to bring the clergy under some semblance, at least, of discipline, by the establishment of diocesan courts, which are to consist of an equal number of clerical and lay members; and are intended to arm the bishop of each diocese with sufficient authority to prohibit irregularities in the mode of conducting public worship, or in case of disobedience to inflict the penalty of sequestration."

On the importance of this subject the "Times" has spoken frankly. "We are told," it says, "that it has become impossible any longer to overlook the license which now prevails in the Church in regard to the mode of celebrating Divine worship; and that there is now 'an absolute disregard of the clearest decisions of the courts of law.' The decision of the highest court of appeal is 'unhesitatingly disobeyed.' Such a state of things is not merely inconsistent with the position of an establishment; it is inconsistent with the position of any organised Church, and the laity are beginning to apprehend that the only effect of the Church to which they belong being 'established,' is to place them absolutely at the mercy of the clergy."

But the opponents of the measure—the very parties who need its application—are not less outspoken. Dr. Pusey declares that it is "a gratuitous insult to the Church of England that the persons who, conjointly with the bishop, are to regulate her services, are to be elected, in part, by persons hostile to her. You condemn this objection as unreasonable, because it lies equally, you say, 'against the whole existing constitution of the Church.' Allow me to submit to you that the present relations of Parliament and the Church produce already serious complications, of a kind which no true Churchman, and I may add, no wise politician, would wish to exaggerate." The "Church Herald" condemns the proposal as "insidious, immoral, dishonest, and hopelessly impracticable;" and as "the most immoral and demoralizing that ever was made to the English people."

The pleasantries now interchanged among parties of the same Established Church are becoming interesting. The "Church Herald," for instance, recently said, "We recommend the Bishop of Exeter to exchange sees with some remote colonial prelate. The more cannibalistic the propensities of his flock, the more easily shall we be reconciled to the hard trial of parting with him."

Turning, however, to more congenial topics, we notice that Dean Stanley is, it is said, about to allow a memorial to be erected in the Abbey, in honour of the founders of Methodism, John and Charles Wesley.

The editor of the "Christian World" says that an Indian missionary with whom he is in frequent communication states that with a few pounds he could save scores, if not hundreds of lives, from famine. "We cannot," adds the editor, "refrain from saying, that should any of our readers wish to render a little help we shall be glad to transmit their bounty direct to his hands, well assured that it will be very wisely used. We shall gladly head the list ourselves with £10."

At a recent meeting, Sir Henry Havelock, M.P., said:—"He recalled with just pride the year 1829, when, religious matters being at a very low ebb in the army, his father, who then occupied no higher position than that of a subaltern of Her Majesty's 13th Light Infantry in India, was the first to make a decided stand for the rights of Dissenters in the army. The soldiers were then marched to the parade services of the Church of England without being consulted in the matter. His father objected to it, and by a memorial addressed direct to George the Fourth, who was then on the throne, he obtained for British soldiers those privileges which they had since enjoyed, and which he was sure were valued by none more highly than by the Wesleyan soldiers on whose behalf they had met that night."

The Jubilee Singers have already sent home from England about £7000, and they expect soon to make up the amount to £10,000.

Many friends of the late Mr. Binney will be interested in knowing that a stained-glass window is in course of preparation for the Weigh House Chapel, which was originally intended to commemorate his forty years' ministry there. Now, however, it must be regarded as a memorial window. The subject is a reproduction of Raphael's cartoon, "Paul Preaching at Athens."

Of the late Mr. Thomas Windeatt, who died at Tavistock, in his 75th year, a writer remarks: "From early youth a confirmed invalid, and therefore living in comparative seclusion, he was personally but little known to the generality of his townsmen, while by his benevolence and wide-reaching usefulness few names were more familiar to them. He furnished an edifying example of the power of spiritual truth to sustain the mind in brightness and hope under the pressure of that weariness, lassitude, and pain which were its life-long heritage."

The Rev. John Raven has recently completed forty-three years of no ordinary ministerial labour. "My mission," he remarks, "has been to revive and build up Churches and congregations; to set in order things that were wanting; to gather assemblies, build sanctuaries, and to enlarge them; to erect schoolrooms, and pay off debts; to provide pecuniary support for Christian institutions; to evangelize surrounding districts, and open village-stations for preaching the gospel and the instruction of young people. I do not," he adds, "purpose giving up preaching, but shall be at liberty, and happy to supply any vacant pulpit, or for any brother minister of any denomination who needs help."

Rev. J. B. Kaye, of Keyworth, has recently been presented with an address signed by the chairman of the Notts County Union, the secretary of the Notts Nonconformist Association, and others, expressive of their "admiration of the courage, the constancy, the sacrifice, and the success" with which he has "fought the battle of unsectarian education and of religious freedom in the village of Keyworth." The address was accompanied with a purse containing £37 2s.

The church at Aylesbury, rebuilt in the old English style, at a cost of £3000, has been re-opened for Divine worship.

At Castle Donington, Leicestershire, a chapel was erected in 1840 at a cost of £1400. Some years since it was disposed of, and has been used as a lecture hall; but it has been recently re-purchased for the denomination through the active efforts of the Rev. H. J. Bannister, of Melbourne, Derbyshire. It will now be a mission church, associated with Melbourne church. Castle Donington was the locality in which the late Countess of Huntingdon first commenced her evangelistic efforts.

The Rev. James Deighton, of Wickham Market, has accepted the pastorate of the Church at Lutterworth; Mr. F. Binns, of Rotherham, at St. James's-street, Nottingham; and the Rev. Edward Price, at Hounslow.

The Rev. J. K. de Verdon has been obliged to resign the pastorate of the Church at Hayland, Suffolk, after seven years' acceptable ministry, in consequence of the bursting of a blood-vessel.—The Rev. T. H. Browne, F.G.S., after upwards of sixteen years' pastoral labour, has been compelled by ill health to resign the oversight of the Crenon-street Congregational Church, Wycombe.—The Rev. Palmer Law has resigned the pastorate of the Church at South Hackney.

RUTH TREDEGAR;
OR, CLOUDS AND SUNSHINE.

BY MARY SHERWOOD.

CHAP. VI.—WILL SHE COME?

THE shop, as Master Dan had predicted, turned out, under Ruth's skilful management, a complete success. It supplied a want in Pengarva, and it supplied it well. The goods did not lie long on the shelves, when every housekeeper in the village was wanting something or other that she could have by running down to Mrs. Tredegar's for it, and Ruth was such an obliging saleswoman, that, as people said, it was a pleasure to go and buy for the sake of the pleasant way in which she served them. Perhaps there were some who went on this account more often than occasion warranted; at all events, there were several of the young fishermen at Pengarva who were uncommonly anxious to make themselves useful at home in the way of errands if anything happened to be wanted from the shop.

The little shop-bell was kept tinkling from morning to night, and Ruth had as much as she could manage, to attend to customers, to keep her books, and to give a hand in the house as well; for there was much to need her there. Mrs. Tredegar had brightened up a little under the excitement of the new undertaking, and the cheery stimulus which Master Dan's frequent visits had supplied; but when once that had worn off, and the warm, kindly presence was withdrawn that had seemed to her like an echo of the best music of her life, she drooped again, both inwardly and outwardly, and the settled sadness which, from the time of that terrible shock, had only in appearance lifted, deepened over her till she was but as a shadow in the house.

The neighbours shook their heads as they saw her coming slowly up the church aisle, in her deep mourning garments, and with a face from which all light and life seemed to have died out, and whispered to one another that the widow Tredegar was not long for this world.

Once a week, on the Sunday afternoons, when there was no shop to attend to, and when Jack and Bob, growing up now into sturdy, noisy urchins, were at the Sunday-school, and the house was quiet,

with only little Dolly at home with her mother, Ruth used to go to see old Mrs. Kenworthy, who lived at a small white house on the Bexmouth road. Master Dan had begged her one day to look in upon his mother now and then, and Ruth had promised willingly enough to do so. It was not always a very cheerful visit, for the old lady's chief enjoyment was in being read to sleep, and Ruth's voice, she declared, did that better than any one else's whom she knew. Betty, her maid, tried sometimes; but it was worse, Mrs. Kenworthy declared, than nothing, for she stumbled so at every long word, that she rather kept her awake than otherwise. But, sometimes, instead of begging Ruth to take down the volume of ancient sermons which was generally used as a soporific, she would draw forth a well-worn envelope from her pocket, and settling her tortoise-shell spectacles well on her nose, would proceed to read aloud her son's last letter. It was not often that one came, only when the *Ariadne* had touched at some port, whence a letter could be forwarded; but there was plenty in them when they did come, and Ruth listened to every word, as she had listened to the captain's adventures, when they all sat together by the cottage fire. And always at the end there were inquiries about the Tredegars, and a special message to Ruth herself, which Mrs. Kenworthy read through, word for word, in her slow cracked voice, not understanding half the meaning which Ruth found in it.

The year wore onward to its close, and winter began once more to soften into spring. The larks sang high up in the blue, and the primroses laughed out on the sunny banks, and the March winds began again to blow wildly of nights, as they had done a year ago. And as the time came round again, that all in Pengarva remembered so well, the widow Tredegar quietly passed away. They laid her in the churchyard on the hill, by the side of her husband and the boy for whose death her heart had broken, and the Sunday after the funeral the old rector preached a sermon on the text, "There shall be no more sea." Ruth listened, weeping. She was thinking of that March morning a year ago, when their troubles had begun, and of the waves lapping on the beach, the fury all spent out of them, while on the shore sat her mother, looking down on the dead face which lay upon her lap—thinking too of that sunny May day when she had stood upon the cliff, watching the white sails of the *Ariadne*, and praying God that such fate might not befall it as had befallen the *Bonny Bess*.

Ruth kept on the shop just as before. The management of the household affairs had long fallen entirely into her hands; and Jack and Bob and little Dolly were dependent upon her for everything they needed. A great charge, the neighbours said, for a young girl like her; and indeed, if it had not been for the silent hope within, Ruth would oftentimes have well-nigh sunk beneath the weight of care that fell upon her. For the little shop was not quite so prosperous this second year as it had been the first. A rival had sprung up, tempted perhaps by her success, and a large new window, filled with things placarded at tempting prices, drew away a good many of her customers. The placards did not say that the goods thus ticketed were adulterated, but the things looked well, and the Pengarva housewives, who were as fond of small economies as others of their class, went where they could buy the cheapest. After a time, doubtless they would find out their mistake; but in the mean time Ruth's business suffered for her honesty.

In other ways, too, her means were straitened, for her mother's long illness had caused their expenses to be much increased, and there was a doctor's bill to pay, which Ruth knew not how to meet. And there were bills for goods bought in, and lying now, alas, unsold upon the shelves; and poor Ruth felt the weight of anxiety and debt hanging like a millstone round her neck.

They were hard times for the orphans, that second winter after their father's death, and though Ruth toiled early and late, all that she did scarce availed to keep the wolf from the door. But she struggled on bravely, and kept her heart warm with hope. The spring was coming on again, and the time was fast nearing now when the *Ariadne* would be home.

March came and went, that saddest month of all the year, full of memories that could never die. And April smiled and wept itself away; and then May came laughing in, and the hedgerows gathered green, and the elm trees on the Bexmouth road pushed out their emerald buds, and the big apple tree in the cottage garden was all one flush of rosy bloom. It was in blossom when the *Ariadne* had sailed two years ago, and as the days slipped by through sun and shower, and Ruth watched the old tree arraying itself once more in its fair garniture of leaf and flower, a strange sense of rest and gladness nestled at her heart. For any day now, the news might come that the good ship had put into port; and Ruth knew full well that at the captain's coming the troubles and perplexities

that oppressed her life would take to themselves wings and flee away.

Any day he might come, any day now. Mrs. Kenworthy had read it out to her when the last letter from her son arrived. In May the *Ariadne* would return. That was written three months ago, and they were just starting then on their return voyage. Every morning, before the shop was opened, Ruth ran up to the cliff to look out, and if she saw a distant sail glancing in the sunshine her heart beat quick, as she wondered if that were the *Ariadne* bringing her lover home again.

But the apple blossoms had all fallen from the tree in the cottage garden, and no news had arrived of the captain's vessel. And June came, and the woods were thick with leafy life, and Ruth grew weary with waiting. Then July crept on, and her heart was sick with the long suspense, for there was no news still.

Poor old Mrs. Kenworthy was well-nigh broken-hearted. Ruth tried to comfort her, for hope was not quite dead even yet in her bosom. But when August was far spent, and instead of the May blossoms there were the shocks of corn standing in the harvest fields, then, indeed, it was hard to believe any longer that brighter days were yet to come. The Pengarva sailors shook their heads as they talked it over. Foundered at sea, most likely, they said; for she would never be overdue so long, unless mischief had befallen her.

Ruth heard them one day as she came down from the cliff. The sailors had grown used to see her there. Perhaps some among them more than half guessed the sorrowful secret that she carried with her, for the Pengarva folk had gossiped, as village people will, about Master Dan's frequent visits to the cottage, though none knew that it was he who had furnished the money to stock the shop.

"Foundered at sea!" Ruth murmured the words over to herself as she went back in the dewy August morning to begin her weary work again. For it was weary work now. There were the children to provide for, and the need for exertion kept her up, but all was dull and lightless toil — toil that was full of sorrow and anxiety as well; for strive as she would, debt was beginning to press harder and harder upon her.

She scarce knew how it was, but as she went on through the meadow that opened into the cottage garden, Master Dan's words came back to her as he had said them to her mother that night so long ago, when their troubles were beginning. "Look up," he had

said, when faith and hope were weak alike, and Ruth felt as if even now, in the depth of her own distress, he ever was speaking the words to her. And she could "look up," even now; for was there not One who was still her Friend, even though all earthly help should fail.

She lifted the latch of the wicket, and stood for a moment looking up into the blue sky above her; and through her very hopelessness, a sense of peacefulness fell like a benediction over her.

"Ruth!"

She started, as though a voice had called her from the dead. There, before her, at the garden gate, was Master Dan himself! Ruth stood still gazing at him, more in amaze than joy; for it seemed to her that it could be no other than a dream, a dream from which, by-and-by, she must awake.

It was no dream though.

"Ruth!" he said again. "Little Ruth! Will she come?"

He held out both his arms. Just for a moment she hesitated, and then, gazing in her wonder and gladness at his face, the love in his eyes called her to him, and she went. Master Dan's secret was told at last. Ruth's, too, for they settled more between them that August morning than I have space to tell.

The *Arialne* had foundered at sea, as the sailors had said. She had been run into by a steamer in the open sea, and her crew picked up by it and carried to a southern port, whence the captain had at last taken ship home, and arrived safe and sound when all had given him up for lost.

But then it was the last voyage, Master Dan said, that he meant to take. He had promised his old mother before he went that he would give up his seafaring life and stay at home for the rest of his days, and he was not likely to break his promise to her now that Ruth had given another to him.

Ruth gave up her shop. It had kept them all for more than two years now; and when the stock was sold there was enough to meet all their debts and have a little over. The twenty pounds remained unpaid. It did not much signify, however, for before another year came round, Ruth Tredegar was the captain's wife.



MR. BOOTH'S WORK.

THERE is a Christian Mission in the East of London conducted by the Rev. W. Booth. It is one of the most remarkable efforts of the time to touch that great centre of population with the light and power of the gospel.

This mission had its origin in a few services held in a tent in Whitechapel. No plan had been laid down for future operations. A week's evangelistic work only was intended, and "then the writer proposed to leave for a distant field of labour; but the blessing vouchsafed was so striking, and the harvest so promising, that the friends who gathered round urged him to make the East of London a permanent sphere of labour.

"The call seemed to come to us from God, and from the souls of hundreds of thousands of dying men and women, sunk in poverty and misery. And after much prayer, deliberation, and conference, we accepted it, and settled down in this desolate and destitute part of the vineyard. All that the Master has wrought through the Mission has grown out of this small beginning."

"The following pages* tell a fragment of the story, of as wonderful a work of its kind as this generation has seen. No doubt it is open to the same kind of criticism as the sculptor's chisel might award to the excavator's pick; but I do not hesitate to believe that for every essential Christian virtue—faith, zeal, self-denial, love, prayer, and the like,—numbers of the converts of this Mission will bear not unfavourable comparison with the choicest members of the most cultivated Churches."

The work is emphatically aggressive, and the means employed are of the most unconventional kind. Open-air preaching is kept up "all the year round." One of the workers at Bethnal Green thus describes their method of "missioning the streets:"—"As we go singing down the street, you may see the doors fly open, and the windows shoot up, and soon we have crowds of eyes and ears upon us from all sides. Every now and then we make a pause, sing a verse or two, and then give a short address, publishing the glorious gospel, and then we fall on our knees, and offer a few short earnest prayers; then up and on to another corner, and there to a fresh

* "How to reach the Masses with the Gospel." By William Booth. London: Morgan and Scott, 23, Warwick Lane, Paternoster Row, E.C.

crowd tell the old old story of the Cross. By this method we preach Christ to hundreds who would never go so many yards to church, chapel, or an open-air service. This seems to us to be one way of taking the gospel to the people."

The report goes on to say:—"True, this kind of work brings with it the result of which the Master spoke. It insures opposition and persecution; it rouses the hatred of men and devils. If you will stop quietly in your church, or chapel, or meeting-place, you may talk religion for ever, and beyond a little passing ridicule, the ungodly will let you alone. But *go out to them*, spread your gospel-feast by the highway side, proclaim the truth at the gates of the city, or in the crowded market-place, and they will gnash upon you with their teeth, and hate you as they hated Him who went about all the cities and villages of Palestine, preaching the gospel of the kingdom."

We cannot describe the kind of opposition thus suffered better than by giving a few extracts from the journals of some of the workers.

Here is one instance:—"Another evening we were at the same spot, and soon after we commenced the meeting, two men came up swearing at us, and sneeringly said that it was all very well to spout; but that real religion was to help the poor, and give them something to eat. One of them I saw was a regular loafer, so I told him, that when in the past he had been able to help himself, he had helped the publican, and now he had to suffer for it, and that if I did give him anything he would take it to the public-house. The other one here put in and said, 'All that's true, sir; but I have a wife and family all starving at home for bread, and if you could help me I should be so thankful.' I then turned round and sent a brother for a quartern loaf, and when he brought it, I told him to stand by me with it under his arm, while I went on with the meeting, telling how Jesus could save beggars and paupers, the tears meanwhile running down the poor man's face. I then gave the poor fellow the loaf; but taking him by the hand, I said, 'Let us all pray that God may bless the food to this poor man's body, and save his soul.' The people wept; a great congregation had gathered; and the man, very thankful, went home with the loaf. He washed himself, and came to the Mission Hall, where he knelt and cried to God to have mercy on his soul; and I trust his conversion will be the result."

Another worker writes:—"Sunday, 16th.—Missioned the streets

morning, afternoon, and evening. In the afternoon, while some of the converts were speaking, they were beset by a number of mockers, who got a whitewash brush full of whitening, and daubed it over their black coats; but the grace of God kept them from resenting this treatment in any other way than by falling on their knees and praying for the conversion of their persecutors. This so affected a young man who stood by laughing, at what he deemed a good joke, that it led him to think about his soul, saying to himself, 'Surely there must be something about this people more than common.' At night he came again to the open-air service, and followed us into the hall."

To show how discouragement and encouragement grow side by side, we extract the following touching incident:—"Going with my tracts one Sunday, a man to whom I offered one took it and then struck me in the face with it. The Lord helped me, and I did not feel angry, but said, 'The Lord bless you.' The next door at which I knocked was opened by a young woman who was weeping. I asked her what was the matter? She said her father was dying. I asked to see him, and she took me upstairs. The man was very bad, and looked very unhappy. I asked him if he was saved. He replied, 'No.' Then I said, 'Don't you believe Jesus can save you?' He answered, 'No, I'm too bad.' 'May I pray with you?' I asked. He said, 'It's no good; it's too late. I resisted the strivings of the Spirit, and now it's no good.' I said, 'Praise God, I know He can save you. We'll ask Him.' So I prayed, and then sang, 'The precious blood of Jesus.' 'That's good,' he said; 'sing it again.' And I sang it again, praying all the while; and the Lord did help me to speak for Him. 'Do you believe now that His blood washes you?' I asked. 'Oh! I do believe Jesus saves me. I can praise God now.'

"I went to see him nearly every day in the week; he was always happy in Jesus. I asked him, the last day I saw him, if he would like to see any one else. 'No,' he said; 'I have found Jesus, and He has pardoned all my sins, and no one can tell me anything better than that.' When I called on Sunday he was dead. His daughter said he was happy when he died, and said, 'Tell that young woman, I bless God she ever came to point me to Jesus.'"

The tract distributor, from whose lips this account was taken, has been carrying on her quiet, self-denying work, for more than a year, finding her way into the houses of some of the lowest and most

depraved. She lives with an ailing mother, and often knows what it is to go days without sufficient food; but however faint she may be, her work for God is never set aside.

These are but imperfect specimens of this earnest work. Some idea of its extent may be formed from the following general summary:—

There are now in the Mission twenty-five stations, with twenty-six halls, having sitting accommodation for about 10,000 persons, in connection with which there are over 1,100 persons in religious fellowship.

The different societies raise over £1,000 in the year.

About twenty persons devote their whole time to the Mission, assisted by over 200 preachers and exhorters, who devote all the time they can spare from their daily avocations to the promotion of the work of God, and who do this without any payment or reward.

“Eight years ago this Mission had no existence. It was commenced by one individual, a perfect stranger to the teeming thousands among whom he took his stand, not knowing who would lend a hand or give a farthing, and left almost at the outset without a building in which to hold a meeting. It has been carried on without any guarantees for expenditure, and without the patronage or recommendation of any society. It has had to encounter constant persecution, and has been *everywhere spoken against*. And yet it has prospered. Strangers have ministered to its funds, and the common people have flocked gladly around its banner. It has now twenty-five preaching stations, twenty persons devote their whole time to it, and the number of those who labour in it according to their opportunity is legion. It conducts over 10,000 services a year, out-doors and in; and thereby the gospel has been preached to hundreds of thousands, multitudes of whom would not otherwise have heard it. In connection with its services there have been, since its commencement, many thousands who have not only been anxious, but, by coming out, have confessed themselves penitent. In connection with its varied branches, hundreds who were formerly drunkards, thieves, liars, atheists, blasphemers, secularists, adulterers—in short, sinners of every grade, washed, clothed, and in their right minds, are now walking in the ways of truth and righteousness. Numbers, saved through its instrumentality, are in different parts of the kingdom or in distant lands, while many, thank God, are safely landed in heaven. It has ministered to the wants of the destitute

members of the Lord's family, and to the poor, whose only claim upon it was starvation and misery; having clothed the naked, fed the hungry, and stretched out a helping hand in various ways to those that were ready to perish, while it is still going forth to occupy other fields of usefulness. And for every sinner awakened—for every soul washed in the precious blood—for every despairing heart filled with peace—for every miserable home made happy—yea, for all the good that has been accomplished—we ascribe all the glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, unto God, for ever. Amen."

Such are the closing words of the pamphlet which has furnished us with these extracts. We glorify God for the grace given to William Booth; and we pray that all such missions may be blessed with Pentecostal blessings.

NOTINGS FROM A PASTOR'S NOTE-BOOK.*

No I.

MANY years ago, when the writer was but a little child, he went into his playroom to "hold forth" in his own way for the edification of his congregation of dolls, rocking-horse, &c. After arranging everything to his own satisfaction he mounted his pulpit, which, by the way, usually consisted of an old chair turned round, the back serving for the desk, and then began his discourse. Little did he think that there was near by an observing eye and an attentive ear, to whom the child-preacher spoke of "a bad heart" so truly that the unseen listener was led to a sense of sin and to the feet of Jesus.

Many years afterwards, when the child had grown into a young man, and was engaged as a Sunday-school teacher and local preacher, he was summoned to the bedside of an aged dying woman, when the following conversation took place.

"My dear John, do you remember on one occasion, when a very little child, preaching in your playroom about the bad heart?"

I replied, "I remember that it was one of my greatest pleasures,

* It is the purpose of the writer to furnish some striking instances of the grace of God in the conversion of sinners. Every fact given will be written in a plain unvarnished way; only real names of persons and places being withheld, for obvious reasons.

as a child, to play the minister, although I cannot call to mind any one time in particular; but what of that?"

"Oh," replied the dying woman, "I was a listener then, and as you, in your childish language, described the bad heart, I had such a sight of my own as I had never done before; and if ever I was brought to the feet of Jesus, it was then; and if I reach heaven, I shall have to bless God throughout eternity for that sermon."

Shortly afterwards she died. That aged friend was my own grandmother.

J. J. W.

INDECISION IS DECISION.*

MAN, with his ingenuity and skill, can do very much, but there are four things he cannot do. He cannot alter the laws of God. He cannot stay the flight of time. He cannot prolong his life one moment beyond "the appointed time." He cannot postpone the Judgment Day. God "hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness, by that Man whom He hath ordained, whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised him from the dead." "We must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." And according as we are then, so will our sentence be. Yea, even before that day comes, there is a day, probably much nearer to us, which will virtually decide our lot, even the day of death. We know not when that will be. The Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not. And "as death leaves us, so judgment will find us."

And when the "great white throne" is set, and the books are opened, if we have not decided for Christ, Christ will certainly decide against us! Whatever is left doubtful in the Word of God, that is clear. Our eternal all will depend on the relation in which we stand to the Lord Jesus. All who have opposed His sway, or who have failed to own Him as their Lord, He will sentence to "everlasting punishment." And if Christ decides against us, all is lost! From His sentence there can be no appeal. For He is Lord of all! His omniscience forbids that He should give an erring

* "Decide for Christ." By Clement Clemance, B.A., Nottingham. Price Threepence. Hodder and Stoughton.

judgment, His omnipotence forbids He should give an ineffective one. Our own consciences will acknowledge the justice of our doom, if we have not decided for Christ. The angels in heaven, who know Christ's worth and love, will acknowledge that His judgments are righteous,—and not in all creation shall there rise up one to dispute the justice of that awful word—Depart! And from that point of time no one can point to one passage of Scripture that opens up any further probation for those who have refused Christ here. Of what avail would it be if there were? If men can trifle with such a Christ as ours, with whom would they not trifle? Dear reader, expose not yourself to awful, unutterable risk, by neglecting Jesus Christ! Decide, decide for Him! Now is the accepted time. Now is the day of salvation. Seek ye the Lord while He may be found; call ye upon Him while He is near. The hour is coming when "every one of us shall give account of himself to God."

—◆—

LIVINGSTONE.

THE swarthy followers stood aloof,
 Unled—unfathered;
 He lay beneath that grassy roof,
 Fresh-gathered.

He bade them, as they passed the hut,
 To give no warning
 Of their still faithful presence, but
 "Good-morning."

To him, may be, through broken sleep
 And pains abated,
 These words were into senses deep
 Translated.

Dear dead salutes of wife and child,
 Old kirkyard greetings;
 Sunrises over hill-sides wild—
 Hearts-beatings.

Welcoming sounds of fresh-blown seas,
 Of homeward travel,
 Tangles of thought's last memories
 Unravel. . . .

'Neath England's fretted roof of fame—
 With flowers adorning
 An open grave—comes up the same
 " Good-morning."

Morning's o'er that weird continent
 Now slowly breaking—
 Europe her sullen self-restraint
 Forsaking.

Mornings of sympathy and trust
 For such as bore
 Their Master's spirit's sacred crust
 To England's shore.

HOUGHTON.

The following lines have been written on one of the last expressions of the late lamented traveller—" Build me a hut to die in. I am going home."

Build me a hut wherein to die,
 In quietness then let me lie,
 And to my Heavenly Father cry,
 I'm going home.

All my wanderings now are o'er,
 My bark is nearing that bright shore
 Where I shall rest for evermore ;
 I'm going home.

Say to my friends I die in peace ;
 My life on earth will shortly cease,
 But I shall gain a blest release ;
 I'm going home.

My toil is done ; England, pursue
 The work I undertook to do ;
 Set free the slave, he looks to you ;
 I'm going home.

Send light and truth to chase away
 The darkness, bringing in the day,
 That Afric's sons may see its ray ;
 I'm going home.

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, MATLOCK BANK.

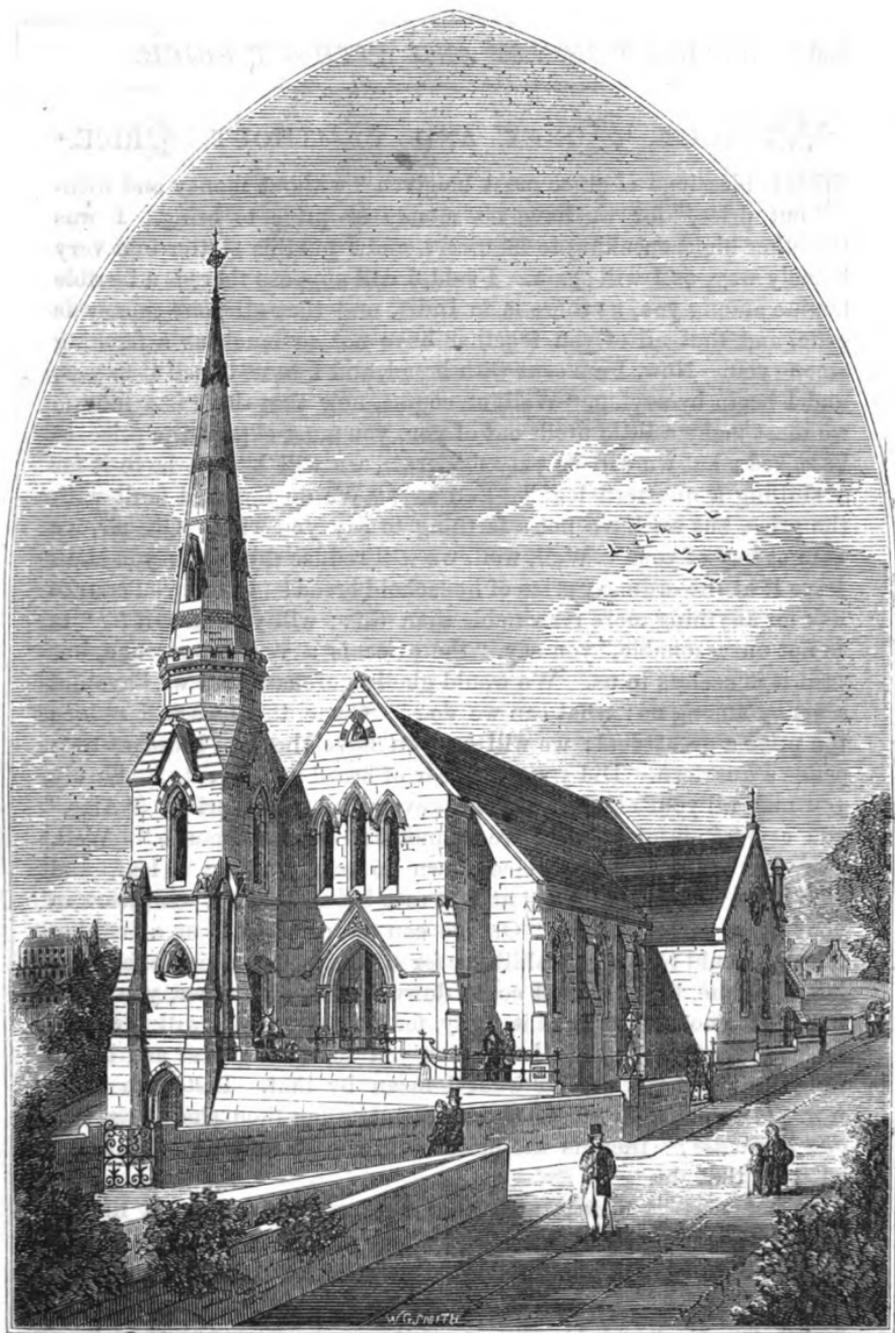
IN the existence of the Church at Matlock Bank we have an instance of the wonderful power for good which it is possible for one Christian family to exert. In 1842, a Mrs. Stevens settled at Matlock with her family. At that time there was no Congregational worship in the place, and it is feared little preaching of the gospel. Mrs. Stevens at once set apart a large room in her own house for public worship, and the holding of meetings for prayer. A few gathered, and were brought to Christ, joining themselves to the Church at Matlock Bath. In due time a sufficient number of Christian people, connected with the Independent denomination, resided about the Green, as the heart of the village is called, to form a Church. A Church was formed, and a chapel built, considered then a wonderful structure. Under the pastorate of the Rev. J. Whewell and the Rev. S. Dyall, both greatly blessed of God in their work, the Church increased and grew in Christian life, until it was able to stand alone. Towards the close of Mr. Dyall's ministry the village had so increased, and the attendance upon the worship, by the large concourse of visitors in the neighbourhood at the various hydropathic establishments, that it was again necessary for the Church to arise and build.

In 1865 the Rev. S. Dyall resigned, through growing infirmity, and in that year the foundation of the new, commodious, and splendid Church seen in the engraving, was laid by James Sidebottom, Esq., of Manchester. Along with the site for the church, ground for a manse was given by Mr. Thomas Stevens, the son of the Mrs. Stevens with whom the work began.

The chapel, which cost over £3,000, has been for some time free from debt.

—◆—

MAKE peace, if you will, with Popery; receive it into your senate; shrine it in your churches; plant it in your hearts. But be ye certain, as certain that there is a heaven above you and a God over you, that the Popery thus honoured and embraced is the very Popery that was loathed and degraded by the holiest of your fathers; and the same in haughtiness, the same in intolerance, which lorded it over kings, assumed the prerogative of Deity, crushed human liberty, and slew the saints of God.—*Rev. Canon Melvill.*



MATLOCK BANK CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

WITHOUT MONEY AND WITHOUT PRICE.*

THE blessings of grace must be given "without money and without price," for we have no money or price to bring. I was the other night speaking to inquirers, and I put this matter in a very homely way, as I will again. I said, I will suppose there is a terrible famine among you, as there is in India, and that all your money is gone, and that all of you together have not so much as a farthing among you. Now, I am sent with bread, and I want to sell it to you, and I begin by saying, "Well, of course, now that there is a famine we must make a little profit out of you, you must expect the price to be raised; but we will be very moderate, we will let you have it for a shilling a quarter loaf." You say, "We do not find fault with the price, but we have not a farthing to pay you with. Oh, sir, we cannot buy of you." Well, well, we will reduce the price; you shall have it at the ordinary price of household bread! Come, you cannot ask for anything more reasonable than this; will you have it? "It is not unreasonable," you say, "the price is a very proper one, but still it is useless to us. We would gladly purchase, but we have not a penny among us; what can we do?" Come, then, we will reduce the price a great deal; we will let you have the best bread at twopence a quarter. Did you ever hear of bread at that rate? Surely you may fill your children's mouths every day at this price. "Alas," you cry, "it is of no use; we cannot find even twopence." Well, now, we will bring the price down to one farthing a loaf, and who has ever heard of bread at that rate before? Still, with tears in your eyes, you cry to me, "Oh, we can no more get it at a farthing than we could buy it at a shilling, for we have not a single farthing left." Come, then, I must come down to you altogether, you shall have it for nothing. Take it, I say, for nothing, and I will give you a piece into the bargain; I will give you something over and above weight. I see you wonder what I mean by that. Listen to these words: "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house;" there is the piece over and above what you asked or even thought.

Is not that good reasoning that God must give eternal life for nothing, because you have nothing which you could offer as a price? If you are to have eternal life, no terms but those of grace will meet

* From a recent sermon by C. H. Spurgeon, for which a wide circulation is especially desired. Price 1d. Published by Passmore and Alabaster.

your case. Think, dear friends, when the dying thief was hanging at the side of Christ—suppose the Lord Jesus Christ had made a rule that a man should live a holy life for a week, and then should have the blessing. Why, the thief must have died unblest! Suppose that He had said to all men, it is absolutely essential that you join a church and be baptised, for else I cannot save you, then poor bedridden sinners must perish hopelessly. A Gospel all for nothing suited the dying thief. "I admit it," says somebody. Ah, my friend, then surely you cannot be in a worse condition.

Some years ago I had a very high compliment paid me by a gentleman who intended an insult. He ridiculed my preaching, and remarked that it would be eminently suited to the lowest class of negroes. This I accepted as an honourable admission, for he who could reach and bless the black man will not preach in vain to white people. I have heard of a preacher of whom his detractors said that he might do very well to preach to old women. Ah, then, he will do for anybody. I suppose he would suit old women because they are on the borders of the grave, and that is where we all are, for we are all much nearer to the grave than we imagine. Free salvation suits the vilest of the vile, and it is equally suitable for the most moral. If it is all for nothing none can be so poor as to be excluded from hope; if it is to be had "without money and without price" no soul need be without it. Surely the price is brought low enough. The difficulty is that the price is too low for human pride, sinners will not come down to it. Whereas every other salesman finds that he cannot get his customers *up* to his price, my difficulty is that I cannot get my customers *down* to mine; they will still higgie and haggle to do something, be something, or promise something, whereas here are the terms, and the only terms upon which Gospel grace is to be had, "without money and without price." Ye shall have it freely, but God will have none of your bargaining. Take mercy, take it just as you are, you are welcome to it; but if you tarry till you are better your very betterness will make you worse; if you wait until you are fit your fancied fitness will be your unfitness. Your hunger is your fitness for food, your nakedness is your fitness for clothing, your poverty is your fitness for the riches of mercy, your sin, your leathsomeness, your hardness of heart and obduracy do but make you fit objects for the wondrous grace, and for the amazing transformation which Divine power can work in men.

NEED OF SPIRITUAL LIFE.

AT the recent meeting of the Congregational Union of Yorkshire, the Rev. Robert Balgarnie referred to the necessity of more spiritual life in our Churches.

What, he said, are all the political or educational questions of the day compared with this? Not only the prosperity, but the very existence of the Churches depends upon it. On some of our Churches, no doubt, showers of blessing have already fallen, by which believers have been quickened, and converts to Christ been greatly multiplied. Yet, taking a more general view, are we not sadly conscious of a lack of spiritual power in our work? Even when we have laboured hard in our studies, and preached with fervour from our pulpits, does not the message seem to fall like moonshine on a lake? Are not instances of conversion fewer than they used to be; yea, have not some of us almost ceased to expect immediate conversion at all? How few come as inquirers after salvation! How many of our youth abandon the Church of our fathers to become connected with others of a more imposing ritual! How few young men of talent and piety come forward to fill the places of those whom age has disabled or death has removed! What a feeble hold they have on the masses around them, who are living without Christ! Lifting up the Cross, how few look that they may live. And when we see in all directions the sensuous methods adopted to draw people to the sanctuary, does it not seem as if the Gospel had lost its power, and the Gospel of Christ were of none effect? Some of us may have been instrumental in building costly churches, or in enlarging and beautifying churches; but have we not to confess that it is easier to build the material temple than the spiritual—easier to raise money than to save souls?

True, we are not bound to the State like other brethren who pine for liberty, and one day will gain it. True, we were never in bondage to any man, for we are free-born—but is there not another bondage from which we need deliverance—even bondage to the world? Has not the spirit of the world crept into our Churches, chilled our love, deadened our piety, and paralysed our efforts? Have we not for the sake of Christ, of truth, of the national weal, long desired the severance of the Church of England from the State; but I doubt whether this grand consummation can ever be reached till

the Church of Christ in England is first severed from the world. Have we not sought the former apart from the latter? and hence our failure.

If we would correctly estimate the spiritual life of our Churches, let us look at the prayer-meetings—the very lungs of the Church; do these not, in many instances, indicate declining health? All this is especially cause for anxiety at the present time, when it seems as if a great moral conflict were impending; not between sect and sect, but between truth and error, between formalism and evangelism, between the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of the devil. Surely our right place now is in the forefront of the army of the living God; but devoid of spiritual power, where are we and what can we accomplish?

If we ask how this loss of spiritual power is to be accounted for, I remark, that to ascertain the causes is surely the first step towards the remedy. God is not the cause, nor Christ, nor Satan, nor the civil Government, nor an unsound theology. Are we not rather forced back upon ourselves for the answer? I dare not affirm that spiritual declension is entirely owing to ourselves as ministers, but is it not so partly? Mr. Balgarnie then proceeded to urge that their personal holiness should be more pronounced. Had they not been living too much in their official acts, to the neglect sometimes of their own private godliness and spiritual life? Might not the multiplicity of their official duties have also tended to impoverish them in this respect? Many extraneous questions and causes arose to divide their sympathy, and divert their attention from their main business. It must needs be that controversies should arise, but might not the laymen find in these a legitimate sphere for their talents? Loss of spiritual power was the loss of capital in their great business, and might be the first step towards spiritual bankruptcy.

Then, might not their study of God's Word have been too professional and mechanical? had not they been remiss in their private devotions? had not long familiarity with the work weakened in some of them their sense of its solemn responsibility? Be the causes and symptoms of spiritual decline what they might, was it not their duty at once to admit the fact and abase themselves in the dust before God on account of their shortcomings? Their only hope of a revived Church was a revived ministry. Let them therefore, with more fervent love for Christ, stir up the life within them; they were not dead but ill; not lifeless but torpid; not destroyed but cast down.

The speaker then described the change which would follow a deeper and more fervent spiritual life—such a blessed change as had recently come over the Churches in Scotland. Why not here as well as there? He believed there was a blessing for us, too, God having awakened in us an expectation which He would not be slow to fulfil if we sought it in earnest and believing prayer.

THE WEEK-NIGHT SERVICE.

“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is.”—
Hebrews x. 25.

“What various hindrances
we meet
In coming to the mercy-
seat.”

“I really cannot go; I have just returned from business, very tired, and am not disposed to turn out again.”

“I do not like to go in the rain for fear of taking cold. I think it is a pity that prayer-meetings are held in wet weather, when so few are likely to be there.”

“I ought not to go; my little ones must be looked after. It is quite right that those who have no families should attend these meetings.”

“I cannot go; a friend has just come in to see me, and it would not be kind to leave him.”

“I am afraid if I go my minister will ask me to pray, and I am too nervous to do so in public.”

“Yet who, that knows the worth of prayer,
But wishes to be often there?”

“I will *gladly* go; often, when wearied in body, I have been refreshed in spirit when meeting with God’s people. I shall work all the better to-morrow after an hour spent in prayer and praise this evening.”

“I must not stay at home for such a *trifle* as a few drops of rain. If the congregation is likely to be small, that is the very reason why I should be present.”

“I can manage to go to-night, for my husband has promised to take care of the children for a short time, and he shall have his turn out next week (all well).”

“There is no difficulty about the matter. I will ask my friend to go with me. I am sure he will not regret it, and who knows but that he may receive a blessing as well as *myself*.”

“My being nervous shall not prevent my going to the meeting. I will try and forget *self* if asked to pray, and think it a privilege to lead others to the throne of grace. If my prayers are not very special, I trust they come from the heart, which is far more important.”

"I need not go; no doubt there will be many people present, and I shall not be missed."

"I would go if I were sure of my pastor's being present, for when he does not conduct these meetings, I think they are dull."

"I would go any day to hear a *Sunday's sermon*, but I do not care much for week-night services."

"It is my duty to go; others cannot worship God for me; my place can be filled by no one but *myself*; and if all were to stay at home, because they thought the congregation would be sufficiently large without them, the benches would be empty."

"I *must* go; my pastor is never absent unless he cannot possibly help it, and if he is not present, *Jesus* will be there, and 'The disciple' must 'not' be placed 'above his Master.'"

"Our minister is anxious that his people should uphold his hands by *earnest, united* prayer, and how can we hope to profit by his sermons unless we meet to ask the Divine blessing upon them? Those who think that these meetings are of no consequence, never know what they miss by staying at home."

"The same day at evening, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, came Jesus, and stood in the midst, and saith to them, 'Peace be unto you.' *But Thomas was not with them when Jesus came.*"

R. C.

"THE ROOT OF ALL EVIL."

NOW see what a gross blunder the miser commits, and observe how cleverly Nature punishes him through the agency of his own vice. There is just one thing he dares not do with his money. *He dares not spend it!* The sole condition which gives it its value is precisely the condition with which he cannot, dares not, comply.

What should we say if a man were to expend his fortune in building a mansion he never intended to inhabit, in collecting carriages he would never employ, in procuring dainties he would never taste, in accumulating coats and trousers he would never attempt to wear? Without hesitation we should pronounce him a fit and proper person for a lunatic asylum, and when there the other patients might protest against him as a disgrace to the whole order of madmen.

But this is substantially the part which every miser plays. For the money which he keeps locked up in his coffers substitute some of its equivalents, and the cases are precisely the same. His conduct is just as brainless, and his hoards are just as useless, as if

you found that he had a hundred clocks on his premises, not one of which would go, or five hundred hats, not one of which would fit his head, or a thousand boots and shoes, not one of which he could draw on to his feet. Imagine his cellars to be filled with the costliest wines, but bricked up so that no one could reach them; let his stables be crowded with steeds which no one is permitted to mount; let his pantries be stocked with provisions which are never to be consumed; let him order fresh coals every day and yet allow no fire to be lighted from January to December,—in short, let him amass whatever species of commodity he may like, stipulating with himself that he shall not use it at all, and we have the philosophy of avarice practically exemplified and practically explained.

Let us grant, indeed, that the man has the pleasures of possession. But possession of what? If a person is enchanted with a piece of glass which he believes to be a priceless diamond, he is an object of pity, but certainly not of envy. If the miser gloats over a treasure which in his hands is substantially as unavailing as if it consisted of so much sawdust, his raptures only render his folly the more marked and preposterous. Every one can understand why a man may be in love with money, if it enables him to live in a castle instead of a cottage; to sleep on a bed of down instead of a pallet of straw; to dine on venison and turtle instead of a herring and a roll; to drink port and champagne in place of small beer or smaller water. These are unquestionably low applications of its power, but they give a prodigious value to wealth, not to mention the nobler purposes to which it may be put. But it is a singular feature in the vice of avarice that it not only excludes a person from all the higher enjoyments which opulence commands, but cuts him off from the coarsest and commonest indulgences of life. He may "groan under gold, yet weep for want of bread." Practically speaking, the labourer is richer on half-a-sovereign a week, than the miser with a million in the funds.—*J. G. Hargreaves.*

THOUGHTS—GRAVE AND GAY.

THERE are two reasons why some people don't mind their own business. One is that they haven't any business, and the other is they haven't any mind.

The Bishop of Peterborough mentions the case of a clergyman, who

offered to marry a patron's plain and unamiable sister on condition of receiving a living in reward.

The consumption of sugar annually increases at such a rate that it will soon, according to trustworthy authority, reach one million tons per annum.

A Parisian defines a shout to be "an unpleasant noise, produced by overstraining the throat, for which great singers are well paid, and small children well punished.

"Eh, sir," said a minister's man one Sabbath morning to the parish minister, while assisting him on with his gown, "dō you see what a lot o' folk are leaving the kirk to-day, and gaun ower the hill to the meeting-house?" "Very true, John," replied the minister, jocosely; "but, John, ye diinna see ony o' the stipend gaun ower after them."

The *Spectator* confesses that it is "the blindest possible policy to attempt to disguise from ourselves the fact that the National Church of England is a more or less accidental agglomerate of a good many different Churches...which no possible jugglery will make a dogmatic unity."

Before a man gives way to excessive grief about the fortunes of his family being lost with his own, he should think whether he really knows wherein lies the welfare of others.

Desire is the soul of prayer.

CHURCH NEWS OF THE MONTH.

A PAROCHIAL clergyman is reported to have said that he could set his back against the church wall, and hold the bishop at arm's length with one hand, and his parishioners at arm's length with the other.

Startling as the statement is, it is even short of the truth: for a clergyman can not only set his bishop and his parishioners at defiance, but the law of the land also. The very loftiest and the very lowliest in England are amenable to justice, with the exception of the clergyman. He can and does at his discretion trample its plainest decisions under foot.

In saying this we are only repeating the recent extraordinary confession of the highest authorities in the Church; and facts of the greatest notoriety attest its accuracy. The Primate complains that anti-Protestant innovations are made in all directions with impunity; and the

Archbishop of York describes the wide-spread and gloomy discontent that is justly felt by the laity at the Popish tendencies of many of the clergy. "It is not," says a writer, "merely a question of ecclesiastical millinery; or the foppery and frippery of young clergymen who must play at priestcraft, and dress themselves in silks and satins to make a show; it is a question of introducing all the practices of Roman Catholic worship, and the doctrines those practices symbolise and teach, into our Protestant services."

To find a remedy for these iniquities, the Archbishop has brought in a bill, the practical design of which is to invest the bishops with a power of discipline they never have had before. To entrust the bishops with such powers is, according to the Dean of Westminster, "so inevitable an inference from accepting Episcopacy as a desirable form of Church government, that he would not further argue" the matter. It has, however, always been the practice of the English law for legal tribunals of any kind to consist of laymen. What is needed at the present moment is to enable the laity to protect themselves against the innovations of the clergy, and so long as the Church covets the control of the State, such control could best be exercised by the laity.

Of course to any change that can bring certain of the clergy under the dominion of common sense they are averse. They much prefer to be a law unto themselves. Thus Archdeacon Denison says:—"If this bill, or any bill like it, become law, we are not only on the edge of a revolution, but we are in a revolution. Pending the final issue of that revolution, not long to be delayed, the bill would do more to create differences of practice than anything that can well be conceived. Its probable effect would be that in no contiguous dioceses would there prevail the same or a similar rule of practice. It would make many victims, for there will be many who would rather be deprived of a benefice than appear before the tribunal proposed to be established under the bill. Upon the whole, if it is wished to break up Church and State, there is no readier or more effectual way than that proposed under the bill."

A guarantee fund of £7,200 has been promised to the Bishop of Durham to enable him to meet the expenses incurred in checking Ritualistic practices in that diocese.

The purchase system in the Church has become so gross a scandal that at last the Bishop of Lincoln has decided to brave the penalties for refusing to institute in a simoniacal case, and no less than three

suits are proceeding against him for refusing to connive at similar transactions. The Bishop of Peterborough proposes that the subject should be referred to a committee of the House of Lords.

The Rev. John Kennedy, in an able letter to a contemporary, proposes that action should be taken by the Nonconformist bodies of England, with a view to protest against the Romanising tendencies of the Establishment. After discussing various methods of action, and showing that whatever ground is occupied must be ground common to all, he says: "Presbyterians and Wesleyans—not all indeed, but many—could not join us in asserting the unlawfulness and inexpediency of all Church Establishments. Nor could we join them in an assertion of the abstract lawfulness and expediency of such institutions. But are we not agreed in this—that better no Establishment than one that is Popish or Romanist? Suppose the present Establishment were Roman Catholic, would we hesitate to combine in asking the Legislature to disestablish it? Now, though it is not nominally Roman Catholic, is it not confessedly endangering the Protestantism of the land? Is it not itself saturated with essentially Romish doctrine? And is not the hope of Rome touching the conversion of England based far more on the labours of Anglo-Catholics than of Roman Catholics? In these circumstances is not the question which has to be answered really and essentially this,—which is better, a Popish Establishment or none at all?—or, an Establishment which, though not Popish in name, is in doctrine and in ritual, and is effecting a rapid transition from Protestantism to Popery, or no Establishment at all? . . .

"If the question was submitted to the Wesleyan body—a Protestant Establishment or none at all?—all differences would be merged, and with one voice they would say, 'None at all, if it is not Protestant.' Now, my contention is, that this is substantially the question submitted to-day to the Nonconformists of England. And on this ground I claim the co-operation of Presbyterians and Wesleyans in asking for the disestablishment of the Church of England—not on 'Liberation Society' grounds, as they are called—but on grounds which may be taken in common by those who believe in the principles of the Liberation Society and those who do not. A petition signed by the universal ministry of the Nonconformist Churches, or by any large portion of them—including those who have hitherto been regarded as the friends, not the enemies of Establishments—would show to the Legislature that the patience of the country is exhausted,

and that the wealth and prestige of a national institution must no longer be prostituted to the purposes of a scarcely disguised Romanism."

We think the proposal admirable, and hope to hear that further measures are about to be taken. We could even suggest, that instead of such petitions emanating from the "universal ministry" of Non-conformist bodies, the whole body of the laity should join the action taken.

The recent Triennial Conference of the Liberation Society has, for numbers, enthusiasm, and enterprise, exceeded the most sanguine expectations of its friends. It was resolved to adopt more energetic measures than heretofore for the accomplishment of the great national purposes to which the Society is devoted. The truth on these subjects, said Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, must be made first to "leaven the masses of the people, and by-and-by it will reach the scum of the population floating at the top." Mr. A. Illingworth expressed the belief that if the friends of the Society devoted themselves thoroughly to the subject "they could make it the policy of the Liberal party within seven years." The only basis which true Liberals ought now to accept for the reconstruction of a Liberal party is that of "complete religious equality." It was resolved to raise a special fund of £100,000; and the families of Sir Titus Salt, Mr. Isaac Holden, and Mr. Illingworth each promised £5,000 by way of a beginning. It was mentioned that between eighty and ninety "disestablishment members" had been returned to the new Parliament.

The Bishop of Winchester has received the following flagellation in a leading article of the "West Surrey Times":—"His lordship said that all the Christianity of New Zealand and the South Sea Islands was due to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel and the Church Missionary Society. He must have rated the intelligence of a Guildford audience very low to suppose that they were ignorant of the real facts. A generation before Bishop Patteson fell a victim to a savage Polynesian tribe, John Williams was martyred at Erromanga. For more than half a century the London Missionary Society has laboured and civilised, as well as Christianised, those indescribably beautiful but heathen islands of the Southern Seas. Fiji has been ministered to almost exclusively by the Wesleyans. The American Board of Missions made the Sandwich Islands their own. The Church of England was late in the

field in all this district, and when it arrived entered into other people's labours, as now it is about to do at Madagascar." We are also informed that the new Bishop of Madagascar recently stated at a meeting in Salisbury, held under the presidency of the bishop, that the Gospel was never taken to Madagascar till the missionaries of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel went thither.

The new Government has shown its gratitude to the licensed victuallers by the inauguration of new facilities for general drunkenness. The Home Secretary professed to be sorry that 182,000 persons were proceeded against in 1873 for drunkenness in England alone; regrets that John Bull drank up last year a little sea of beer, brewed from sixty-three millions of bushels of malt; that he poured down his capacious throat an additional fiery river of forty millions of gallons of spirits, and a thinner but still potent stream of eighteen millions of gallons of wine; and then he provides that all the London publicans shall sell drink for half-an-hour longer after midnight, chiefly because the theatrical people are then dry and hungry; that the larger towns, above 10,000 in population, shall do so till half-past eleven; and that the public-houses in all the country districts need not close until eleven at night.

The Corporation of Gravesend, which has been in existence three hundred years, recently went in state, for the first time in its history, to a Nonconformist place of worship, viz., to the new Congregational Church at Milton, in order to express interest in the extension of religious influences in the borough, and as a mark of public regard to the pastor, the Rev. W. Guest, and his people.

The Roman Catholic Bishop Hedley, while preaching in Monmouth, lately described the press as "the most powerful engine in the whole armoury of the devil."

Rev. R. W. Dale has recently expressed his firm belief that the revival which God's people are everywhere looking for and anticipating, will take place amongst the children of our Churches.

Professor Henry Rogers's Lecture on "The Superhuman Origin of the Bible, Inferred from Itself," has been published, and will excite deep interest. It bears the *imprimatur* of the Congregational Union, and is the first of a new series of lectures "established with a view to the promotion of Biblical science, and theological and ecclesiastical literature."

The foundation-stone of the new College in Rotherham has been laid by James Yates, Esq. The estimated cost of the building is £20,000, of which £12,000 have been subscribed. Rev. Dr. Mellor delivered an interesting address on the occasion, and Revs. Dr. Stoughton, Dr. Raleigh, J. C. Harrison, James Parsons, P. C. Barker and other ministers took part. Mr. John Crossley, of Halifax, has given £1,500; Mr. Yates and Mr. Allott, £1,000 each; and Mr. G. Hadfield, late member for Sheffield, £500 to the building fund.

The City Temple, which is being built for the congregation under the pastoral care of the Rev. Joseph Parker, D.D., on the Holborn Viaduct, is, as we write, rapidly approaching completion. It will seat 2,500 persons.

The new church at Holywell-green, built at the sole charge of Messrs. James, Samuel, and Thomas Shaw, of Brookroyd Mills, at a cost of £10,000, has been opened. The church is in the early decorated style, and stands on a terrace with the gable end of the nave fronting the road, having on one side a beautifully proportioned tower in four stages, from which springs an elegant spire surmounted by a vane. All the windows are filled with painted glass, and the pulpit, which is of Caen stone, is described as a gem of artistic skill.

The chapel at Brigg, Lincolnshire, which has been closed six months for alterations, involving an outlay of about £600, has been reopened.

A meeting was held at Westbroughton, on Monday, to celebrate the extinction of the debt on the school-rooms erected about five years ago at a cost of £1,800.—The Rev. Henry Lee, late of Thornton-leath, Croydon, has recently accepted the unanimous invitation of the Church at Roydon, Essex.—Rev. John Wilde, for ten years the pastor of the Church at Burley-in-Wharfedale, near Leeds, has accepted the pastorate of the Church at Stainland, near Halifax.—Mr. J. E. Gibberd, late of New College, has commenced his labours as pastor of Zion Chapel, Dover.

Mr. Alfred Meon, of the Western College, has become the pastor of the Church at Ottery St. Mary; Mr. Dorrall Lee, of Airedale College, at Peasley Cross, St. Helen's; Rev. J. Peill, of Kendal, at Dukinfield; and Mr. Wm. Karfoot, of the Lancashire Independent College, at Church, near Accrington.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES.

BY THE REV. FREDERICK ROBINSON.

FIVE summers ago a Christian gentleman, Mr. Josiah Spiers, was walking by the bright waters of Llandudno Bay. There were great numbers of happy children, in picturesque groups, playing and shouting, and the thought occurred to Mr. Spiers that he might gather some of these children round him, and speak to them of the Saviour. So he began to play with one group, and then sang a hymn, and this attracted other children, until he was surrounded by a large crowd. He then wrote deeply in the sand a Scripture text, and when the little ones had become excited and pleased with the novelty, he briefly addressed them. He repeated the experiment, and found it so successful, that he resolved to give himself entirely to work amongst children. So he joined himself to the "Children's Special Service Mission," which had just then been formed in London, and had partly grown out of the labours of the Rev. E. Payson Hammond. Mr. Spiers is now called "the Children's Evangelist," and all the summer through he is to be found on the sands of our watering-places, surrounded by boys and girls, who hang on his words while he speaks of the Saviour's love for children. In the winter he conducts services in London and large provincial towns.

This Children's Mission is a sign of the times. For it is not difficult to discern that the Christian Church was never more keenly alive than now to the duties it owes to children; and although in no age of the Church has our Lord's injunction, "Feed my lambs," been quite forgotten, yet in these days the command moves us with a wider range, if not with a mightier power than ever. Among our own Churches many circumstances have combined to effect this result. The discussions of a few years ago on the terms of communion; the more recent debates on religious instruction evoked by the Elementary Education Act; the letters and labours of Mr. Mander, of Wolverhampton, concerning "The Relation of Children to the Church;" and last, and because it is so unmistakably practical and effective, the "Children's Special Service Mission;" all these have contributed to surround our work among children with a vivid and beautiful interest, and to reveal in clearer light the duties we owe them.

The work of our Sunday-schools has brought incalculable benefit to our Churches, and not more to the scholars than to the teachers. For while the scholars were receiving instruction, more or less complete, in Bible truth, the teachers were receiving a mental and moral discipline of the highest kind; their Christian conscience was being moved to finer issues; their love for Christ preserved in living freshness; and the flame of their zeal fed with secret oil. At the same time it has long been evident that our Sunday-schools have partially failed in some departments of their work. They have not reaped after having sowed. They have too frequently worked in deep ruts, and lost that vivacity and directness which are so essential in dealing with children. It has often been felt that the clearer appreciation of our duties now possessed should lead us to use fresh methods, and to seek out untrodden paths. Now the Children's Mission is remarkable for the freshness and variety of its methods, and for its entire freedom from all conventional usages. It is full of new life, and will doubtless flush with new blood all our Sunday-school work. The services of the Mission consist of two parts, in both of which there is room for every sort of good influence to be brought into exercise. The first part is made up of Scripture reading and simple exposition and appeal, interspersed with as much singing as possible, so that all sameness and routine in the order may be avoided. But this is followed by a conversational meeting, in which the children come singly, or in little groups, to the older persons present, and are instructed and encouraged with a more direct and personal application. The importance of this after-meeting will be at once apparent to those who have ever attempted to awaken Christian feeling in children, or to impart to them Christian truth. The little ones cannot bear "trains of thought," nor appreciate a carefully-constructed argument; but an appeal to their conscience, or the presentation of a motive for love, or a lively picture of Divine things, will engage their interest at once; and this can always be done best by loving personal address. You must call a child by name, and touch a child's hand, and look into a child's eye, even as our Lord Jesus, who understood children so well, "took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them."

The plain and immediate aim of the conductors of this Mission is the conversion of boys and girls. And it is very gratifying, in reading their reports and other publications, to see that they have reasonable ideas of what to expect in a child's piety. This is a

matter in which there have been many mistakes. Some have demanded from the little ones assent to an elaborate creed, or put them through an examination in Christian evidences, or required them to go through certain intricate mental experiences, before they could be recognised as Christian children, and followers of the meek and lowly Jesus. But surely the time has gone by for expecting children to feel as their elders feel, or to be moved by the influences necessary only where many years of sin have darkened the understanding, and seared the conscience as with a hot iron. It is saying very little to say that a child's piety will be childlike. It need not be childish, that is, silly or unworthy, but childlike we must expect it to be; and then it will be strong in love and trust, in joy and hope, and looking at such a piety, we shall see a brighter light gleaming from the words, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength." They do not know or wish to know the niceties of theology; and the technical words and phrases in common use, such as original sin, atonement, justification, regeneration, &c., may have little meaning for them. But they can feel they need forgiveness, and that Jesus saves them from sin, and that God answers prayer, and that the Saviour loves them, and that His love begets love in them, and that love and obedience should go together. A little girl a few weeks ago was asked by her mother, "Do you love Jesus?" and the prompt reply was, "Yes, I do." The mother asked again, "Why do you love Him?" and the gentle answer was, "Because He was so kind to children." In this answer, which might stand for what you would get from a thousand children, there is more of religion than of theology; but it is religion indeed, possessing elements of endurance and beauty, and calling for the heartiest recognition and most loving encouragement.

It is well worth notice that children, if properly appealed to, are utterly unequivocal as to their religious experience. They have no desire to represent themselves as either better or worse than they really feel. The other day, the writer heard of a little girl who, when asked if she knew herself to be a sinner, replied, "O no, I'm not a sinner." "But," said her friend, "do you not love Jesus?" and she replied, "Yes, I love Jesus." She was asked again, "And do you never do wrong?" and she said, "No, I never do wrong." Now, judged harshly, and by certain standards of experience, this little girl was wofully blind; but surely if we read between the lines of her answers, we shall find that what she meant was, that now she

had begun to love Jesus she never did wrong consciously and deliberately: if she sinned, it was against her wish or against her knowledge. Perhaps nothing has repressed child piety in our Churches so much as the suspicion with which Christian people (often unconsciously) have regarded all its manifestations. The fair blossoms have been nipped. The bright, loving, outspoken utterances have been frowned down. We have too often waited to see how the piety would stand, instead of helping it with sympathy of voice and hand to endure. We have watched jealously, instead of watching ever lovingly. We have left the lambs in the cold, and not brought them into the fold. If we have told the little children about Jesus, we have not always suffered them to come to Him, but rather rebuked them. We have contented ourselves with the notion that future years would see the harvest we were sowing; that we should labour, and other men would enter into our labours; but while we were leaving the reaping to be done by others, the ripening ears were blasted as with an east wind. It is not for us to anticipate the judgments and issues of eternity, but it is greatly to be feared that many Christian parents and Christian teachers will find that, for want of a Christ-like confidence in them, their children are lost. Let us hope that the Spirit of Christ will help us more and more to look at child life and piety with the eyes of Christ.

Will Christian fathers and mothers allow us to suggest that they should make more systematic and continuous efforts to bring their children to early decision for Christ. And there is little need to seek for other methods than those which lie close to hand, and are in common use. Family worship might be lifted from the dead level to which it too often sinks. More singing might be put into the daily order, or Christian singing substituted for the merely humorous or sentimental. In this way every Christian home might have its own "Children's Services;" and those private prayers of every father and mother, and those prayers the mother offers with every separate child, would all fit in with the family devotions to make one golden circle, within which the youngest might stand with the oldest for time and for eternity.

And let every Sunday-school be the centre and home of a "Children's Special Service Mission." More and more we find that our scholars are with us only in the afternoon. They rise late on Sunday morning, and in the evening the little ones are put to bed, and the older ones are too often anywhere but in our chapels. But if we had

services specially for them, in which they could be fed with "the sincere milk of the word," and led into the green pastures of Christian privilege, and taught the reality and fulness of Christian joy, surely we should be able to win them and keep them for Christ. There are so many children, and they demand so much of hand and brain, that they may well be called the true autocrats of Society. But their despotism is a pleasant one; their yoke is easy and their burden is light. And if mothers and fathers, for the love they bear their boys and girls, will rise up early and sit up late, working year in and year out until they are weary, shall not Christian people, with the same self-sacrificing heart, watch for the young souls as they that must give account? Then, when the Master's midnight call is heard, the Church may boldly answer and say, "Here am I, and the children whom thou hast given me."

AUNT FANNY'S STORIES.

NO. II.

A DAISY IN LONDON.

"**A**RE there daisies and buttercups in London, Auntie?" asked my little niece, Florence, one sunny June day, as she tossed a great golden ball into the air.

All the morning I had been sitting in a field adjoining the house, whither I had been beguiled by "the children," directly after breakfast; for they said, "You can't be indoors a day like this! And you mustn't bring any stupid work or books out with you; it's a regular holiday day." Nevertheless, I do not consider I had been at all idle. Daisy-chains and buttercup-balls had been in great request; and there was the baby, who would put everything into his mouth; and the boys as usual risking their arms and legs by climbing into the huge old oak under whose shade we sat.

"No, Florence," I replied. "Thousands of children in London have never seen a sight like this. How their eyes would sparkle if they did—a field of gold and silver! But," I continued, "I once knew a daisy in London, only she was not a flower, but a little girl!"

"Oh, Auntie, was that her name? Tell us about her," they cried, as they grouped themselves round me.

" Her real name was Margaret, but the French name, Marguerite, means a daisy, and little Margaret Morton was always called 'Daisy.' It suited her exactly, for she was as simple and fresh and innocent as one of these little flowers. She was a thorough little country girl, and the nearest approach to a town she had ever seen was the village two miles from her father's farm. And even there she seldom went. Eight years of her life had been spent among green fields, trees, and flowers, and her principal companions had been her pony, her dogs, her kittens and rabbits, and numerous pets among the farm animals, from the great shaggy cart horses, on whose backs she would fearlessly sit, down to the little yellow balls of down which appeared from under the wings of the motherly hen. And the animals, too, seemed to love the little maiden who was always kind to them. Daisy's mother had taught her that the same God who made and loves little children, cares for the animals, yes, down to the sparrows who flutter under the stacks; and that no sin is more displeasing to our merciful Father than cruelty or neglect towards the helpless dumb creatures that He has given into our charge. And Daisy was an only child, so she would have been very lonely if she had not had plenty of four-footed and winged fellow-creatures to take the place of brothers and sisters. She was a very happy little girl, and after her lessons with her mamma, or early in the summer mornings before any one else was up, she would ramble away by herself into the woods, watching the wild birds, and learning their habits and their songs; returning, with hands full of wild flowers, to tell her father how she had seen a squirrel run up a tree, or a water-rat peep at her with its bright eyes from a hole in the bank of the pond. It was one morning, when the child came wandering up the sloping lawn, her hat swinging in her hand, singing to herself, that she was destined to have a wonderful surprise. Into her quiet little life was to come a change!

" 'Daisy,' said her father, as she sat eating her basin of bread and milk, 'would you like to go to London?'

" The spoon dropped from her hand, and she stared open-mouthed, first at her father and then at her mother, who laughed, and said, 'Don't look so frightened, child, I am going too; would you like it?'

" 'Oh, mamma, so much! May I really go, papa?' and she got off her chair, dancing round the room and clapping her hands, the dogs jumping up to her. 'Dash, I'm going to London! Frisk, I'm going to London!' she cried.

“ ‘Why, Daisy,’ said her father, ‘I couldn’t have believed that you would be so pleased to leave me, and your dogs, and the new calf, and all your treasures.’

“ ‘Oh, papa, you’ll take care of them for me ; and I do so want to see London.’

“ Her papa laughed heartily.

“ ‘I wonder what sort of an idea you have in your little head about London ! What do you think it is like, Goosey ?’

“ ‘I don’t know,’ returned Daisy, ‘but I’ve seen pictures of it, and I’m sure it’s very beautiful.’

“ ‘Well, tell me all about it when you come back ; and don’t get spoiled ; don’t let them change my little Daisy into a Tulip, or a London Pride !’

“ So saying, Mr. Morton patted his little daughter’s curly head and went off to his farm, while Daisy tried to finish her breakfast, but had so many questions to ask, that it was not an easy matter.

“ Mrs. Morton had been summoned to London to see her mother-in-law, quite an old lady, who was in failing health, and who, knowing that her grand-daughter was a quiet, obedient child, had included her in the invitation. Mrs. Morton was not sorry that her little girl should have this thorough change, for hitherto she had never left her home for more than a day ; and before long both mother and daughter were whirling away in the train, the child too much occupied in gazing out of the windows, and thinking of her anticipated pleasures, even to talk. Long before they reached their journey’s end, the tired eyes had closed, and when they opened again, all was noise and confusion : it was getting dusk, but lights were flashing on all sides. Daisy clung to her mother, feeling rather frightened, but presently they were safe in a cab, rattling through lighted streets. Oh, what a number of shops ; what hundreds of cabs and horses and carts ; what crowds of people ! Where were they all going ? And what were they doing out so late ? Daisy tried to ask her mother, but the noise drowned her voice, so she only looked and wondered. More streets, more shops, more people, and then it became quieter ; and tall houses, that seemed to go right up into the sky, took the place of the dazzling shop windows. At one of these tall houses they stopped, and a grave old white-headed man-servant, at whom Daisy looked with much awe, helped them and their luggage into the house. The child was taken at once up what seemed to her endless flights of stairs, to a little room that was to be her

nursery, where a smiling servant took charge of her, gave her some supper, and put her to bed. When, some time after, Mrs. Morton went up to look at her, she found her still awake.

“‘Mamma,’ she said, ‘what is that roaring noise?’

“‘Only the carriages in the streets, dear,’ replied her mother.

“‘More carriages!’ exclaimed Daisy. ‘Do the people *never* go to bed in London?’

“Now the next day—the very first day of Daisy’s London visit—she had an adventure that might have been very serious, and which I am sorry to say was the result of her own fault. And she had meant to be such a very good girl, and not to give her mother any extra trouble. I will tell you how it was. Notwithstanding her excitement and fatigue the day before, she woke very early. A gleam of sunshine had somehow made its way between the tall chimneys, and through the smoky air, and fell on the child’s little bed. Starting up, she thought at first she was at home in her own room, and listened for the cocks to crow; but then she remembered where she was, and that she ought to lie quietly till the servant came to tell her that she might get up. But after waiting what seemed to her a long time, the temptation to look out of the window was irresistible. It all looked so bright and sunny in the large square, with the houses all round, and a bit of dingy garden in the middle, shut in by rails, and there were people walking about, and some children too. Daisy longed to be out. At any rate she would dress, so as to be ready. When this was accomplished, and her hat put on, she opened her door. All was quiet and dark upstairs, but looking over the banisters she saw that the hall door stood open, and a housemaid was scrubbing the hall. Presently the maid went into the kitchen for something, and in a minute Daisy had run downstairs, and was out in the square. ‘I can go back directly,’ she said to herself. ‘Mamma never told me I mustn’t go out.’

“No, Daisy, because she knew your own conscience would tell you so, as it is doing.

“She ran along the square till she came to a corner, and peeping round, there was an organ-man playing, and a little monkey on the organ, and some children dancing to the music. Daisy had never seen a monkey except in her picture-books, and she forgot everything in watching this novel sight. She slowly followed the man till she found herself in a wide street, and turning to retrace her steps, did not see the right way back. Daisy was a brave child,

and was naturally independent, so at first she was not much frightened.

"'This must be the street we came through last night,' she thought; and again she turned round, and tried to remember. Alas! the more she tried, the more impossible it seemed, and the more hopelessly puzzled did she become. Hustled and pushed this way and that by the busy crowd, and frightened by the noise, Daisy burst into tears. Then seeing, as she thought, the right turning the other side of the street, she ran eagerly towards it, never heeding the horses' feet under which she very nearly fell.

"'Are you mad, child?' cried an old gentleman, catching hold of her, and pulling her into a place of safety. 'Where's your nurse? What's your name? and where do you live?' he added, kindly, seeing the poor child was trembling all over with fear, and crying as if her heart would break. He took her into a shop and soothed her, but her answer, when it came, did not help matters.

"Thoroughly bewildered, she could only sob out, 'My name is Daisy, and I live in the country.'

"She became calmer, however, presently, and was able to describe to her friend, and a policeman who had joined them; that her grand-mamma's name was Mrs. Morton, and that she lived in a quiet place where all the houses were alike, with steps up to the doors, and lamps over them, and with a garden in the middle.

"'She must mean Grosvenor Square, it's close by,' said the policeman, and Daisy thought that was the name. They had not gone far before the child uttered a cry of joy. Her mother, the old footman, and several maids, all appeared, and rushed up to them. Mrs. Morton was most grateful to her little girl's protectors, and so thankful to see her safe, that she forgot to blame her; but Daisy had to listen to a long lecture from her grandmamma, who was a very particular old lady, and was quite as much shocked by the impropriety of a young lady running out alone, 'like a gipsy child,' as at her naughtiness. However, Daisy had learnt a lesson, and did not feel at all inclined to wander off by herself any more.

"Her London visit was not, however, all pleasure. She saw and heard of many things that saddened and perplexed her. It puzzled Daisy to see the real poverty and misery that she met with now and then in her walks with her mother, and which made her say, with tears in her eyes, 'Mamma, why do not the rich people who live in those beautiful houses feed those who are starving?'

"Her mother took her over a children's hospital, too, which greatly interested her. Well, her visit came to an end at last, and once more the train was whirling Daisy and her mother along, past trees and hedges. The latter wondered, as she looked at the little thoughtful face opposite her, how much the child was really altered by this glimpse of a new world.

"'Not a bit altered! The very same little Daisy!' her father declared that evening, when he had listened to her merry talk, and had been coaxed to take her round the farm, to see with her own eyes that all her pets were alive and well. Nevertheless, I agree with her mother that she was not quite the same. And perhaps some day, children, I will tell you a story about something that was one of the results of Daisy's London visit."

LORD HATHERLEY.

LORD HATHERLEY has for many years laboured as a Sunday-school teacher, in which capacity he was the colleague for twenty years of a man whom Leeds returned as its representative to Parliament—the late Robert Hall. Here is a man, with the make and materials of a Chancellor, who has been giving his personal services to working men, by instructing their children and grandchildren, Sunday after Sunday, for the past thirty years, until his hair is whitened with age and hard and constant labour. In his attendance at the school his punctuality is so unerring that, upon nearing it he serves as an invariable timepiece; both teacher and scholar knowing well that if they are able to reach the door with or before him, they are perfectly safe. Should a medal ever be awarded for punctuality in voluntary service, Lord Hatherley could fairly claim it, for he has never been known to be behind time. Westminster also finds in Lord Hatherley a most liberal supporter of its schools and hospitals, and more than one of its churches owe their existence to his counsel and to his munificence. If at any time there should be projected an "Early Rising Association," the founders might almost reckon upon Lord Hatherley as president, for our venerable abbey (which is close to his residence) witnesses his daily entrance at an hour when a third of the metropolis is asleep.

MOLD, AND ITS ENGLISH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

THOUGH Congregationalism in Mold has exercised no small influence, for more than sixty years, on the spiritual life of the town, yet English Congregationalism is of a much later date.

In the month of September, 1857, a few gentlemen, who had long felt the want of some other place for English preaching in Mold, arranged for a series of services to be held in the Assembly Room, the first sermon being preached by the Rev. R. S. Short, on Sabbath, Sept. 13th. For several months the pulpit was filled by ministers of the Countess of Huntingdon's Free Church, but in 1858 the communicants unanimously resolved to form themselves "into a free and Christian Church upon *Congregational* principles," and, in the following year, invited the Rev. W. Warlow Harry, then student of New College, London, to be their first pastor.

Mr. Harry's ministry at Mold extended over nine years, and during it, the Church, shown in the above engraving, was built. A serious delay however occurred in its erection, by which several large contributions were lost, so that a debt of nearly £800 remained upon it.

On the 13th of February, 1870, the Rev. D. Burford Hooke became its pastor. Two years ago he started a fund to remove the burdensome debt, and its satisfactory completion has just been accomplished. This Church issues a Monthly Magazine, the June number of which says: "The hearty thanks of its members are due to the three hundred friends by whose contributions its freedom has been obtained; though in thanking them we still more devoutly thank Him 'from whom all blessings flow.'"

At a meeting of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, held at Swansea, in 1871, Mr. H. Richard, M.P., when pleading for the English Churches, who labour amid difficulties unknown to Congregationalists across the borders, drew one of his "illustrations" from a battle fought at Maesgarmon (*i.e.*, the field of Garmon), near Mold, and to which Professor Seeley, in a recent lecture, ascribed much importance. Mr. Richard said: "In our history there is a memorable story of the Hallelujah victory, when the Anglo-Saxons (who worshipped Thor and Wodin centuries after the Ancient Britons became Christians) were invading Wales. On one occasion the Welsh lay in ambush, with their ministers at their head, and as

the enemy drew near they rushed out from their ambush, shouting, in a loud piercing voice, 'Hallelujah!' This so terrified the Anglo-Saxons that they turned and fled. Now we want another 'Hallelujah' victory in Wales. There is another Anglo-Saxon invasion, not a hostile one, but, in many respects, a beneficial one. They invade us with their capital, with their industry, and their indomitable perseverance; and they are doing us, materially and commercially, at least, an enormous amount of good. But many of them come unbaptised with the spirit of religion, and it is our place to go and meet them, not to vanquish them by violence and fraud, but to meet them fairly, with the gospel of Christ in our hands and in our hearts."

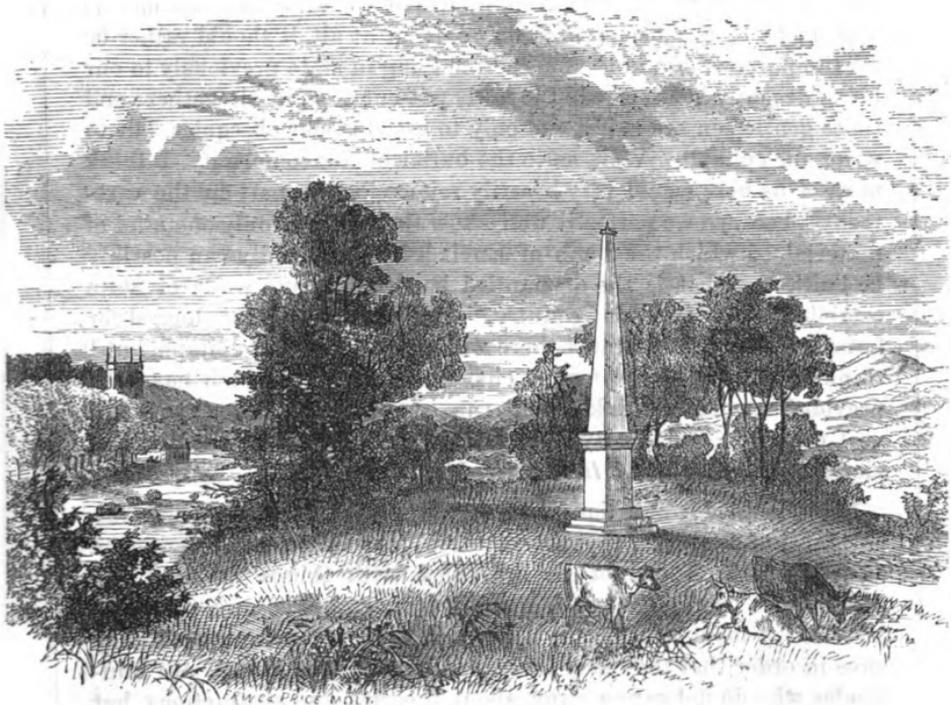


ENGLISH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, MOLD.

By the kindness of Messrs. Pring and Price, the publishers of "Rambles Round Mold," we are enabled to present our readers with a view of Maesgarmon, and of the monument raised to commemorate the "Hallelujah" victory; a victory of which Bede says: "That while the Christians, clad in snow-white garments, were filing up the hill, overlooking the lovely vale of Mold, they were apprised of the approach of the foe. St. Garmon, a Christian bishop, who led the Britons, gave 'Hallelujah' as a war cry. It was triumphantly shouted through the vale, and was taken up from the opposite heights. Thus shouted, it created a panic, so that the enemy fled without striking a blow. Many were drowned in the river Alyn"

(where a baptismal service had recently been held), "lately the Christians' font, now the pagans' grave."

" Thus runs the legend—and upon the height
Where Christian valour conquered pagan might
A little spire or obelisk doth rise,
A taper finger pointing to the skies :
As if to say, ' Here raised the white-robed train
That shout, which turned the warriors on the plain.



" HALLELUJAH " MONUMENT, MAESGARMON, MOLD.

Thus, Christian soldier, raise thy heart on high,
When dangers threaten, or when foes are nigh ;
If songs of praise within thy spirit burn,
Lo ! they disperse, or dark clouds soon will turn
To thee their silver lining—press thou on,
Strong in the strength of the Almighty One ;
His shield is thine.' Then ' Hallelujah ! ' cry,
Like they of old—and thine the victory !"

GLEANINGS AFTER THE MAY HARVEST.

IF we listened to some of our critics, to whom, perhaps, we refer a little too often—but we can hardly help it, because they refer so often to us—and who, if they do not believe in inspiration themselves, at all events expect us to recognise living oracles, and to believe in infallibility; if we are to attend to all that is said, one would really think that if our Memorial Hall, in which we were to have met, is ever to be of any use on such an occasion at all, it should rather be for the purpose of a kind of corporate lying in state previously to our being decently but somewhat joyfully put out of sight altogether; and those gentlemen are ready, not only to assist at our obsequies, but to write our epitaph. Well, as to the burial of Nonconformity, I think most of us here would very heartily rejoice to take part in the ceremony—because we perfectly well know that there is only one kind of material of which the tomb of English Nonconformity can possibly be built, and that is the dismantled battlements and walls of State establishments in this country. And whenever that longed-for funeral has to be celebrated there will, no doubt, be an epitaph, but I think it will be of a different character from that which has been provided for us: I think it will run somewhat in this way:—“In zeal for truth and liberty it was born, and it died in the arms of victory.”—*Rev. Eustace H. Conder, M.A.*

Ecclesiastical edification—building up—that is of immense importance, of immense urgency in these days of ours. There is a dissatisfaction, it cannot be concealed, with things as they are, wide-spread through many if not all denominations, and there are numbers of thoughtful people who are looking away from what they have in order that they may find something better. There are multitudes who do not care a straw about theories and abstractions, but they do ask for something that can be put and kept in working order, the wheels well oiled, the motive force sufficient, and the work turned out good and abundant. Now are we, as a class of people—and I put this to the consciences of all, and to my own conscience—are we, as a class of people, doing our very utmost to render our Churches so spiritual and so earnest, and so loving and so efficient, so rich in goodness and in good works, to make them the admiration and envy of the land? or are there congregations amongst us to which unsettled neighbours might fairly say, “Whatever we give

up, whatever we leave, we shall never think of joining you"—*Rev. Dr. Stoughton.*

Forty years ago my congregation was mainly composed of persons living in their own little holdings, not rich men, but well-to-do men. The policy of the great estate in the neighbourhood has been to buy up every one of these little holdings until there is not one left, and I cannot stir out of the parish in which I live without treading over the ground belonging to the great estate. The policy further is, "Let no Dissenter be admitted into any one of our farms." We have therefore nothing more than agricultural labourers and small shopkeepers dependent upon agricultural labourers.—*Rev. John Browne, B.A., of Wrentham.*

We have difficulties of a peculiar character to contend with. Suppose that a farm is to be let: unless it belongs to one of our brethren, no Dissenter need apply. Last Michaelmas, for example, three farms were let in this place, and Nonconformists offered for them, but, though men of means and intelligence, because they were Nonconformists, and for no other reason, their offers were refused. Farms are also held upon the agreement, that if the tenant goes anywhere, it must be to the parish church.—*Home Mission Report.*

It is useless to disguise the fact that we are bitterly and contemptuously opposed, in many parts of the country, by the Ritualising clergy. Only a week or two ago a clergyman was visiting a cottage recently left by one of our evangelists, in Northamptonshire. Observing one of our tracts on the table, he said to the woman of the house, "Take this downstairs, and burn it." Nor is this an isolated instance. One of the evangelists writes:—"The curate, when I first came, commanded the people to burn all my tracts." Another evangelist writes:—"My work is so strongly opposed as though it were wrought by Satanic agency." And yet, in this district, the eight evangelists have "paid about 15,000 visits to families, and about 1,000 specially to the sick; they have held many religious services, preached in the open air to congregations averaging from sixty to seventy persons, have given away 25,000 tracts, sold 6,000 periodicals, and lent about 1,000 books," while many have professed to receive saving good through their work.—*Home Mission Report.*

I remember perfectly, when our dear friends of the Free Church came out at the time of the disruption, they were overwhelmed with dismay at the prospect before them; their favourite image, I re-

member, was that they were like a Church going out into the wilderness of Sinai; they were constantly casting longing and lingering looks behind upon the land from which they came forth, and saying, "We remember the fish we did eat in Egypt freely, the cucumbers, the leeks, the melons, the onions, the garlic;" but they became resigned to relinquish these rather strong and savoury viands, and to feel that separation was a blessing, when they came really to understand the nature of that goodly land which the Lord had given them, the land of Christian freedom.—*Mr. Henry Richard, M.P.*

Although the actual liberation of religion from State patronage and control may come ultimately from an Act of Parliament, the Act of Parliament will be a result—it will not be the cause. The work has to be done outside that House. Light reaches Parliament last of all. You may not agree with me when I say that the perception of great principles very frequently originates with very poor and obscure people, who have not the power to push it forward for a long time, and hence it struggles among despised but earnest men, till it reaches another class and then another. We must expect to see the truth leaven the mass of the people, and then make the cauldron boil upward from below, and then by-and-by I have no doubt it will reach the scum of the population floating at the top.—*Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.*

I like the good old country deacons. I always find deacons the best men I ever meet with. If ever there is a cause to be arbitrated, if half a dozen men were asked to do it, they would be the deacons, and, on the whole, they would be the best for the work. I like to see these good country brethren come up to our town meetings; they give an air of solidity to the whole concern, not merely by the bulk of their persons, but also by the solidity of their opinions.—*Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.*

I confess I never had the ability to manage a small Church. They are like those canoes on the Thames; you must not sit that way or the other, or do this thing or that thing, lest you should upset. I happen to have a Church like a big steam-boat, and whether I walk here or there my weight will not upset it. If a big fellow thinks himself to be somebody, his importance vanishes when he joins a great Church like mine. Brother ministers have said, "This man will be a troublesome member of your Church; you must watch him." I say, "No, he won't; nobody ever troubles me—because I

don't let them." These fellows only want something to do; they have too much energy to be unemployed. I set them to work, and they are no longer troublesome; and if that does not cure them I give them still more work to do.—*Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.*

Our country Churches make the very backbone of Dissent, and their members hold sternly and strongly to the truth. We ought also to support and strengthen our village Churches, because they furnish us with some of their best recruits. There is a constant influx of young men who come up from the country and increase the numbers and the power of the London Churches. How much of that is due to the obscure pastor in the country village. These young people are of course taken away from the Churches in the country, and it is no small thing that the country sends London so many godly men. If they were, on the other hand, ungodly, London would be much worse than it is. When I consider the number of country Churches depleted every year, I am not surprised to hear of a great increase in London Churches. We hear a good deal about the increase of Church members in America. Why, about one-third of all the increase at the Tabernacle goes to America. We are continually feeding their Churches by the growth of population derived from this country. The town Churches obtain a goodly proportion of their increase from their country brethren just in the same way. Keep up, therefore, I say, your country Churches. They are the feeders of our town congregations, and keep us well supplied with good and useful members.—*Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.*

Messrs. Moody and Sankey have held their farewell services in Glasgow. During the last six days of their visit they held no fewer than nine meetings in the Crystal Palace, which is the largest place of public assembly in Scotland, being capable of holding above six thousand people; and on each occasion it could not contain the crowds who pressed for admission. One of the meetings was for young women, and hundreds applied in vain for tickets after 7,500 had been distributed, while the building was crowded up to the fainting point, and was indeed partly spoiled by its numerical success. Another meeting was designed specially for those who believed themselves to have been converted since January 1st, and who previous to securing tickets gave their names, addresses, and Church connection, which information was forwarded to their several pastors. About 3,500 received tickets on these conditions. The children had their turn on

Saturday at noon; for the working people there was a meeting at night; on Sunday morning there was a young women's meeting; and in the evening the multitude who sought admission was variously computed at from 15,000 to 30,000. The local journals testify that never before during the present century have so many large and representative meetings been drawn together in Glasgow within six days by any cause or interest whatever.—*Christian World*.

I do not wish to be the apologist in detail of all the proceedings of our brethren who have come from the other side of the Atlantic. But, in presence of spiritual power so remarkable as that which seems to be associated with their labours, I do not care to criticise their measures.—*Rev. R. W. Dale*.

We might imagine ourselves cast by some magic power into a sleep of two hundred years, and, on waking up, I suppose we should begin to talk and to think about the Colonial Missionary Society, and we should begin just where we left off. If we were to ask about the colonies we should find perhaps that Tasmania was filled with an overflowing population; we should hear that all the vast districts of Australia had become a Confederate Republic; we should find out that Canada had chosen a king, and had embalmed the remains of Joseph Arch; we should find that New Zealand, with all its vast areas at present uncultivated, was smiling with beauty and had become fertile and productive; and then we should begin to ask about its Christianity, about its religious life, and we might be told that half of its religious population had gone over to Rome or to Ritualism (which is about the same thing), and we might find that the other half had gone over to Wesleyanism and to Presbyterianism, because these had fought the battle of evangelical religion.—*Rev. Samuel Pearson, M.A.*

Let Sir Samuel Baker, in his gallant, soldierly way—and he is a brave man—let him ridicule the cause of Christian missions as the “man-and-brother theory.” If Sir Samuel chooses to risk the credit of his intelligence in that way, so as to commit himself to so strong an assertion on some historic points, why, let him. Let him declare that the soldier must be in the van of the great march of modern progress at least through Africa, and that the merchant must come after the soldier, and that the missionary must come in somewhere behind, and I rather shrewdly suspect that if the missionary did not answer at the roll-call at all, Sir Samuel's grief would not be so very

great. Now, I take it, our kind of missionary will go anywhere, in any way that is lawful to him. He will go with the soldier if he cannot go in any other way, or he will go after the soldier. Alas! it is all the more necessary that he should go if the soldier has gone before him. When were missionaries more needed in Coomassie than now? Or he will go without the soldier. He will go with the merchant or after the merchant—he, too, is a merchant—or he will go alone. And those who know the history of these things in any tolerable measure, know very well that the missionary has never prospered better than when he has gone first, than when he has gone alone. It did not need that our venerable and beloved friend, Dr. Moffat, should rise, as he did so gently, to answer Sir Samuel on a certain occasion. I think his white head in the assembly should have been answer enough, though really it is not so white after all. Greenland is an answer, which was civilised by the Moravians only by being Christianised, and the hundred isles of the Southern Seas give reply, and districts of that very Africa of which Sir Samuel was speaking.—*Rev. Dr. Raleigh.*

On the contrary, I believe we are—at any rate, I am quite sure that we wish to be—as broad as truth, and as tolerant as charity, and as hopeful as the sight of spring flowers, and stars, and daybreaks, and returning summer can make us. We believe in God and His mercy. We believe that God is light, that God is love. We believe that He covers this whole world every night within His protective shadow, even as a hen gathereth her brood under her wing. We believe that God's government, moral, providential, gracious, is the one grand reality amid all the ongoing and strifes of this fretful, passing world, and that the strifes of men are but as shadows. We believe that God's plan is perfect, and that He will work it out. We believe that all things are working together for good, even now, to those who love Him; and that all things must be working together for good to the world ultimately; although how it is to come out we cannot say, unless this we know, that the ever-working God must be ever working for the best, and must in the end certainly secure it. Sail on, then, thou great world-ship, although it be for a while through dark and stormy seas, thy Captain knows the way! Thy rudder is firm, thy chart is true, and every wind that blows, whether that which gently fills thy sails, or that which makes thy timbers creak, is sent in some way from God, and will waft thee on towards the haven where thou wouldst be.—*Rev. Dr. Raleigh.*

OUR LORD'S HUMANITY.

THE experience of human life by Jesus Christ was wonderfully comprehensive. He touched upon most of the conditions of man's existence, and wherever He went He shed blessing. That the case might have been different from this it is easy to see. As regards His public ministry, Jesus Christ might have come into the world as Adam is declared to have done, in the maturity of manhood. But what a loss would this have been to us! Methinks every infant's face would have been sadder had not Jesus Christ become a babe. Over the humiliation and weakness of childhood He has thrown a transforming beauty and tenderness. Strong is the prejudice even to-day of the world against manual toil, but what would it have been had not the hand of Jesus grown hard with labour and His brow been stained with sweat? So in regard to the closing scenes of the Redeemer's life, He might have shunned them altogether. From the arms of His cross He might have risen in instantaneous resurrection to heaven. Beneath His footsteps angel wings would have been spread out to sustain Him, and angel voices would have sung Him welcome.

But what a different scene would the close of human life then have been. Unstreaked with Divine light, the tomb would have opened its grim jaws to devour us at last. All else might have been Christian, but the grave would have been Pagan. Still, in the hour of greatest weakness, the saint would have wanted the full assurance of his Redeemer's sympathy, and in the last resting-place of man it would have been felt we were going upon an enemy's ground. But how different from this is the truth. Man comes by birth into the world, and Jesus Christ was born. Man has to die, and Jesus Christ died. Into the narrow cell of the ground man has to resign his pride, his ambition, his love, and Jesus Christ was buried. Hence arises the beautiful truth taught by St. Paul—"He was tried in all points like unto us, and he is able to succour the tried."—*Rev. Stephen Clarke.*

◆

"I LIKE to play in the garden, because there is no ceiling between me and Jesus." (The words of a little girl.)

THOUGHTS—GRAVE AND GAY.

DR. JUDSON once said: "I am not tired of my work, neither am I tired of the world; yet, when Christ calls me, I shall go with the gladness of a boy bounding away from school. Death will never take me by surprise; do not be afraid of that—I feel so strong in Christ."

Christian worship gives brightness to the eye, and a flush to the cheek, and a pressure to the hand, and a thrill to the heart. You see the aged man tottering along on his staff through the aisle. You see the little child led by the hand of its mother. You look around, and rejoice that this is God's day, and the communion of saints. "One Lord, one faith, one baptism."

"I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid." (The words of Adam when he lost his moral childhood.)

"Oh, blessed day! I should like," says De Witt Talmage, "to die some Sabbath morning, when the air is full of church music, and the bells are ringing. Leaving my home group with a dying blessing, I should like to look off upon some Christian assemblage chanting the praises of God as I went up to join the one hundred and forty and four thousands standing around the throne of Jesus. Hark! I hear the bell of the old kirk on the hillside of heaven! It is a wedding bell, for behold the bridegroom cometh! It is a victor's bell, for we are more than conquerors through Him that hath loved us! It is a Sabbath bell, for it calls the nations of earth and heaven to everlasting repose!"

No man is good unless others are made better by him.

A man's family is his best care. To raise Christian souls to their height, even to heaven, to dress and prune them, and take as much joy in the straight-growing child or servant as a gardener doth in a choice tree.

I had a friend (says De Witt Talmage) in Syracuse, who lived to be one hundred years of age. He said to me, in his ninety-ninth year: "I went across the mountains in the early history of this country. Sabbath morning came. We were beyond the reach of civilisation. My comrades were all going out for an excursion. I said, 'No, I won't go; it is Sunday!' Why, they laughed. They said, 'We haven't any Sunday here.' 'Oh, yes,' I said, 'you have; I brought it with me over the mountains.'"

OUR CHURCH NEWS.

RECENT movements of the Congregational body have attracted more than usual attention. Apart from the full share taken by Independents in undertaking to raise £100,000 for the service of the Liberation Society, there have been the opening of the new Emanuel Church at Cambridge, which has cost £13,000; the erection of the City Temple in London, at an expense of some £60,000; the approaching completion of the Memorial Hall, at an outlay of some £60,000; and the arrangement to raise the loan fund of the Chapel Building Society to £50,000. Besides this has come the announcement that our Pastors' Retiring Fund now exceeds £100,000, and that the Pastors' Widows' Fund amounts to several thousands more.

Concerning the Congregational Memorial Hall, the "Times" says: "The building stands upon ground which is consecrated to Nonconformity by sacred and venerable memories of the days of persecution and tyranny. It occupies a portion of what till within quite our own days was the 'Fleet Prison.' In the Fleet Prison, as we read in history, some of the earliest martyrs of Independency were immured, and from its gates, two hundred years ago and more, several of them were led forth to suffer on the scaffold. For example, Whitgift's controller, in stating the nature of the indictment against Barrowe and Greenwood, narrates how they were brought before the Star Chamber in 1586, and 'enlarged upon bonds, but all in vain, for, after their liberty, they burst into further extremities, and were again committed to the Fleet, July 20, 1588, where they published their "scandalous and seditious" writings, for which they were proceeded against at Justice Hall, near Newgate.' From the Fleet, in 1590, Greenwood issued his answer to Giffard, signing himself 'Christ's poor afflicted prisoner in the Fleet at London, for the Truth of the Gospel.' Then he and Barrowe were tied to a cart and borne to Tyburn. To the Fleet, Johnson was committed in 1593, and thence issued the memorial from the various Independent prisoners in the London gaols, stating their 'miserable usage,' 'laden with as many irons as they could bear'—'aged men, and aged women, and young maidens' being confined for years among the vilest prisoners. Later on, in 1637, Prynne, Bastwick, and Burton were committed by Laud to the Fleet, whence they were taken to the pillory, branded with hot irons, and their ears cut off; then sent

back again to the Fleet, and thence to their respective prisons. Few students of Church history will have forgotten how the crowd lined the streets and roads of London and its suburbs, 'from the Fleet even till beyond Highgate,' when Prynne was conveyed thence to Lancaster Castle. Such is the ground trodden by these men's feet, and watered by their tears, upon which the Congregationalists of England are now busily engaged in erecting their 'Memorial Hall.'"

The handsome Italian structure, with its lofty tower, 120 feet high, which has been recently erected on the Holborn Viaduct, as a home for the Church which formerly worshipped at Poultry Chapel, and as the scene of the future ministrations of the Rev. Dr. Parker, was recently opened for Divine service. The cost of the entire structure, which includes a church capable of seating two thousand persons, as well as spacious, lofty, and well-lighted schoolroom and class-rooms, is about £60,000. Of this sum, £25,000 were paid for the site, about £30,000 for the building, and £5,000 for the fittings and furniture. Of the cost of the edifice something like one-third was absorbed in foundation work; as, in addition to the space from the level of the Viaduct to that of Farringdon-street, the nature of the soil, the London clay, rendered it necessary that the works should be carried down another twenty-five feet, to ensure a solid substratum for the superstructure.

The announcement was made at the recent anniversary of the Church Missionary Society that, partly with a view to discountenance High Church schemes, the directors had resolved altogether to withdraw from the island of Madagascar. This, says the "Non-conformist," is a very creditable decision. "A bishop has been appointed with the sanction of the heads of the Church of England—who have most discreditably succumbed to a small clique of Sacerdotalists—but without the co-operation of the Church Missionary Society it is hardly possible, should he proceed to Antananarivo, that he will long remain there. Was there ever an exhibition of sectarianism on the part of Nonconformists which could match this proposal for sending a bishop to Madagascar, without a diocese or converts to watch over?" Even the "Times" says: "It is, to say the least, very unfortunate that the Church of England should appear in those regions not only as a disturber of the peace, but also as an intruder, claiming a title and authority certain to be challenged, and equally certain to be discredited."

Rev. F. Ewer, Wesleyan minister, of Frome, has published a letter detailing the conduct of the Hon. and Rev. Lord Francis G. Osborne, who, having to bury the body of Miss Sheppard, a lady of exemplary character, in the churchyard at Great Elm, refused to admit the corpse into the church, and read only a portion of the burial service at the side of the grave. Not content with this, in his sermon on the following Sunday, he said it was "an insult to God and to the 'priest of God' to bring the corpse of such a person into the church." The ground of offence was that Miss Sheppard, instead of attending and supporting "the church," had been a regular attendant at the Wesleyan chapel.

An appeal has recently been made for assistance in the erection of a Nonconformist place of worship in Malvern. This charming place has hitherto been closed to Dissenting agencies, owing to the unjust restrictions placed upon the sale of land, which is only sold for building on the strictly-enforced condition that no Dissenting chapel or beerhouse shall be erected. After many unsuccessful efforts, a freehold site, exempt from such restrictions, of ample extent, and in a central and prominent position in Great Malvern, has at length been purchased for £1,000, on which it is intended to build a Congregational church with as little delay as possible; and it is proposed that this church shall be the centre of various mission agencies which exist in the neighbourhood.

The Rev. J. Thompson, of Great Ayton, Yorkshire, has accepted the cordial and unanimous invitation of the Independent Church and congregation at Haslemere, Surrey, to become their pastor; the Rev. H. T. Robjohns, B.A., after thirteen years at the West Clayton-street Church, has accepted a unanimous invitation to become the pastor of Fish-street, Hull; Mr. P. Rathbone Berry, of Airedale College, has accepted the pastorate of the Church at Fleetwood; the Rev. S. St. N. Dobson, B.A., late of Dover, has accepted the unanimous invitation of the Church and congregation at Bungay, Suffolk; the Rev. W. Bennett, late of Staithes, has become the pastor of the Church at Market Lavington, Wilts; the Rev. James Thorpe, of Wendover, at Shrubland-road, Dalston; the Rev. Lloyd Harris, of Stourbridge, at Warwick; the Rev. W. H. Hyatt, of Douglas, Isle of Man, at Uppermill, Saddleworth; Mr. Edwin Watts, of the Western College, at South Petherton; Mr. Robert John Cooke Tillotson, of New College, at Marlborough Congregational Church; and the Rev. J. S. Barker, at Edgware.

A SPEECHLESS REPROOF.

ONE beautiful afternoon in spring, three years ago, I was enjoying a solitary walk in a field near one of the towns of Derbyshire. All nature seemed to rejoice. The sun shone brightly, as if pleased because permitted to return once more to bless the inhabitants of these northern climes. The lark, the linnet, and the thrush sustained a chorus, in which, though the voices differed, the sentiment was ever the same :—

“ Praise God from whom all blessings flow.”

The modest daisy cautiously peeped around, as if anxious to ascertain that the winter was indeed past. The primrose, “ eldest daughter of spring,” preferred the shady bank to the sunny slope, as if conscious of possessing that beauty which need not go abroad in search of admirers. The whole prospect was pleasing, and one was apt to forget that even man was vile. Under the influences peculiar to such a time and place, my mind was led to indulge in speculations not perhaps unnatural to the occasion. I wondered, if the footstool of the Great King is so beautiful, what must be the glories of His throne! If such melodious harmonies pervade the outer courts of His temple, how rapturous must be the strains in which His praises are celebrated in the holiest place of all!

My reverie was broken by observing, a little in front of me, a man and a woman. Even from a distance, it was evident that the man was an invalid. His languid step and stooping gait plainly indicated that he was heavy-laden with the weary load of physical weakness. On realising this painful fact, “ a still small voice ” suggested to me the propriety of asking him concerning his spiritual interests and eternal prospects. Another voice, in sterner tones, denounced such conduct as impertinent, and such inquiries as ill-timed, if not uncalled for.

I overtook them. The man's appearance was remarkable. His sunken eye, his parched lips, and the ghastly hue of his features denoted an alarming state of health.

“ You do not seem strong, my friend,” I remarked.

“ I am anything but strong, sir,” he replied, in gasping accents.

"You ought to consult a doctor," I continued.

"I have been taking medicine."

Thus, questions and answers were interchanged. Suggestions and explanations followed. At any moment I might have introduced the subject uppermost in my thoughts, but to my shame then, and my regret ever since, I did not.

The day but one after, a friend requested my company to visit a sick neighbour. On entering the room, imagine my astonishment when on that humble bed I recognised the man with whom I had conversed so lately on the walk. Imagine my feelings when, recognising me, he feebly said, "I wish I had spoken to you the other evening about my soul."

Anxious to improve the time, we spoke of sin and its deserts; of the Saviour and His merits; of the blood of atonement and its efficacy; of pardon and its freeness; of the love of God and its fullness. We read, we prayed, we tried to lead him to the Lamb of God. I asked him what he thought of Christ? He replied, "I believe that 'whosoever cometh unto him, he will in no wise cast out.'"

While showing his claim to the promise, and trying to teach him the "way of salvation" more perfectly, without a sigh, a groan, or a struggle, the spirit took its flight. My friend called my attention to the solemn fact. We summoned his sorrowing wife, who seemed overwhelmed with the suddenness of the dreaded, yet unlooked-for event. As I turned to leave the room, those large blue eyes, still open, seemed to follow me, and with speechless eloquence to reprove me for my moral cowardice and Christian unfaithfulness.

That night I prayed, as I never prayed, "Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God." I resolved, grace being my helper, "to be instant in season and out of season" in reminding the afflicted that "there is a balm in Gilead," and that "there is a Physician there." May what has proved to me so humiliating, to others prove instructive. May it serve to remind all "labourers in the vineyard" that yielding to timidity may be trifling with souls—souls whose blood may one day be required at their hands.

D. M. C.

AN Eastern proverb says,—“To play with the tail of the lion, to tickle the tiger in the ear, is not the part of a prudent man.”

AUNT FANNY'S STORIES.

NO. III.

A PEEP INTO FAIRY-LAND.

IT is a rash thing to make a promise to children. If, in an unguarded moment we fancy that their memories are like ours, and that they are as willing as we old folks are to put things off till a more convenient season, we shall find ourselves marvellously mistaken. Childhood's memory is fresh, keen, and unpleasantly alert; its dislike of procrastination a constant example to its elders. "By-and-by," "some day," "another time," terms with which we indolently soothe our consciences, it hates. The future, which looks to us so short, is to it a vague immeasurable stretch of years—a month is like our year; a day like our week. "No time like the present," is the children's motto. After which preface, no one will be surprised to hear that, having given the promise recorded in my last story, to tell at some future time something more relating to Daisy's visit to London, I had not much peace until it was performed.

"Do you remember, children," I began, therefore, one evening, "a place in London where Daisy's mamma took her, which made her very grave?"

Yes, they remembered quite well, it was a children's hospital.

"It was," I replied; "and in that hospital, on a little bed, in a red flannel jacket, lay a boy whose eyes Daisy could not forget. They were certainly the principal things to be seen, for the rest of his face was pale and thin and small, and so was the hand that lay outside the bedclothes; in fact, there seemed little enough of him altogether, except those large lustrous blue eyes, shining out from the masses of thick soft brown hair, which lay upon the pillow. It was not, however, the beauty of the eyes that struck the rosy little visitor, who stood by the bedstead, such a contrast in her health and vigour to the sick child, her brown chubby hand touching his white one, so much as a sad, wistful, longing look in them, that went to her tender little heart; and now, though weeks had passed, and she was seemingly engrossed with her own simple pleasures, yet she had by no means forgotten it.

"Her birthday was about Midsummer, and she was always allowed

to choose a special treat on that occasion. This year her answer to her father's yearly question was quite ready. 'May I have that little boy from the hospital to stay with me? He was getting better, and going home soon; and oh, papa, he has never seen the country, but has lived in streets all his whole life!'

"Papa hesitated, but at last gave the reply which satisfies all reasonable children, 'I will talk to mamma about it,' and Daisy skipped away contented.

"Mrs. Morton, who had also been much interested in the boy, had made inquiries of the matron, and heard that he was an orphan, living with his grandmother, who was not well off; and when the poor child met with an accident, by falling on a slippery winter day, she was glad to send him to the hospital, where his father had been a doctor, and where she knew he would get well taken care of.

"Little Archie, as Daisy said, had never been out of London. His father had been too busy and too poor to do more than provide a living for his family. So his eight years had been spent in crowded streets, with only an occasional glimpse of blue sky through the smoke, and a still more occasional glimpse of green grass in the parks. He was not at all unhappy, however. He was a dreamy, thoughtful child, his little head full of fancies, of which he seldom spoke, and he possessed the priceless gift of a happy, contented disposition. Poor little fellow, he had need of all his patience when abscesses set in, and a long tedious illness. However, he got better at last, and you may imagine with what delight both he and his grandmother heard that he was actually to go into the country, to stay with that pretty little rosy girl who had talked to him about lambs, and little ducks, and chickens, and wild flowers. For the next week he asked so many questions about country life, that I think the old lady was really glad when he was safely off in the train.

"Meanwhile, you will imagine Daisy's joy, and all her preparations for her guest. That night, however, he was too tired for anything but bed, and only remarked, 'How sweet everything smells!' And when Mrs. Morton came to tuck him up, and kiss him, he could not help putting his arms round her neck and saying, 'You are like my own mamma.'

"'Do you remember her, dear?' asked the lady.

"'Only at night,' answered the boy. 'She always tucked me up, and heard me say my prayers, and I think she hears me still: don't you, ma'am?'

“ ‘Yes, darling, I do; and now go to sleep, for Daisy will want to show you all her treasures to-morrow.’

“ ‘When she presently looked in again, Archie called out, ‘I am almost asleep; but, oh, what is that beautiful sound? Do the birds sing all night in the country?’

“ ‘It is the nightingale,’ said Mrs. Morton, going to the window and listening to the gush of melody. It must have mingled with Archie’s dreams, for he dreamed that his mother was singing to him.

“ ‘The next morning, to Daisy’s delight, the sun rose in a blue, cloudless sky, but her mother would not let her disturb her friend too early. She herself went into his room later, and found him half-dressed, leaning out of the window, drinking in the pure fresh air, and feasting his eyes upon what he saw there. Shall I tell you what he saw? First, a smooth green lawn sloping down to a little murmuring, babbling brook, which ran along like a silver thread, dividing the lawn from a field where the sweet-smelling hay was piled in haystacks. On each side of the lawn were beds of brilliant flowers, with a background of shrubs, and beyond them kitchen gardens and an orchard, from whence came suggestions of strawberries, raspberries, gooseberries, and currants. In the far distance stretched away hill and dale, till lost in the purple mist; but what I think struck Archie most, was a thick green wood just beyond the hay-field. A little white gate led into it, and beyond this gate it looked dark, and cool, and mysterious. The boy had read of woods, and had often longed to be in one, but never before had had the chance. He forgot about it, however, when he came down to breakfast, and chattered to Daisy. He told her the stillness woke him that morning—he was so used to the sound of wheels in London. Then he had a tumbler of new milk from Daisy’s own pet cow, ‘Buttercup,’ and after breakfast the two children went over the farm, patted the new foal, fed the chickens, searched for eggs in the hay-loft, rode on the great cart-horses, swang in the barn, climbed the straw-stacks, and made friends with all the dogs and cats on the premises, and came in hungry and rosy for their early dinner. When this was over, Mrs. Morton thought Archie had better rest, for she was afraid of his doing too much. So calling Daisy away, she left him in the cool drawing-room with a story-book, and for a little while he read it; but what story could be so fascinating to this little town-mouse as the sights and sounds outside, which kept tempting him into the garden? First, a great velvet bee boomed solemnly in through the open

window. Then a fussy blue-bottle fly bounced and buzzed over the room and out again, plainly saying, 'You had better come out, little boy, this lovely afternoon.' And then, as the book fell from his lap, a bird began to sing, and a gorgeous butterfly alighted on a rose close to the window.

"These repeated invitations were irresistible. Out went Archie after the butterfly, following it from flower to flower, and gazing at its brilliant wings as they opened and shut in the sunshine. It led him across the lawn, down the little shrubbery, and into the hay-field, when it flew over a high tree.

"The butterfly was gone, but there was the wood just before him. On went Archie, through the little white gate, along a narrow path carpeted with thick soft moss, and shut in on each side by tangled masses of wild rose, honeysuckle, and nut-trees, while tall trees met overhead.

"How deliciously cool it felt, and how perfectly still! Stop, there is a little rustling, and a movement in the long grass. A small bright-eyed weasel ran across the path. Archie did not know what it was, but he recognised a squirrel running up a tree, though the poor caged creatures he had seen looked very different to the graceful active little animal that bounded from bough to bough. But what is that that odd thing under a hedge—dark and round and prickly; not like a plant, and yet not like anything else? He touched it, and pricked his fingers; then, as he stood watching it, lo and behold the ball uncurled! four little feet appeared, and a small snout with two bright eyes, and off trotted Mr. Hedgehog.

"'What can it be?' thought Archie. 'I wish Daisy was here; I must go back for her.'

"But this was not so easy. Turning back, he soon found that he was lost in this enchanted wood: three paths met, and which he had came by he could not think. A green lizard looked at him, and a tiny field-mouse ran by in a great hurry, but they could not help him, nor could the wood-pigeon cooing overhead. A little rippling brook could, however, and hearing its musical murmur not far off, Archie found it and followed its windings, first taking a deep draught of its clear cool water. Presently the thick trees parted, and the narrow path widened. A smooth green glade appeared, surrounded by trees, through whose tall straight stems gleams of sunshine streamed upon masses of wood-lilies, harebells, and wild hyacinths. Uttering a cry of joy, Archie filled his hands with them, and then he noticed

that on one side of this glen there was a pond, into which his little brook had emptied itself. A thick fringe of bulrushes concealed its wonders from him at present, but they were there ready for all who had eyes and heart to appreciate them. And Archie had. Lying down and pulling aside the rushes, the boy rested his head upon his hands, and gazed spell-bound into the water. On its surface darted innumerable small brown beetles in and out and round and round, in, Archie was sure, some merry game. Other larger beetles swam near, and some curious-looking, black, motionless things, that looked like miniature boats, and which suddenly gave one stroke with a pair of oars and dived to the bottom. The cause of their fright was a large water-rat which sprang from its hole in the bank and splashed into the water. I have not time to tell you all the wonders this pond showed Archie; the brood of little dusky moor-hens which sailed past; gnats which seemed to live on the water as well as in the air; spiders floating on tiny rafts of sticks and leaves, or coming up from the bottom for bubbles of air, with which they dived again. But the most wonderful sight of all was to come. Archie noticed on the green stalk of a bulrush close to him, a dark shiny sort of grub, and as he looked it moved and struggled, and seemed to burst open, when to the astonished eyes of the boy there appeared, coming forth from the skin, a beautiful perfect insect, with a body of brilliant green and blue, and four gauzy wings, which it stretched in the warm sunshine. For a moment it stood, then flashing its radiant wings, it darted up and down the pond—a glorious dragon-fly. Archie rubbed his eyes, as if to make sure that he was not dreaming, then slowly getting up and walking round the pond, he discovered that on the other side of it was the hay-field, and there were Daisy and her mother coming to look for him.

“‘Where have you been?’ they both cried.

“And Archie replied, ‘I think I’ve been to fairy-land.’

“‘O mamma,’ exclaimed Daisy, ‘I believe he has been to my Bluebell Glen, and seen the pond, and I wanted to show them myself.’

“‘Never mind,’ said Archie, ‘I’ll go again as often as you like. Oh, ma’am, I did not think the world was half so beautiful; I think heaven, where my mamma is, must be like that wood.’

“Then they all sat down, and Archie told all he had seen, and Mrs. Morton talked to them about God’s goodness and skill in filling the earth with so much beauty, and adapting each creature, however

small, to its own perfect little life; and of the wickedness of ill-treating any living thing so marvellously made and cared for by their Father and ours. And she pointed out to them that the beautiful sight Archie had seen was a type of the Resurrection, when, clothed in new beauty, God's children shall rise to a higher and nobler life.

"Then they went in to tea, and Archie and Daisy planned a whole day to be spent in the wood. The two children became great friends, and the happy sunny days passed only too quickly. When Archie went home, his grandmother hardly knew him, he was so sunburnt and healthy.

"Archie is an artist now, and he spends much of his time in the loveliest scenery in the world; but he always says that nothing has ever given him the thrill of joy that he felt at his first glimpse of the real country, or, as he and Daisy call it, his 'first peep into fairy-land.'"

SCOTTINGS FROM A PASTOR'S NOTE-BOOK.

No. II.

IMAGINE yourselves standing upon the top of one of those magnificent hills which are peculiar to East Devonshire, and which, although they tower away, range beyond range, to an immense height, have none of the ruggedness and abruptness of their northern brethren, but which are clothed with pasture, crowned with foliage, and covered over with flocks to the very summit. Few, who have not been eye-witnesses, can form any idea of the beauty of this locality in the early spring and summer months, when the trees are putting on their royal robes of emerald, the flowers are enriching the banks and hillocks with a thousand tints, and the birds are filling the air with songs; and you may picture to yourselves the scenery which surrounded the writer as he was walking, on a sunny afternoon in May, 1854, to a village, about five miles from M——, where he was to preach in the evening.

As I was thus musing, I observed a small farm-house, a short distance from the road, and which I did not remember to have noticed before. It was almost of a snowy whiteness, and as it lay, nearly hidden from view, among the trees, presented a pic-

turesque appearance. I wondered who lived in that lovely little spot, and impelled by a feeling which I can, now, only look upon as from God, I turned down through the avenue of trees which led to the house. After knocking, and waiting for some time, the door was opened, and I stood face to face with one whom Mrs. Hemans somewhere characterises as "a he woman," so thoroughly masculine was her appearance.

I said, "Will you allow me to come in and read with you?"

"Yes, if you will," was the somewhat curt reply.

I entered, and taking an unproffered seat, began to read John xiv., "Let not your heart be troubled," &c.

"Stop," said the woman, "God sent you; I have seen you before."

I replied, "Indeed, I think it is very likely you may have done so, but I have no recollection of ever having seen you."

"Oh, but I saw you last night in my dream; you are an angel."

"Well, my good woman, God grant that I may be an angel of mercy to you, but what do you mean?"

"Oh, sir, you do not know what an awful sinner I have been."

I replied, "I have no wish to know, but I am here to tell you that however sinful your past history may have been, there is a Saviour for you now."

"Sir," she said, with great feeling, "that cannot be, for I have been one of the greatest wretches under the sun. I have turned my own daughter out of house and home because she wanted to serve Christ; and she would have gone to ruin if it had not been for the kindness of Mr. E.," naming a neighbouring farmer, who was a godly man. "And, sir, I have been very unhappy for a long time past, but last night I was miserable indeed. I tried to pray, but could not utter a word; I seemed lost, utterly lost. In this wretched state of mind I went to bed, and by-and-by fell into a troubled sleep, when I thought God sent His angel to show me the way of salvation, and in my dream I heard him read to me John xiv.; and when I opened the door to you, I saw in a moment that yours was the face I saw, and now you are reading the same words to me. You say, 'Let not your heart be troubled.' Oh, sir, you are the angel, and God has sent you to me that I may have peace."

I read and prayed with her, and after entreating her earnestly to give herself to the Saviour, I left, rejoicing that God had so graciously directed my steps to her door.

As this was my last visit in that neighbourhood (for I left in a week or two for the East of England), I never saw her again, and often wondered what was the issue of so singular an incident. But about ten or twelve years ago I accidentally met, at a watering-place in Kent, the daughter of the farmer at whose house this woman's child took shelter when driven from home by her mother. This lady was then the wife of a minister.

I said, "How did that case of Ellen P—— terminate after all?"

"Oh," she replied, "she became one of the most useful members of the Church at W——, and is to this day a respected Christian."

Although I have never seen Ellen P—— from the day of our first interview until now, I rejoice in the hope of meeting her by-and-by before the throne of God, as another proof of the freeness and fulness of the Saviour's grace and power.

J. J. W.

THE SABBATH.

AN eminent London merchant narrates that thirty years ago he went to London. He says: "I have, during that time, watched minutely, and I have noticed that the men who went to business on the Lord's day, or opened their counting-houses, have, without a single exception, come to failure." A prominent Christian merchant in Boston says: "I find it don't pay to work on Sunday. When I was a boy, I noticed out on Long Wharf there were merchants who loaded their vessels on the Sabbath day, keeping their men busy from morning to night, and it is my observation that they themselves came to nothing. These merchants and their children came to nothing. It does not pay," he says, "to work on the Sabbath." I appeal to your own observation. Where are the men who, twenty years ago, were Sabbath-breakers, and who have been Sabbath-breakers ever since? Without a single exception, you will tell me they came either to financial or moral beggary. I defy you to point out a single exception, and you can take the whole world for your field.

The Sabbath comes — and it bathes the soreness from the limbs, quiets the agitated brain, and puts out the fires of anxiety that have been burning all the week. Our bodies are seven-day clocks; and unless on the seventh day they are wound up, they run

down into the grave. The Sabbath was intended as a savings' bank; into it we are to gather the resources upon which we are to draw all the week. That man who breaks the Sabbath, robs his own nerve, his own muscle, his own brain, his own bones. He dips up the wine of his own life and throws it away. He who breaks the Lord's day, gives a mortgage to disease and death upon his entire physical estate, and at the most unexpected moment that mortgage will be foreclosed and the soul ejected from the premises. Every gland, and pore, and cell, and finger-nail demand the seventh day for repose. The respiration of the lungs, the throb of the pulses in the wrist, the motion of the bone in its socket, declare: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."

VOWS.

YOU said, "If I am ever raised up, and my life is prolonged, it shall be better spent." You said, also, "If I am delivered out of this great trouble, I hope to consecrate my substance more to God." Another time, you said, "If the Lord will return to me the light of His countenance, and bring me out of this depressed state of mind, I will praise Him more than ever before." Have you remembered all this? Coming here myself so lately from a sick bed, I at this time preach to myself. I only wish I had a better hearer; I would preach to myself in this respect, and say, "I charge thee, my heart, to perform thy vow." Some of us, dear friends, have made vows in time of joy, the season of the birth of the first-born child, the recovery of the wife from sickness, the merciful restoration that we have ourselves received, times of increasing goods, or seasons when the splendour of God's face has been unveiled before our wondering eye. Have we not made vows, like Jacob when he woke up from his wondrous dream, and took the stone which had been his pillow, and poured oil on its top, and made a vow unto the Most High? We have all had our Bethels. Let us remember that God has heard us, and let us perform unto Him our vow which our soul made in her time of joy.

But I will not try to open the secret pages of your private note-books. You have had tender passages, which you would not desire me to read aloud: the tears start at their memory. If your life were written, you would say, "Let these not be told; they were

only between God and my soul"—some chaste and blessed love passages between you and Christ, which must not be revealed to men. Have you forgotten how then you said, "I am my beloved's, and he is mine," and what you promised when you saw all His goodness made to pass before you? I have now to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance, and bid you present unto the Lord to-night the double offering of your heart's praise and of your performed vow. "O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together."—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

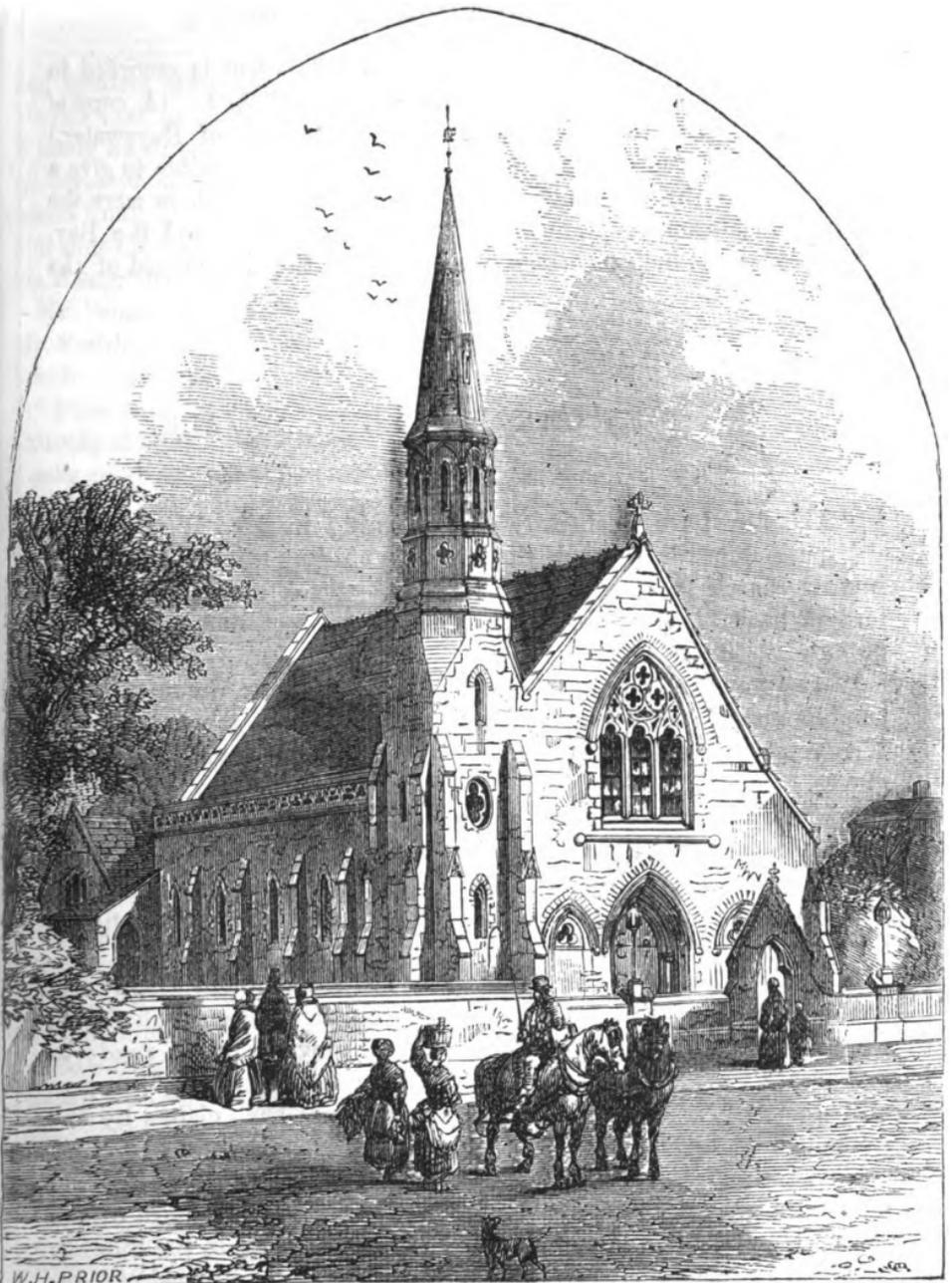
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❧ CROSSBROOK ❧ CONGREGATIONAL ❧ CHURCH,
❧ CHESHUNT.

ALL Church records prior to the year 1848, when the Rev. Thomas Hill, now of Finchley, entered on his ministry, have been lost. Whatever is known of its history has been gathered from other documents and from tradition.

A congregation of Separatists was formed at Theobalds, in the time of Queen Elizabeth. They were however a very feeble band until the accession of James VI. of Scotland to the throne of England. On his arrival he was entertained at Theobalds, in the sumptuous mansion of the Cecils, to which he became so much attached that he purchased the property, and it was constituted a royal palace. It is said that in his household were many Presbyterians, who joined the little congregation gathering at Theobalds. There is a further tradition that the King, wishing to include the meeting-house in the palace grounds, gave the congregation the site in Crossbrook Street (then called Carbuncle Street), on which the present chapel stands. The meeting-house, which was removed in 1857, to make way for the present handsome and convenient structure, was erected in the year 1705, at which time the Rev. Mr. Wadsworth was pastor.

The Rev. Wm. Yates, the Vicar of Cheshunt, was one of the ministers ejected in 1662, but he does not appear to have become the pastor of a congregation of Nonconformists in his own parish. In the following century the congregation enjoyed the frequent ministrations of the Rev. Isaac Watts, D.D. His last public discourse was delivered in the old chapel. The doctor was then so



CHESHUNT CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

infirm that he broke down in delivering it. This fact is recorded in a note appended to the sermon, which was published. (A copy of it is in the possession of the Rev. J. S. Russell, of Bayswater.) Owing to the loss of the Church records, it is impossible to give a correct list of the pastors of the Church; but among them were the Rev. John Mason, M.A., author of "Self Knowledge," and the Rev. Dr. Weybridge, both of whom are interred in the churchyard of the parish church.

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A DEACON'S MORNING WALK.

I

THE fire burned cheerily one morning in Mr. West's cozy parlour, while through the streets a chilling wind was driving in true March fashion; but as the clock struck eleven, Mr. West pushed back his easy-chair, laid down the paper, and prepared to go out.

"Must you really go out to-day, father, and your rheumatism so troublesome?" asked his daughter, who came into the hall just as Mr. West was buttoning up his overcoat and drawing on warm gloves.

"I used to go to business through a March wind, Mary. Do you think we should be more self-indulgent in doing God's work than in doing our own? Good-morning, my dear," he gently added, and Mr. West quickly closed the door after him, a rush of cold air filling the passage as he did so.

Mr. West had been for fifteen years a deacon, and for nearly double that period a member, of the Church meeting in High Street Chapel. Through all these years he had proved himself ready to every good work as far as the claims of an active business life permitted; lately, however, he had been freed from such claims by the relinquishment of business.

This retirement had not been the signal with Mr. West for removing into the country, or even to a more fashionable suburb of the town. He continued to enjoy his modest competency in the locality in which he had realised it, there fulfilling faithfully all local obligations; and of his increased leisure, he gave largely to the service of the Church in connection with which he had found stimulus

and comfort through the anxieties and struggles of earlier days. He felt that in no other neighbourhood, in no new associations, was it likely he could be equally useful; and having been accustomed in all business enterprises to seek such investments for his capital as would bring the surest and highest returns, it scarcely occurred to him that he could be at liberty, in the use of the talents with which his Master had entrusted him, to adopt a directly opposite principle.

Mr. West had paid two of his intended visits, when he encountered Mr. Smith, one of the High Street members. "Good-morning, Mr. Smith; a trying wind, this?"

"Fine healthy weather," replied Mr. Smith, who was younger, untroubled by rheumatism, and a little given to contradiction. "What a poor congregation we had yesterday morning."

"Well, yes, rather so; the weather was unfavourable, and so many people are unwell with colds."

"Oh, I don't know that it was much worse than usual; the attendance is always poor, I think," observed Mr. Smith.

"Not at all such as we could desire in so populous a neighbourhood; but we hear the same complaint elsewhere. The neglect of public worship is a serious thing, and should make us consider, I think, whether even in a small degree it may be attributable to a want of adaptation in our methods and arrangements to the needs of our times."

"As to the same complaint everywhere, I don't know about that. I went last evening to hear Mr. Newbroom. What a congregation! every seat full, and forms in the aisles."

"One vacant seat at High Street accounted for," observed Mr. West; "but I cannot think you could have heard a more thoughtful, earnest sermon than that to which we listened."

"Oh, I don't complain of Mr. Morris as a preacher, though I think his sermons might be more attractive, but I do complain of him as a pastor. It is just four months next Wednesday since either Mr. or Mrs. Morris has been inside my house."

"A tolerably sure sign," said Mr. West, "that you have been unvisited during those months by sickness or sorrow."

"I beg your pardon; no sign at all. There was Mrs. Selfe, dangerously ill, confined to the house three weeks, and not one visit from minister or deacon."

"Mr. Morris was not made aware of her illness, was he?"

"No, Mrs. Selfe objected: she wished to see how long a member

of twenty years' standing could be absent without being missed by her minister."

"My dear sir, do you consider that a minister conducting divine worship is engaged in the most solemn work possible to any human being—speaking from men to God, speaking from God to men? Do you really suppose, does Mrs. Selfe suppose, he can be at the same time engaged in taking an inventory of persons present and persons absent? Mr. Morris much regretted not having seen Mrs. Selfe during her illness, but he has repeatedly warned his people that unless he is informed of the illness of members, he will not be held responsible for their remaining unvisited. Neither can I undertake to discover by observation every absentee, and especially if sitting in a part of the chapel quite out of my sight, as Mrs. Selfe does. However, as you were aware of her illness, and live so near, she doubtless enjoyed the visits of one Christian brother."

"I am no deacon," observed Mr. Smith, hastily; "but as to visits being paid to the sick only, my wife has watched Mrs. Morris call three times on Mrs. Arnold, and Mr. Morris once, within three months. There has been no sickness in that house any more than in our own."

"Yet doubtless you know that Mrs. Morris and Mrs. Arnold had been friends years before Mr. Morris became our minister. But I suppose ministers and ministers' wives ought not to have any personal friendships?"

"No partialities," interposed Mr. Smith.

"Really," Mr. West went on, without noticing the interruption, "our expectations as to what a minister ought to be and to do are something amazing in their unreasonableness. He is to preach every Sunday two 'attractive' sermons—thought fresh and original, style polished, illustrations numerous, telling, well chosen—compositions requiring for their production protracted study, varied reading, mind and imagination unharassed, undistracted. Yet this same man is to be ready to leave his study at every call; be constant by all sick beds, in all houses of mourning, accessible to every one desiring spiritual counsel, make no end of calls where spiritual counsel is the last thing desired, grace social gatherings, conduct prayer meetings, sit on committees, write reports, speak at public meetings, care in various ways for the poor of the neighbourhood. We expect our minister to be aware of circumstances never told him, to be in different places at one time, to find one week to him as a month;

to be, in fact, something more than human, and—something 'less ; sinking in ministerial routine all personal preferences, tastes, habits, the individuality which is every man's birthright (though of course he is never to grow stiffened and official by this process); and in addition we expect all this to be done in many cases upon an income on which some of us would deem it impossible to live. We expect—but I'm afraid I am getting warm," said Mr. West, stopping suddenly, "and I certainly have been getting cold a very long time. Try, my friend, to imagine yourself in your minister's place, considering whether all you expect is reasonable or even possible, and do not forget that every member of a Church is responsible for its well being, in his or her degree, as truly as the minister or deacons."

As Mr. West hurried on, the complaints to which he had listened occupied his mind, and gave occasion to thoughts something like these :—"What can be the causes of such irrational expectations prevailing among us in respect to a minister's duties? In many cases they arise, I suppose, from an egotistic narrowness, an inability to so much as 'look' intelligently 'on the things of others,' an utter failure to appreciate the obligations, difficulties, possibilities, impossibilities of any position, any mode of activity differing from their own. Then there is personal vanity, self-importance, the inversion of the precepts, 'In honour preferring one another,' 'Let each esteem other better than themselves.' Probably Mrs. Selfe never supposed that Mr. Morris could observe every vacant place, but her place being vacant should of course have struck him instantly; nor Mr. Smith, that the minister could pay two or three visits, or even one within three months, to every house, but then his house should in the very nature of things be an exception. How many ways self has of asserting its claims. Oh, for the heart at leisure 'from itself,' for the mind 'to be in us which was also in Christ Jesus.'"

But here Mr. West's reflections were interrupted by his arrival at the third point to which his morning walk was to be directed.

K. L. G.

STRANGE! how the beauty and mystery of all nature is heightened by the near prospect of that coming darkness which will sweep it all away; that night which will have no star in it! What an air of freshness, of novelty and surprise, does each old and familiar object assume to me when I think of parting with it for ever.

GERTIE'S PARTY.

GERTIE was ten years old, and thought she was old enough to have a party. "Every other girl did," she said, and she tired mamma with teasing about it.

At last Mrs. Clay put on her thinking-cap, and sat so long that Gertie recited the multiplication-table backward at least twice.

"You may have your party, Gertie," her mamma said, at last; "or rather, you may come to one that I will have for you next Wednesday afternoon, and invite any ten little girls that you would like to have come also, only you are not to ask a question until then about it."

Wednesday came, and so did Gertie, and her friend Mabel Seal, and nine other little girls, all dressed as nicely as careful mammas thought best; and last of all came Mrs. Clay also.

"For it is my party, you know," she said. "And I want to tell you a story to begin with." Nobody objected to that, of course, and a good many white handkerchiefs crept up to the faces as they heard of a poor little home in their city that the fire had stolen into a few nights before, and eaten up everything, even to the few clothes they had, and scorched a poor little baby's face and hands, before its mamma could get it out.

"And I thought," said Mrs. Clay, "I would make some clothes for the poor baby to-day, and if any of you wanted to help me you could."

In a few minutes the little brass thimbles Mrs. Clay provided were fitted on, and tapping against needles that were running up sleeves, making cord. or hemming.

What a busy two hours that was before tea, and then by eight o'clock they could hardly believe that a little dress, two aprons, and a baby's gown were really finished, and their work, too.

"Better than a dancing-party, ever so much," they all said.

"Come next Saturday afternoon, and I will tell you about the baby," said Mrs. Clay.

They came, and when they found the baby there, and bright in the new dress and apron, in spite of the burned face, they adopted it at once, and Gertie's party grew into the "Busy Bees," who make honey for some poor baby every Wednesday. By honey, I mean clothes for the body and comfort for the heart; and they are learning what the dear Saviour meant when He said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

"GIVE ME A BAIRN'S HYMN."

"I HAVE just been reading," says Rev. Theodore L. Cuyler, through eyes brimming with tears, the narrative of Dr. Guthrie's last hours. They were all in perfect keeping with his noble and beautiful life. For three-score years and ten Guthrie had been following after Jesus, who "went about doing good." To the last he was the same simple-hearted, genial, childlike creature, in genius a full-grown man, in simplicity a child.

His love of children was a passion with him. He had eleven of his own, one of whom, Johnnie, had gone home to heaven in his infancy. For the poor outcast lads and the lasses of the wretched "Cowgate" in Edinburgh, Dr. Guthrie's heart went out in tenderest compassion. He visited them in their miserable whisky-cursed homes. He organised for them the first "ragged school" ever established in Scotland. And, among all his printed productions, his "Plea for Ragged Schools" is the most characteristically touching and eloquent.

When the great pulpit-orator came to die, he grew more and more like a child himself. He felt like a babe on the bosom of Jesus. The sight of a little grandchild who came into his dying chamber brought a smile over his pale face, and he whispered, "Put her up." When lifted on the bed, she crept up to him and kissed him, and he nodded his head, and said sweetly, "My bonnie lamb!"

During those last hours he found great solace in the singing of dear old favourite psalms and "spiritual songs." But of none was he so fond as of simple Sunday-school melodies. When they asked him, on one of the last nights of his life, "What shall we sing for you?" he answered quickly, "Give me a bairn's hymn." So they sang for the veteran pilgrim, "Jesus, tender Shepherd, hear me," and "There is a happy land, far, far away."

Glorious old hero of the Cross! His theology was all narrowed down to one word, Christ. His faith was the faith of a little child. When asked, "Have you that Saviour now?" he promptly answered, "Yes; I have none else." Then he was heard to murmur to himself, "Over on the other side," and kept ejaculating the words, "Happy, happy, happy!" And so he fell asleep in Jesus, without a struggle or a sigh. The last of earth was the beginning of the everlasting weight of glory. To-day Scotland weeps over the

silence of her most gifted tongue. But the voice has passed into the harmonies of heaven, and Guthrie is singing a bairn's hymn before the Throne !

REBREATHEd AIR.

THE crowded badly-ventilated school-room is often the place where, early in life, rebreathed air commences its deadly work. Not one school-room in a hundred in this country is a fit place in which to confine children six or eight hours of the day. The little ones are herded together in a promiscuous crowd ; those of tender years and those more advanced, the feeble and the strong, the sickly and the well, are all subjected to the same hours of study, the same school discipline, and all breathe the same deleterious air. The hardy and the strong may be able to resist the influence of the poison ; the weak and tender ones grow pale and haggard, and struggling on through their school-days, live perhaps to the age of youth, and then drop into the consumptive's grave. Will parents never awake to the enormity of this evil ? And yet the Government and the Education department of this country, with criminal indifference, cram children together into so-called national schools, and sacrifice the health and life of the young merely to gratify sectarian and political selfishness.

THOUGHTS—GRAVE AND GAY.

A SHREWD farmer, speaking of a popular minister, remarked : " Certainly, he is a great preacher, but he will rake with the teeth upward."

Christianity is not sent into this world to establish monarchy or secure the franchise, to establish socialism or to frown it into annihilation ; but to establish a charity, and a moderation, and a sense of duty, and a love of right, which will modify human life according to any circumstances that can possibly arise.

I ask the mountain, " Why art thou suddenly so dark ?" And the mountain answers, " Ask the passing cloud that shadows me." " Why, O most beautiful ocean ! art thou so changeful ?" And the sea answers, " Ask the sky above, that showers down, now

radiance, now this gloom." "Why, O thou eternal sky! dost thou wrap thyself in clouds?" And the sky answers, "Ask the valleys of the earth; they breathe this sadness up to me; it is not mine." Nothing stands circumscribed within itself. There is no self that is not half another's.

A Christian man was dying in Scotland. His daughter Nelly was sitting by his bedside. It was Sunday evening, and the bell of the Scotch kirk was ringing, calling the people to church. The good old man, in his dying dream, thought that he was on his way to church, as he used to be when he went in his sleigh across the river; and, as the evening bell struck up, in his dying dream he thought it was the call to church. He said, "Hark, children, the bells are ringing; we shall be late; we must make the mare step out quick!" He shivered, and then said, "Pull the plaid up closer, my lass! It is cold crossing the river, but we will soon be there!" And he smiled and said, "Just there now!" No wonder he smiled. The good old man had gone to church. Not to the old Scotch kirk, but to the temples in the skies. Just across the river.

I suppose no farmer ever broke up an old pasture that he did not unsettle a population of millions of grubs, black-backed beetles, and mice, together with the stores which they had laid up, and of which he knows nothing. And I have no doubt that if you were to take statistics of their opinion, you would not find one of them that, being overturned in the furrow, did not think that the disturbance of the soil had produced confusion worse confounded, wreck and ruin. Yet out of this ploughing, sub-soiling, scarifying, and harrowing, come the new grass, a better harvest, and a brighter future. It is worth while to plough under the old once in a while, in order to get the new. All this Mr. Disraeli and his friends would call "harassing."

Be not a drone in God's busy hive.

OUR CHURCH NEWS.

THE Premier recently addressed an illustrious audience at a City banquet. His hearers were "Tailors"—"Merchant Tailors." Among other important disclosures confided by the speaker to his hearers, was that the Conservative party had conferred upon the people of this country "religious equality!" We need not say that Mr. Disraeli is much too clever a person to have believed a word of

what he said. He was simply suiting his style to the tastes and appetite of the company. It was in a similar strain that he not long before referred to the question of the extension of the county franchise. "This is," he said, "an old country, a country influenced greatly by tradition, a country that respects authority from habit, a country which expects, in the constitution of political power, that it should be invested as much as possible with a venerable character." This kind of stuff—"flapdoodle" a brother novelist of the Premier has designated it—"the stuff that fools are fed with"—is popular in some quarters just now. Dr. Johnson once explained the reason of a worthless book by saying of the author and his readers, "His nonsense suited their nonsense;" and Mr. Disraeli doubtless thought that if nonsense would do, sense would be thrown away upon his hearers.

Of course "The Times," bluntly enough, next day told Mr. Disraeli: "There is plenty of religious liberty; there is some religious toleration; there is even some justice and charity between conflicting sects: but equality there is not, and cannot be while there is a National Church. As well might it be said that there is social equality, when there exists a sovereign and a peerage and titles of honour." But Mr. Disraeli knew all that just as well as his admonitor.

We now-a-day meet with very strong language from Churchmen on Church matters. Lord Shaftesbury, in reference to the Ritualistic party, at the meeting of the Church Pastoral Aid Society, recently said: "We will endeavour not to purify the Church of England, for she is pure; but to purge her communion through the introduction of a new spirit, or else—I for one don't shrink from the alternative, I rejoice at the prospect—by expelling the generation of vipers who are gnawing at her heart and poisoning the maternal bosom in which they have been fostered."

The "Examiner" has recently been dealing with ecclesiastical questions in a style that reminds us of what that journal was in former days. It declares that "gradually and clearly, like the growth of a crystal in a chemical solution, the new Liberal party is being developed along its inevitable lines amidst the deserted elements of Whiggery." Amongst these lines the question of religious equality is placed first. "If we hesitate," it says, "to add religious equality to our list, it is because this has been hitherto regarded so much from a sectarian point of view, that people outside of all sects have got into the habit of thinking it no concern of theirs. And while we

fully admit, as a matter of fact, the overwhelming political power of the religious denominations, they are so evenly divided in opinion on this question, that, apart from a very considerable accession of force from outsiders, we confess ourselves entirely hopeless of any speedy and decisive issue. So long as the conflict lies between nonconforming sects on the one hand and conforming sects on the other, we may admire the pluck with which the former wage an uneven battle; but the prevalent reaction towards mediæval superstition will not allow even their most sanguine sympathisers to think them capable of swallowing up their adversaries. Meantime the balance of power is at least potentially held by the so-called 'non-worshipping' population, whose numbers may be vaguely estimated, partly by the lamentations of religious societies, and partly by the anxiety of political Churchmen to obtain a census, which would, as a matter of form, enrol them all as members of the Church of England. It is perfectly obvious, then, that if this undenominational section of the public could be won over to throw its weight substantially on one side or the other of the conflict that rages round our remaining Church establishments, the issue would be practically decided."

Mr. Gordon, in a recent debate, truly remarked, "That to compare that Divine institution, the old Jewish Church, through which the heart of God thrilled, with a Disraelian governmental department, was a comparison which was a profanity!" "The Church of England," says Mr. Goldwin Smith, "has been betrayed into a political engine, her offices have become political patronage. Successors of the apostles!—supposed keepers of the truth!—the channels of the Holy Spirit! By whom have they been appointed? By the reprobate Buckingham, by the infidel Bolingbroke, by the cynic Walpole, and now, by men who speak of Christianity as a lower form of Judaism."

A fine colossal statue of Bunyan has been placed on its pedestal in Bedford. The Dean of Westminster and other distinguished representatives of the Christian Church took part in the proceedings. The statue is of bronze, and is executed by Mr. Boehm. It is presented to the town by the Duke of Bedford.

The Bishop of Lincoln professes to be anxious to reconcile the Wesleyans to the Established Church. He tells the Wesleyan ministers, if they give up their claim to be regarded as ministers, he will be happy to see them received into his own communion, and

allow them to be lay preachers, and would use their chapels as "preaching houses." "But," he adds, "I would not let you administer the sacraments."

The Mayor of Buckingham recently applied to one of the curates of that place to baptize his child, and was informed that his daughter could not be accepted as sponsor, as she had been guilty of "the sin of schism," in attending a Congregational Chapel.

Mr. Spurgeon says: "A clergyman writes to inform us that the gout is sent to us as a judgment from God for opposing the Church of England. If a swollen leg proves that a man is under God's displeasure, what would a broken neck prove? We ask the question with special reference to the late Bishop of Oxford. As for the information, that on account of our late speech at the Liberation Society's meeting, we shall soon have another attack, and in all probability will be carried off by it, we will wait and see if it be true."

There are now at the Milton Mount College 118 pupils—78 at £15, 5 at £20, 1 at £24, 2 at £25, and 32 at £30. The debt on the institution amounts to £8,000. Mrs. Joseph Crossley, of Halifax, has collected a sum of £2,600, the interest of which is in perpetuity to be devoted to the payment of the salary of the head mistress.

A site for a new Airedale College has been acquired, overlooking Manningham Park. Towards the £17,000 which will be required, about £12,000 have been raised.

A new Congregational church, erected at a cost of £2,600, has been opened at Hornsea, Yorkshire.—The new school-rooms and lecture-hall, recently completed, at a cost of about £4,000, in connection with Clapton Park Church, of which the Rev. S. Hebditch is pastor, have been opened. The principal room is sixty feet long and thirty-six feet wide: there are eleven other rooms adapted for classrooms, and the children now under instruction in connection with the congregation number 915.

Rev. T. W. Davids having, on account of feeble health, retired from the pastorate of the Church at Colchester, the members of his Church and congregation have raised for him the sum of £1,000, to be paid to the Pastors' Retiring Fund, from which he will receive an annuity of £165. This is a very satisfactory arrangement, and worthy of imitation elsewhere.—The Rev. Robert Berry, of Lambeth, has accepted a unanimous invitation to the pastorate of the Luton Congregational Church.

DEVOUTNESS.

BY REV. SAMUEL MARTIN.

THE following passages are taken from a beautiful and touching address recently delivered by Mr. Martin to the students of New College, London:—

“I, to a great extent, am looking backward upon a ministry almost fulfilled. But the difference between your position and mine does not prevent sympathy and fellowship. You, in the prospect which you cherish, and I, in the retrospect which is forced upon me, meet, as it were, face to face, and we find ourselves on this occasion in spiritual conjunction with each other. May our hearts be one while I venture to speak, and while you kindly and courteously listen. I have said that I am looking back. May I tell you in what light the past appears to me? Retrospect is not merely that which was once prospect, reversed. It is not an exact counterpart of the present. It is not a mirror only of the future. If there be the same objects in that which ‘was,’ and ‘is,’ and ‘is to come,’ they are not in the same position, nor do they sustain the same relations. The past was once morning; it is now night. The past was once stones and timber collected and ready for the building; it is now material incorporated in the structure itself. The past was once a way we had not gone before; it is now a trodden path. The past was once a sanctuary veiled; it is now a sanctuary with the veil rent.

“Looking at the past, life appears very short. The day of one’s birth seems very near to this day. The life-picture has but a narrow background; it is made up largely of foreground. Verily life seems as a vapour, and the days have passed swiftly as a weaver’s shuttle. And the work wrought appears very little; compared with youthful visions and dreams, little; compared with the longing of one’s heart, little; compared with the demand for work, little; compared with the principles and motives of Christian endeavour, little; compared with the sphere of labour, little; and little compared with that which some others have done. It seems very small in the presence of the Christ, and very small before the face of our heavenly Father, and very small in prospect of the day of judgment; too small to supply a thread of material for a robe of righteousness or for a garment of salvation. Some of the work wrought which appeared at

the time very important seems in review comparatively insignificant. The place of assembly does not seem of as much consequence as in former years. Organisations for Christian work do not appear as essential as they once did. The support of the claims of societies is not now felt to be as sure a sign of Church vitality as I once thought it to be. The people should be first in our thoughts, then the place; the worshippers, then the house of worship; the characters and lives of our Church members, then united labours of love.

“Have we not some of us reversed the order? Many, and more than many, *imperfections* show themselves to me in this retrospect. These, one would not intrude on your notice. They are wounds and bruises to be shown only to the Great Healer. But I may say that no man can work by the side of the Christ without feeling the faults and defects of his own work. No man can survey his work with the light which makes all things manifest without feeling how far below the level of “well done” that work really is. And when feeling the imperfections of one’s work, how unutterably precious is our Saviour. He appears in the midst of one’s life, torch in hand, burning up the wood, hay, and stubble, but preserving the gold, silver, and precious stones. He appears in the midst of our life with fan in hand, winnowing the grain and scattering the chaff, while He garners the wheat. He appears in the midst of life with both sword and trowel in hand, constructing God’s building as we cannot construct it, and defending the structure as we cannot defend it. Blessed Saviour, we commit past, present, and future to Thee! . . .

“My topic has been mentioned in the prayer. It was asked of God that you might be devout. That is my subject. In our Holy Book, Simeon is called just and *devout*. It is written in the Acts of Apostles that on the day of Pentecost there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews—*devout* men. Also that *devout* men carried Stephen to his burial. It is written of Cornelius that he was a *devout* man. One of his attendants is called a *devout* soldier. We read of *devout* women, and *devout* Greeks, and *devout* persons at Athens. Ananias is called by Paul a *devout* man according to the law. May I commend this devoutness to your serious and earnest attention! May I talk a little of devout speech and devout behaviour! From cant, and sanctimoniousness, and moroseness, and mock seriousness, may the good Lord deliver you! And may He also preserve you from flippancy, and lightness, and frivolity, and unchastened hilarity! You are devotees to Jesus.

Vows are upon you. You are consecrated to God for a special service. Then there should be reverential and ceaseless attention to worship and religious meditation, absorption by religious pursuits, self-sacrifice in doing good, seriousness everywhere, and seriousness about everything. Seriousness! There is enough in ourselves to make us serious if we only know ourselves. There is more than enough in the world if we are observant and thoughtful. And how much is there in Christian truth which begets the same chastened state of mind? The seriousness of which we speak is quite consistent with buoyancy of spirit and thorough cheerfulness. No old heads on young shoulders. On young shoulders, young heads.

“I entreat you, be devout. I do not say put on devoutness as a garment, but let devoutness come forth from that which is within you, as a wholesome and unspotted skin from pure blood, and as the colour of tree foliage from the vegetable sap. There is that in your creed which should make you devout. There is depth and there is breadth, and there is height in your religious beliefs, which ought to subdue all irreverence, and secure the utmost devoutness of spirit and behaviour. Your creed is not held by your fingers grasping a book. Your creed is not in your mouth as it recites a form of doctrine. Your creed is in your heart, engrained therein by the living God with His own hand. And what a creed is yours! It is full of gospel. It embraces the reign of law. It is full of facts. It includes many doctrines—some grand and lofty like the everlasting mountains, others sweet and tender as a fertile valley; some shining as the sun, others glistening like a glowworm; some speaking with the voice of ocean, others with the voice of singing birds; some doctrines like milk for babes, others like meat for men; some like blocks of marble, others like precious stones.

“What a glorious creed is the faith of a Christian! Hold it fast, my young brothers, and hold it ever. Then in all times of your tribulation and in all times of your wealth, in the hour of death and in the day of judgment, it will hold you, and will be as a tried and tested anchor to your soul. *Be devout. . . .*

“Be devout. Devoutness may be expected from your calling. I say calling, for the work to which you are consecrated is a vocation. It is not a profession which you have chosen, but a work and service for which you are elect of God. There is a sense in which you are apostles, God’s sent ones, unless you be deceived and others be deceived in you. Are you all called of God? No man can prosper

in the ministry who enters upon it as a matter of taste, or as a means of livelihood, or in response to the wishes of kindred and friends. God has, we trust, planted the thought of the ministry in your mind. God has awakened the desire in your hearts. God has led you step by step to your present position. Oh, what a frontlet to wear! 'Called by God to be a preacher and a pastor.' What a phylactery to put upon your raiment! 'Ministers, by the will of God.' What a calling! Called to be shepherds of men under the Chief Shepherd, Christ Jesus. Called to be teachers of men, leaders of men, guides of men, preachers to men, spiritual overseers, and in matters of religion and benevolence servants to all men. There is a pressure and weight in such work which ought to make a man devout. Is there any calling like unto it—to be compared with it?

"May I ask you to renew your consecration here and now? In baptism you were offered to the Lord—devoted to the Lord—lent to the Lord. What changes have passed over you since then? The babe is a young man. Is the father yet alive? Is the dear mother still the sweet light of the home? Have brothers and sisters been preserved to each other, and is the family unbroken? or is there a place called a grave which has become the property of your family? And have some gone out—been carried out, never to return? Is the home of infancy and childhood and youth to-day as in the long yesterday? And what do the voices of the past in that home say? What is the writing upon the walls of that dwelling? There are some memorable days in your history. Of course, the day of your birth is one. Others are—the day of your baptism; the day on which you were first conscious and assured of being a Christian; the day of your first communion; the day on which you first mentioned your desire to addict yourself to the ministry; the day on which you preached your first sermon; the day of your admission to this college.

"I am leading you through the past to the present. Spiritually and religiously where are you to-day? Has hard study pressed spiritual life out of you? Has literary ambition choked religious affections? Have the fascinations of broad reading restricted your devotional use of the Bible? Has the bloom of your piety been brushed off by contact with other young men? Does the ministry seem less solemn through your intellectual training for it, and less real through a constant professional view of it? Or have you from all these evils been kept and preserved? In either case you will not refuse me when I ask the reconsecration of yourselves this night to your Saviour, and

to the ministry of the Word. He is with us here, and will accept you as you renew your dedication vows to Himself. Surely He will put His hand upon you and bless you. Oh, be wholly consecrated, and show by devoutness that you are devoted to Jesus the Christ. Be that which you ought to be, and appear to be that which you really are. 'God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that ye, having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.' By God's help, be devout men.

"Have I spoken too seriously? I hope I have not spoken discouragingly. I am sure I have not spoken unlovingly. As to seriousness—it is demanded by the occasion, and accords with my position. It is evening with me, and the day is far spent. A grey tint suits an evening sky. It is the usher of the night. This tint is not unpleasant to the eye. Nor ought it to suggest storms and tempest. No sadness of heart have I brought to this service; but seriousness I have brought, and in this I am sure I have the sanction of your sound sense and your sincere piety. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

THE MIRACLES OF OUR LORD.

SO in the gathering dusk He gradually and gently succeeded in persuading the multitude to leave Him, and when all but the most enthusiastic had streamed away to their homes or caravans, He suddenly left the rest, and fled from them to the hill-top alone to pray. He was conscious that a solemn and awful crisis of His day on earth was come, and by communing with His heavenly Father, He would nerve His soul for the stern work of the morrow, and the bitter conflict of many coming weeks. Once before He had spent in the mountain solitudes a night of lonely prayer, but then it was before the choice of His beloved apostles, and the glad tidings of His earliest and happiest ministry. Far different were the feelings with which the Great High Priest now climbed the rocky stairs of that great mountain altar which in His temple of the night seemed to lift Him nearer to the stars of God. The murder of His beloved forerunner brought home to His soul more nearly the thought of death; nor was He deceived by this brief blaze of a falsely-founded popularity, which on the next day He meant to quench. The storm which now began to sweep over the barren hills; the winds that

rushed howling down the ravines; the lake before Him buffeted into tempestuous foam; the little boat which—as the moonlight struggled through the rifted clouds—He saw tossing beneath Him on the labouring waves, were all too sure an emblem of the altered aspects of His earthly life. But there on the desolate hill-top, in that night of storm, he could gain strength and peace and happiness unspeakable; for there He was alone with God. And so over that figure, bowed in lonely prayer upon the hills, and over those toilers upon the troubled lake, the darkness fell and the great winds blew.

Hour after hour passed by. It was now the fourth watch of the night; the ship had traversed but half of its destined course; it was dark, and the wind was contrary, and the waves boisterous, and they were distressed with toiling at the oar, and above all there was no one with them now to calm and save, for Jesus was alone upon the land. They were tossing on the perilous sea; but all the while He saw and pitied them, and at last, in their worst extremity, they saw a gleam in the darkness, and an awful figure, and a fluttering robe, and One drew near them, treading upon the ridges of the sea, but seemed as if He meant to pass them by; and they cried out in terror at the sight, thinking it was a phantom that walked upon the waves. And through the storm and darkness to them—as so often to us, when, amid the darkneses of life the ocean seems so great, and our little boats so small—there thrilled that Voice of peace, which said, “It is I; be not afraid.”

That Voice stilled their terrors, and at once they were eager to receive Him into the ship; but Peter’s impetuous love—the strong yearning of him who, in his despairing self-consciousness, had cried out, “Depart from me!”—now cannot even await His approach, and he passionately exclaims—

“Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.”

“Come!”

And over the vessel’s side into the troubled waves he sprang, and while his eye was fixed on his Lord, the wind might toss his hair, and the spray might drench his robes, but all was well; but when, with wavering faith, he glanced from Him to the furious waves, and to the gulfy blackness underneath, then he began to sink, and in an accent of despair—how unlike his former confidence!—he faintly cried, “Lord, save me!” Nor did Jesus fail. Instantly, with a smile of pity, He stretched out His hand, and grasped the hand of

His drowning disciple, with the gentle rebuke, "O thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt?" And so, his love satisfied, but his over confidence rebuked, they climbed—the Lord and His abashed apostle—into the boat; and the wind lulled, and amid the ripple of waves upon a moonlit shore, they were at the haven where they would be; and all—the crew as well as His disciples—were filled with deeper and deeper amazement, and some of them, addressing Him by a title which Nathaniel alone had applied to Him before, exclaimed, "Truly thou art the Son of God."

Let us pause for a moment longer over this wonderful narrative, perhaps of all others the most difficult for our feeble faith to believe or understand. Some have tried in various methods to explain away its miraculous character; they have laboured to show that it may mean no more than that Jesus walked along the shore parallel to the vessel; or even that, in the darkness, the apostles may have thought at first that he was, or had been, walking upon the sea. Such subterfuges are idle and superfluous. If any man find himself unable to believe in miracles—even if he think it wrong to try and acquire the faith which accepts them—then let him be thoroughly convinced in his own mind, and cling honestly to the truth as he conceives it. It is not for us, or for any man, to judge another; to his own Master he standeth or falleth. But let him not attempt to foist such disbelief into the plain narrative of the Evangelists. That they intended to describe an amazing miracle is indisputable to any one who carefully reads their words; and, as I have said before, if, believing in God, we believe in a Divine Providence over the lives of men—and, believing in that Divine Providence, believe in the miraculous—and, believing in the miraculous, accept as truth the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ—and, believing that resurrection, believe that He was indeed the Son of God—then, however deeply we may realise the beauty and the wonder and the power of natural laws, we realise yet more deeply the power of Him who holds those laws, and all which they have evolved, in the hollow of His hand; and to us the miraculous, when thus attested, will be in no way more stupendous than the natural, nor shall we find it an impossible conception that He who sent His Son to earth to die for us should have put all authority into His hand.

So then, if like Peter, we fix our eyes on Jesus, we too may walk triumphantly over the swelling waves of disbelief, and unterrified amid the rising winds of doubt; but if we turn away our eyes from

Him in whom we have believed—if, as it is so easy to do, and as we are so much tempted to do, we look rather at the power and fury of those terrible and destructive elements than at Him who can help and save—then we too shall inevitably sink. Oh, if we feel, often and often, that the water-floods threaten to drown us, and the deep to swallow up the tossed vessel of our Church and Faith, may it again and again be granted us to hear, amid the storm and the darkness, and the voices prophesying war, those two sweetest of the Saviour's utterances—

“Fear not. Only believe.”

“It is I. Be not afraid.”—*Farrar's Life of Christ.*

AUNT FANNY'S STORIES.

NO. IV.

WINNIE'S WISH.

“WHAT were those words I heard just now as I was passing the schoolroom door?” I asked of a party of girls and boys standing ready to start with me for a walk. “They sounded to me like ‘horrid lessons.’” Some of the children laughed, and one stout rosy-cheeked boy looked down rather guiltily, but presently glancing at me with a pair of blue eyes full of fun, he said,—

“Well, auntie, of course they may be useful, and all that, like medicine, but no one can say they are not horrid, particularly on a fine day like this.”

“And you would like to have it always holiday, would you?” “Of course I should,” was the unhesitating reply. “And I suppose you all agree with Charlie,” I said to the rest. Yes, it appeared there was but one opinion among them on that point. Lessons were a necessary evil, to be endured with as much patience as might be, and ‘all holiday’ their idea of perfect bliss. “Then, if you like, you shall have a story to-day of a little girl who once thought as you did, but changed her mind.” As they eagerly assented to this, I began at once.

“Winnie, what are you thinking about?” asked a patient-looking mamma one Monday morning of her daughter, about ten years old, who sat with a book on her lap, gazing out of the window, and occasionally uttering deep sighs. The prospect outside was cheerful enough. It was a bright spring morning, and the blue sky contrasted

with the pure fresh green of the trees and hedges, while the sun shone upon a field full of sheep and lambs, the mothers peacefully feeding, while the young ones frolicked and sported and ran races with each other to their hearts' content.

"Winifred Graham was the eldest of six little girls, but the governess, Miss Jones, said she was the most troublesome to teach of them all, because, though quick enough, she took no interest in her lessons, and seemed to dislike learning anything. Many a time like the present she had been sent into her mamma's room, that she might be quite quiet, and have no excuse for not learning her lessons perfectly. There had been complete silence for the last half-hour, except the scratching of Mrs. Graham's pen as she wrote letters, and the deep-drawn sighs uttered by the child, which at last caused her mother to ask the question, 'What *can* you be thinking of, Winnie?'

"'I was only thinking how happy those little lambs look, with nothing to do this lovely day but to enjoy themselves,' replied Winnie.

"'And wishing that you were one of them?' asked her mother.

"'It would be very nice to have nothing that one is obliged to do,' Winnie admitted, looking, however, a little bit ashamed of herself.

"'You would be as unhappy, if you had nothing to do, as those lambs would be if forced to work,' said Mrs. Graham.

"'Oh, no; it would be delightful to be able to do just what I like; you have no lessons, mamma.'

"'Have I not?' returned her mother. 'If you think I do just what I like, you are very much mistaken. I have my work, papa has his, and you children have yours. And if you had no work to do, Winnie, you would be a very miserable little girl. God, who has formed the lambs and calves and kittens for play, formed children for work and play too. They have minds to be taken care of, as well as bodies, and both require food.'

"'I always enjoy a holiday,' persisted Winnie.

"'Yes, but that is because of the lessons that come first. If it were not for them you wouldn't enjoy it at all; besides, in your holidays you are not left to do exactly as you like.'

"'No,' said Winnie, 'there are always things we are obliged to do,' and she sighed.

"'Now listen to me, Winnie,' said Mrs. Graham, presently. 'If you like, you shall have a week's holiday. This is Monday, and until this day week you shall do exactly as you please. I do not think you will enjoy it so much as you expect, but if you wish you shall try.'

“ ‘Oh, mamma!’ exclaimed the child, ‘may I really? Of course I shall enjoy it.’

“ ‘Very well, dear, then you shall have it.’ And Mrs. Graham left Winnie overwhelmed with the greatness of her treat.

“ ‘Six whole days to do what I like with! A whole week with no horrid lessons, and nothing that I *must* do! How delightful!’ And away she skipped into the garden, where she remained till her sisters joined her, when she entertained them with all she meant to do in her holiday.

“It seemed very strange to Winnie next morning, when after breakfast her sisters went off with Miss Jones to the schoolroom, and Mrs. Graham to look after household matters, to find herself left alone with a day before her to spend as she liked. The first half-hour of it was employed in making up her mind what she most wanted to do, but before she had decided she heard her mother’s step, and not wishing to be found doing nothing, she ran into the garden. It was a fine day, so there was not much difficulty in getting through several hours without doing anything particular, and when the others came out they all went for a walk. The afternoon was spent much like the morning, except that Winnie yawned a little more, and found it pass so slowly, that she several times listened at the schoolroom door, to make sure that it was still school time. She told herself, however, when going to bed that night, that it had been a delightful day, though it puzzled her why she should feel so very tired, having done so little. Next day she meant to make some real use of her holiday. Next day, however, was wet; the sky one mass of heavy black clouds, and the rain pattering hopelessly against the window. Winnie’s heart sank a little as she sat at the breakfast table with the rest. Miss Jones was saying cheerfully, ‘Never mind the weather, it won’t interfere with our English history, and after dinner I daresay it will clear up.’ When they had disappeared, Winnie stood for some time at the window, watching the dripping shrubs and flowers; then she came and stood by her mother, who was writing at the table.

“ ‘Mamma,’ she said, presently, ‘what do you think I had better do this morning?’

“Mrs. Graham looked up. ‘Well, dear, suppose you get your workbox and do some work, or read, or practise your drawing, as you can’t go out. You mustn’t talk to me, for I am very busy.’

“Winnie thought her mamma’s suggestions were almost too much

like school work for a holiday ; but as she could think of no others, she said nothing, and slowly left the room, going up to the nursery, a place she had rather given up of late years ; but a romp with baby seemed desirable this wet morning. Nurse met her, however, with uplifted finger. Baby was asleep, and must not be awakened, so Winnie was again thrown upon her own resources. A little more time was spent in standing at the passage window, listening to the voices in the schoolroom, till, hearing the parlour door open, she ran into her own little room, and taking up a story book, she stayed there till called to dinner.

"Mrs. Graham had a plan, greatly approved of by the children, of giving certain weekly treats depending upon Miss Jones's report of their progress and good behaviour in school hours. Wednesday, being a half holiday, was very often the day chosen, and therefore there was a good deal of excitement at dinner time.

"'We have all been good, mamma,' little Maud said presently, unable to wait any longer.

"'And I am at the top of the class,' added Rosa.

"'And my writing was neatest,' said Nelly.

"'Mamma, I didn't miss a word of my lesson,' cried Katie.

"Mamma smiled. 'Well, I had thought of taking you all for a drive to Mayfield farm, but it must depend on the weather.'

"'It will clear up, I'm certain,' cried one.

"'I see a bit of blue sky,' exclaimed another, running to the window.

"Winnie said nothing ; she knew that in common fairness she could not expect to be included in a reward for school work ; yet when they all drove off, the sun having come out, she could not help a pang of regret. Mrs. Graham saw the dismal face, and came back to whisper, 'Make yourself happy, dear, while we are away. You had better take a walk ; we shall not be long.' But Winnie did not feel at all inclined for a walk ; she was out of spirits, and rather cross. It was only the third day of her holiday, and she was beginning to get tired of it already. She wandered into the schoolroom, looked into the books, and finally went sound asleep on the sofa, from which sleep she was only wakened by the sound of the returning wheels, which made her jump up and run from the room. Winnie often said in after years how thoroughly that week in her childhood taught her the lesson that the hardest and most tiring work we can have is *doing nothing*.

"On Thursday morning Winnie rose in spirits, for two reasons.

First, the sun was shining, and, secondly, there were only three more days left of her holiday. Yes, it had come to pass that she was longing for her week to end, though she would not confess it, even to herself. She intended to spend a long day in the garden, and to weed and rake her own little plot of ground, which much needed it. She set to work so vigorously, that it was soon done, and Winnie was wandering round the garden, wondering what to do next. Now the old hymn says, 'Satan finds some mischief still, for idle hands to do;' and never was anything more true. I am only surprised that this pair of idle hands had not before now got into mischief!

"'Dear me,' said Winnie to herself, 'how this path wants rolling. And there's the garden roller. We are not allowed to touch it, but that's because mamma thinks it's too heavy. I don't believe it's so very heavy,' and she gave it a pull. 'No, it's quite easy.'

"She dragged it with difficulty to the end of the walk; but coming back the ground sloped a little, and Winnie saw, to her horror, that the roller was running on to a bed of choice geraniums. She could not stop it, but in trying, she got one foot under it, and screamed with the pain. Her mother heard her, and came out. Though the hurt was not serious, she was very vexed at the damage done to the plants and at her child's disobedience; but when Winnie, bitterly sobbing, said, 'Mamma, you were right. It is all because I had nothing to do!' she was glad it had happened.

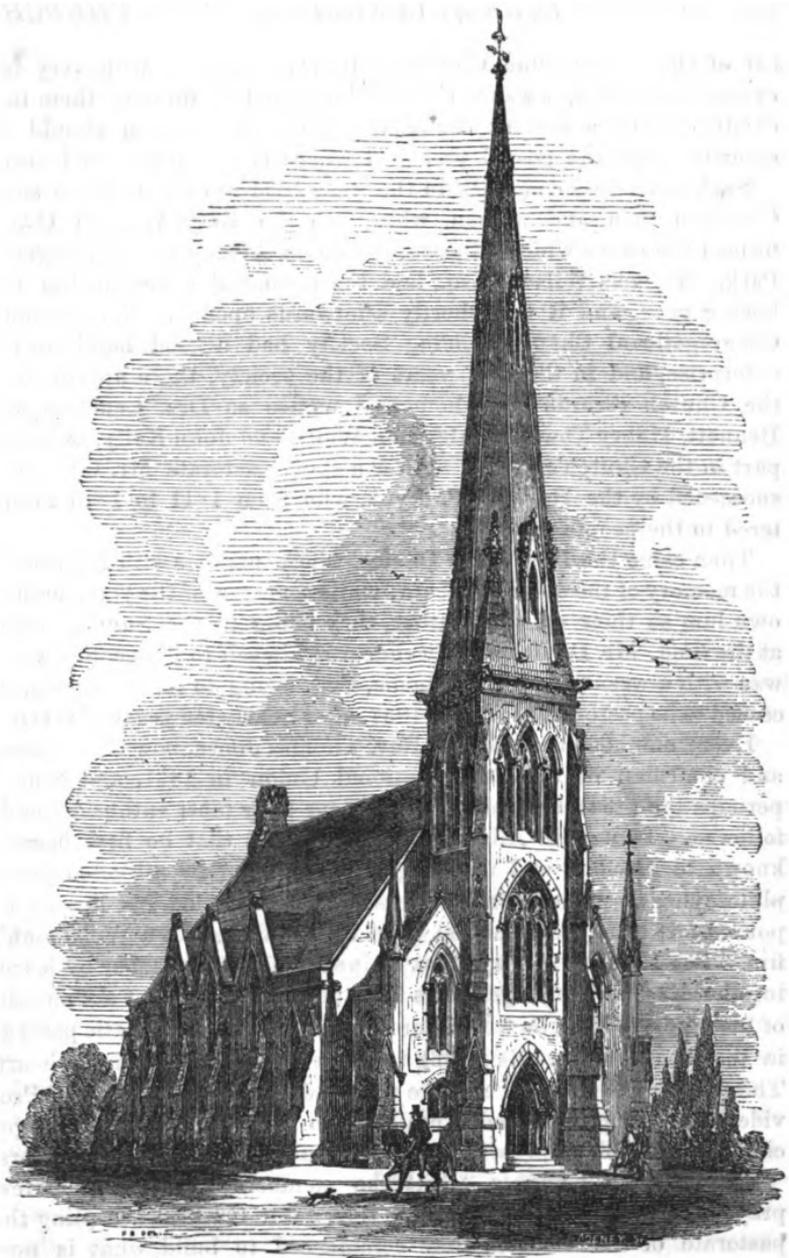
"The last two days of Winnie's holiday were spent on the sofa in a good deal of pain, but in the following week a much happier face appeared in the schoolroom, and Miss Jones had a more attentive pupil.

"'Mamma,' said Winnie, laughing, one day soon afterwards, 'I think I *did* learn a lesson, after all, in my holiday.'

"And I think, children, she learned two: one, that there is no happiness without work, and the other, that *Mamma knows best.*"

TOLMERS SQUARE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

IT has been charged against the Free Churches of England that many of them have had their origin in some internal dissension or schism, and that this therefore is a conclusive argument against those who do not conform to the Establishment. As regards London, the charge is quite untrue of the Congregational Churches. A most competent judge, the Rev. Edward White, stated recently at a conference, that having, with another minister, carefully gone over a



TOLMERS SQUARE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

list of the Metropolitan Churches, they found that, with very few exceptions indeed, it was no "split" which had brought them into existence, but a fervent desire that Christ's kingdom should be extended, and the gospel preached where it had not been before.

Such influences combined in the year 1834 to band together some Christian men and women, who, with the Rev. William Owen, formed the cause which afterwards met at Albany Chapel, Regent's Park. Thomas Wilson, Esq., laid the memorial stone in the following year, and it was shortly afterwards opened. The London Congregational Chapel-Building Society had a good hand in the enterprise, and in the first years of the society, there appear upon the Church records such honoured names as Drs. Leifchild and Bennett, Henry Townley, Algernon Wells, and John Kelly, as taking part in the Church's affairs. After a short pastorate Mr. Owen was succeeded by the Rev. W. P. Lyon, who from 1841 to 1846 ministered to the people.

Then came the Rev. John Davies, whose name is still fragrant in the memory of the older members; while some few of the younger ones own him as their spiritual father, they being in the Sunday-school at the time. Mr. Davies greatly endeared himself to his people, and it was with a wrench and a heartache, that, owing to failing health, he ceased to be pastor at Albany in 1857, after nearly ten years of service.

Every one has heard of the Rev. Thomas Jones, now of Swansea, and chairman of the Congregational Union in 1871, and who is perhaps the preacher of all others in our body most enthusiastically followed. It was in Albany Chapel in 1858 that he first became known to London, and to the gloomy building he attracted poets, philosophers, students, and writers, who hung upon his lips as he poured forth the poetry of the gospel with almost all a Welshman's fire. For I believe he says that he is spoiled as a preacher by learning the English language. It is told that during the first six months of his ministry here, he would burst forth with some emphatic passage in Welsh, English words failing to express what he had in his heart. The place grew too small, and the friends did not see the hand of Providence pointing to extended building, so Mr. Jones left for a larger chapel not far off, taking with him several deacons and many members.

Shortly after, however, albeit the members were few, the few prayed for guidance, and on the Rev. John Guthrie accepting the pastorate of the Church, they commenced to build what is now Tolmers Square Congregational Church, which, designed by John

Tarring, Esq., was described in the papers at the time as "a model of its order." The ground had up to this been occupied by the reservoir of the New River Company, near the southern end of the Hampstead Road. The neighbourhood is a densely-populated part of the immense parish of St. Pancras. Mr. Guthrie worked most untiringly until the close of his ministry in 1865.

After a short interval the Rev. Henry Simon took up the succession, and, like Mr. Jones, attracted his congregation from afar, wielding a sort of spiritual fascination over the hearts of his hearers. During his pastorate ground was secured for school buildings, at a cost of £1,500, part of which was raised. The debt on the church property was diminished, but there remains still £2,500. Mr. Simon accepting the call from the Church at Harecourt, Canonbury, to be co-pastor with the Rev. Dr. Raleigh, the congregation became very small. It was in this state when the Rev. A. B. Camm settled among the people, but health gave way, and he removed to the Anglo-Spanish colony at Costa Rica, where, among orange-groves and perennial roses, he ministers to the English colonists.

The changes which had passed over the Church life at Tolmers Square during the ten years since the removal from Albany, had tended, notwithstanding the many tokens of God's presence, to the discouragement of the friends on whom the conduct of affairs fell. But a new hope arose when, in March, 1873, the Rev. Arthur Hall, of Edmonton, accepted a call to become the pastor. The hope was founded upon the great success which had been granted to Mr. Hall where he had worked, and to this extent it was felt that it would hardly be an experiment. Fifteen months have proved that the expectations of the Church were not unfounded. A large addition has been made to the number of members, the school has doubled in size, most successful organisations have been started or revived, and the building has, at much cost, been restored and beautified. The great work now lying before the people is the erection of schools upon the site long ago obtained. Promises are already coming in, and many an encouraging letter has reached the pastor, referring to his arduous undertaking throughout. Mr. Hall had left a most attached Church, entirely free from debt, and entered upon a series of operations requiring much faith, patience, and decision. But he has no misgiving, and, with a praying and working Church, sees prosperity in the future, and the accomplishment of the things desired.

A DEACON'S MORNING WALK.

II.

THE next visit Mr. West proposed this Monday morning was not to a sick room, but to a well-filled, tastefully-appointed book shop. As the heavy glass door swung to again, the soft warm quietness contrasted pleasantly with the hurrying noisy wind and bustle outside. A gentlemanly-looking man was writing at a desk, but came forward with a courteous salutation as Mr. West entered.

Mr. Morland was a somewhat recent addition to the Church worshipping in High Street Chapel, having been transferred to its fellowship from a Church in London some eight months previously, after nearly as many months spent in undecided wanderings from one place of worship in C— to another. Mr. West had quickly noticed the intelligent, thoughtful-looking stranger, and had discerned a rich, highly-trained voice joining in the singing; and when at length Mr. Morland united with the Church, it was hoped that a worker of superior order had been secured for some department of Christian usefulness. But hitherto Mr. Morland had shown no great disposition to share in the activities or sociabilities of the community he had entered. Twice, on earnest solicitation, he had taught a Sunday-school class in the absence of the teacher, and the order and eager attention of the boys gave proof of his efficiency; but he had not volunteered such occasional aid in future, and had given a decided negative to the earnest request of the superintendent that he would become a regular teacher. Occasionally he attended the prayer-meetings, but had declined to lead in the devotions. His connection with the book trade, and his knowledge of books, he had willingly put at the service of the book society; he had not, however, accepted any invitation to attend its meetings.

The ostensible object of Mr. West's call this morning was to receive a subscription from Mr. Morland; the secret purpose, to try, once more, whether he could not secure his assistance for the Sunday-school. A valued teacher had been compelled, by failing health, to resign: might not Mr. Morland be induced to take charge of this class of intelligent lads, taught in the quietness of a classroom? That the noise and publicity of the general schoolroom had been distasteful, Mr. West instinctively guessed. He could not but perceive that Mr. Morland was not one of those servants whose

cheerful alert loyalty makes them equally ready for *any* task, higher or lower, more or less agreeable.

It had not been without special prayer in respect to this errand that Mr. West had set forth that morning, nor was it without silent up-looking that after a little general conversation he stated the case, and urged upon Mr. Morland the acceptance of the vacated post.

Mr. Morland listened politely, but with little sign of yielding. "Your good superintendent requested me some time ago to become a teacher, but I declined. Engaged in business all the week, I value greatly my Sunday rest and quiet."

"Sunday-school work demands self-denial, without doubt," said Mr. West, "though I am not sure the self-denial is as great as it seems; or rather, perhaps, the counterbalancing satisfactions are such that the self-denial ceases to be felt. That, at least, is my experience through well nigh thirty years."

"Were all teachers such as you, Mr. West, I might perhaps join the ranks; but to tell truth, I am not greatly in love with the way in which Sunday-schools are managed generally—the want of discipline, the lack of good taste often shown, the teaching entrusted largely to young, inexperienced, uninstructed persons, who can present at best the crudest, most surface views of Christian truth, perhaps a distortion and caricature. These things are an evil, Mr. West, a serious evil."

"Such an evil that, on the whole, it would be well to give up the work? just make a clean sweep of all Sunday-schools out of the land?" inquired Mr. West.

"I am not prepared to say that, certainly."

"Then pardon me, Mr. Morland; once admitting this, that Sunday-schools are doing good, notwithstanding their defects and deficiencies, becomes an argument, not against, but for joining in the work. That the management and the teaching is in many schools left in far too great a degree to the young and half-instructed, is true—painfully true; but why is it? Is it not largely because so many older and better instructed men and women in our Churches stand aloof and refuse their aid. In the present case, we do not know where to find any one both suitable and willing to fill Mr. Hall's place: the class must be broken up, or else entrusted to very inferior hands. For the love of Christ, for the love of souls which He has purchased with His own blood, do you not think you could accept the various self-denials which, doubtless, may be involved in joining with us."

"If I undertook such a work," said Mr. Morland, thoughtfully, "I should wish to do it thoroughly. I think a teacher should be the guide, counsellor, helper of his class in every way; should watch over them, should interest himself in their intellectual progress, in their amusements; should visit them, and encourage them to visit him; should write to them when absent, never lose sight of them in after life. This is *my* ideal, and my time and attention are too much engaged to permit me to realise it fully."

"As are the time and attention of nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand Sunday-school teachers in the land. Doubtless it is well to form a high ideal, and to reach as near to it as we can; but if we will undertake no work which we cannot hope to carry out with absolute completeness and to final perfection, then, in this imperfect, disjointed, ever-changing world, we may stand all the day idle. We must often be content to do just what good we can, here a little, there a little; to drop a seed as we pass along, though we may not be able to watch for the upspringing, still less to guide the growth."

"Yes, you say truly. But I do think if Sunday-schools profess to take young people under their influence, they should make that influence as extensive as they can. Let week-night classes, lectures, good libraries, reading-rooms, be a part of the scheme. Music — what a refining, elevating influence that may have. A good singing-class, at least, there should be in connection with every Sunday-school."

"The very thing we were talking of at our last teachers' meeting," said Mr. West, with animation, "only we were in difficulty as to a leader. Could you not help us here, sir? I cannot but be aware of your capabilities as a singer."

"Yes," said Mr. Morland, "we are a musical family, My father, grandfather, great-grandfather, all had a passion for music. An illustration of the doctrine of the hereditary transmission of qualities."

"None the less a good gift from above. Might we hope you would accept the post of teacher, were such a class formed?"

"Hardly so, Mr. West. You would have my best wishes; I might help occasionally, but I could not take so prominent a position. To confess the truth, I am afraid I am not well fitted or much inclined for organized associated efforts. Quiet, unobserved, individual works of love, silent ministries of sympathy and helpfulness, seem to me more attractive."

"But many kinds of work cannot be done except by united, organized effort," said Mr. West, with a slight tone of impatience in his voice. "Still, there are differences of operation, and one kind of work suits one, another kind another. I was just thinking of a very quiet work of love in which I would gladly enlist sympathy and help. For some time I have visited a young man, living scarcely five minutes' walk from hence, who has been confined to his room, or nearly so, by a weary and hopeless malady more than six years; a Christian young man, I fully believe, and one of more than ordinary intelligence. It would be a great pleasure to introduce you to him as an occasional visitor."

"I should be truly happy to add to his comfort by lending him books, or in any other way; but I have the greatest dislike to making illness an excuse for intrusion on the part of a stranger," objected Mr. Morland.

"Thank you; the offer of books would doubtless be acceptable, as he is a great reader. But a little society of a less general kind seems his greatest need. His family are by no means poor, and are most attentive to such wants of the sufferer as they can appreciate. Intellectual, spiritual needs and aspirations are, however, quite beyond the range of their sympathy or understanding. An hour's conversation, now and then, with some one who does understand, to whom he can speak of the books he is reading, and the thoughts he is thinking, is a great relief and enjoyment—one he rarely finds, as he is very little known. I fancy, too, though he has never distinctly said so, that he is haunted at times by gloomy thoughts and sceptical difficulties, against which he fights at disadvantage in his isolated, depressing position."

"That is a battle which must really be fought alone," said Mr. Morland—"is generally, I think, best fought in silence. He only,

' Before whom ever lies bare
The abysmal deeps of Personality,'

can stand quite close to us in such conflict, and bring our souls safely through."

"True, no doubt; at least in part. But I was thinking less of any direct conversation on such subjects than of the indirect benefit, the cheering and help afforded by intelligent Christian converse."

At this moment a carriage stopped at the door, and two ladies alighted. Mr. West immediately rose to leave. "You will give

these matters serious consideration, Mr. Morland, especially that of Mr. Hall's class?"

"I will, Mr. West, but do not be too sanguine."

"Too sanguine, no!" thought Mr. West, as he once more emerged upon the noisy street. "Experience does not warrant any sanguine hopes. Standing by, showing how the work is being done all wrong, and holding up an ideal picture of a perfect way of doing it, is far too easy and gratifying to self-complacency to be readily exchanged for the toil and self-humbling disappointments of actual work. Too sanguine, no! He that has received the *five* talents it is, now-a-days, so it seems to me, who too often hides the talents in the earth, or, it may be, displays them to affront and discourage the brother who has received but one, and who is trying to use that one faithfully.

"Well, I must not be uncharitable. 'Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth.' But surely, surely, 'He who soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly.' 'Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required.'"

K. L. G.

NOTINGS FROM A PASTOR'S NOTE-BOOK.

No. III.

IN 1854, having accepted an invitation to the pastorate of the Church at F—, in one of our eastern counties, I removed there in the month of June. The scenery in this locality is very different from that described in my last. In general, the land is flat and marshy; in fact, there is not much in the place that is attractive to a lover of nature. It lacks both the grandeur of the north and the loveliness of the west. Yet here I spent nearly ten years of my pastoral life, and made many friends. The chapel, which was mainly the gift of one gentleman, was the most prominent object in the neighbourhood, and when I left, was one of the prettiest village chapels in the county. I often look back upon my residence in that quiet spot with gratitude to God, not only for what He did for me, but for what He did for others through my humble instrumentality.

The first case of usefulness, possessing any special points of interest, was that of Emily S—. She was a servant in the house of one of my principal friends, and at first I saw but little of her except as a servant and at the house of God; and in about three months after

my settlement at F—— she left her place, and I saw no more of her for some two years, when she returned to her old situation, and after a few weeks came to me, seeking for admission into the Church. She then related to me the following circumstances:—

“You will doubtless remember, sir, preaching from Dan. v. 27: ‘Thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting.’ It was shortly after your settlement here as the minister. It was under that sermon that my conscience was awakened, and so awakened that I could find no peace anywhere. I thought that perhaps a change of place and association might remove the burden that was oppressing my spirit, so I obtained another situation, and left this neighbourhood; but it was a useless experiment, for no matter where I went my heart was wearied with anxiety and saddened with grief. In the day, when about my work, in the house of God, or in some place of amusement; in the night, when on my bed, the one absorbing thought constantly preying upon my mind was, ‘Thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting.’

“At last my health gave way, I could endure the strain no longer, and I was obliged to go home to my friends. My parents attended the Independent Chapel at D——. The minister there soon noticed my state of mind, and did what he could to lead me to the Saviour; but to all his advice and counsel my heart gave but one reply, ‘Thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting.’

“One night, when I began to feel that this struggle must soon end one way or the other, I went into my bedroom and besought the Lord to guide me into the way of peace; and I cannot tell how it was, but I started suddenly, for it seemed as if an audible voice spoke to me and said, ‘Go back to F——, and you will find peace.’ I resolved to do so; and the next morning I told my mother that I had made up my mind to go to service again, and to try to get back into the neighbourhood of F——, if it was possible to do so. I went to I——, which was the nearest market town to F——, and made application at the register-office for a situation in this direction; when you may judge my surprise and joy when I was told that my old mistress had been there that morning seeking for a servant, and was coming again at three in the afternoon. I waited to see her, and was at once engaged. On the next Sunday morning I came to chapel, with a joy which I can scarcely describe; and as I listened to the words which fell from your lips, I found the peace for which I had so long sought in vain.”

As I listened to this story of God's grace and mercy, I could but rejoice with Emily in what God had wrought. I need scarcely add that she became a member of the Church, and as long as I knew her she was an exemplary Christian.

J. J. W.

THE FLOWER-GIRL.

THE eldest, Phoebe, was not fourteen, but she was quite a mother to her sisters Harriet and Emma, of eleven and ten, and her little brother Dick, of nine. They lodged together in a room tenanted by an old woman who kept a "refuse" fruit-stall in a neighbouring street. Disfigured as her fruit generally was, its colours contrasted queerly with the dusky gloom of the dark cramped attic in which surplus stock was garnered at night, and when the children brought home unsold posies, the bound faded flowers seemed to be consciously-pining captives.

Phoebe was a very grave little maiden. Her responsibilities seemed to have crushed all girlish glee out of her. She talked as if she had been past forty, instead of not fourteen. This was the account she gave me of the little lonely family's daily life:—

"Well, sir, I wakes the children in the mornin', and it's hard work sometimes, when they've been walkin' a good bit the day afore, poor little things. And we says our prayers, and goes to Common Garding. It's mostly flowers we sticks to, but we'll work other things when we can git the chance. That's a good step from here, and horfen we're 'ungry by the time we gits there. There's cawfee and bread and butter you can git, but if you can't git it, why it makes you feel the 'ungrier. No, sir, I can't say that the fruit and the vegetables ever made me feel 'ungry; you want somethin' warmer when you turn out o' your bed at daylight. But it is astonishin' who can eat all that—wan-loads and wan-loads of 'em—the streets round about is choked with 'em, and the cabbages is piled up like 'ouses. When the rubub's in, you can smell it ever so far off, and there's the water runnin' about on the leaves like sixpences. Pretty! I hain't much time to think o' what's pretty, sir. I've got to think of what'll pay best.

"Yes, sir, sometimes I give the little uns a bit of a feed afore I starts 'em, but that's accordin' to what I've got for stock-money. I buy whatever's in. Wilets comes in twice a year. Sometimes 'tis wilets,

and sometimes 'tis primroses, and sometimes 'tis roses, and sometimes 'tis wall-flowers, and stocks, and pansies, and minnet, and lilies o' the valley—some o' the young City gents as fancy themselves swells are wery fond o' stickin' the lily o' the valley in their button-'oles. And sometimes 'tis green lavender. We sells dry lavender too, but that's in the winter, when we can't get nothin' else. Fresh things we buys for a penny a bunch at the market, and then we splits 'em up inter two or three, and sells 'em at a penny or a 'a'penny, accordin' to chances, and sometimes we has to bring 'em 'ome for nothin'. I does my best to freshen 'em up, but they look drunk-like in the mornin'.

“When we're ready, we start—sometimes this way, sometimes t'other—as far apart as we can. We takes our rounds turn and turn about. Miles we walk—hup 'Averstock 'Ill, and about the swell streets in the West-end, and hout to Clapton, and so on, sometimes. No, we never goes across the bridges—I don't know nothin' about them parts. Sometimes we does tidyish in the City, round about by the Bank and the 'Change. But I don't mean 'Arriet shall go there when she gits a bit older. She's a pretty little gal, and she knows it, and some o' the gals there is a bad lot. I was on the pavement in front o' the 'Change one Saturday afternoon, and I see a gal that was sellin' flowers there three weeks afore, with scarce a shoe to her foot, come along with a velvet bonnet and a silk cloak on; and 'Arriet's fond o' dressin' 'erself up. She'll put roses in 'er 'air, when we're tyin' 'em up, and I've seed her stop at a water-trough to look at her face in it. But she sha'n't get fine things that way—not if I knows it. Mother would be fit to jump out o' heaven, if she did. Yes, sir, there's bad amongst flower-gals, but there's good too; and it's 'ard that those as tries to behave theirselves should get a bad name becos o' what t'others does.

“It's 'ard work havin' to look 'arter children. Hemmer's a trouble to me, too, but that's only becos she's so weakly. A quieter, willin'er little gal never was. But Dick's a trial, like 'Arriet. He ain't a bad-meanin' little chap, but big boys gits 'old on 'im, and I'm afear'd they'll teach 'im wrong. He's very owdacious. Last winter he went out Christmasin' with some big chaps. They put him up to git a great bough of mistletoe off a tree in a old gen'leman's horchard down by Chingford. But out come the old gen'leman and collared 'im, and away t'other chaps cut. The old gen'leman was in a hawful rage, for he'd 'ad all 'is holly trees spiled the night afore. So

he up with 'is stick, and was agoin' to hide Dick, when he stopped all of a sudding. 'No,' says he, 'it ain't your fault, you shrimp. I wish I could ketch them cowardly mates o' yourn.' And he gave Dick a penny, but he didn't let him take the mistletoe.

"I wish I could get Dick larnt a trade. He'll go wrong, I'm afeared, if he keeps in the streets—and so 'll 'Arriet. They both minds me now, but when they get to my age, they won't be so teachable. They're a trouble to me, sir—both on 'em. Night and mornin' I prays for 'em, for they're dear, kind children, though they is so flighty. When little Hemmer's bad, they'll work twice as 'ard as they will other times. And it ain't jest for their own bellies—becos there's Hemmer's takin's to make up. It's becous they want to give 'er a bit of a treat; and they'll be so quiet when they come 'ome, its strange to see 'em—'specially Dick. He's uncommon fond 'o Hemmer, and so's Hemmer o' 'im. I wish they could be shook up together. Dick 'ud be all the better off for her willin'ness, and she'd be all the better off for a bit of his spirit. And yet, though she is so quiet, she takes, mostly, more than any on us. 'Pore little thing,' a good many people says when they sees her. If all as says it was to buy of her, Hemmer would soon be sold out; but it's heasier to pity a party than to 'elp 'em. Not that I'm a complainin.' All things considered, we do uncommon well, thank God."—*From "Episodes in an Obscure Life."*

GRANT ME THY SMILE.

GRANT me Thy smile: that smile shall bless my lot,
 Whoever then may frown, 'twill matter not;
 In Thy sweet smile my soul will rest content.
 For, while Thy smile is on me, I shall be
 Too glad of heart, Lord, others' frowns to see,
 Though all the world upon my harm were bent.

But should'st Thou frown, beneath that look of Thine,
 What woe, though all the world should smile, were mine,
 My heart, without Thy love, with anguish rent.
 Unloved by Thee, the world no joy can wake:
 Blest with Thy love, no world my peace can break:
 Smile only Thou, my soul will dwell content.

W. Tidd Matson.

A STORY OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

PART I.

NEARLY two hundred years ago, on an autumn afternoon, might be seen wending their way slowly along a dusty road, a peasant and his donkey. A glance at the scenery stretched out on either side tells us that it is not in England that my story opens. Those level fields, divided by wide ditches, the innumerable rows of poplars, with here and there vineyards, and little villages overtopped by the spire of a church or cathedral, surely belong to France. Fair sunny France! in her happy days how beautiful; how peaceful and prosperous, and how beloved of her people! Alas, a heavy cloud hangs over her! Cruelty, injustice, and oppression have so burdened and harassed thousands of true loyal hearts, that their one remaining hope is to escape from her shores. True to their king, they are also true to their religion and their God; and it is in the name of religion that persecution is raging up and down in the land like a roaring lion, seeking whom it may devour. The scene before us, though lying under a blue sky, and bathed in sunshine, shows signs to an observing eye that all is not right. Where are the usual busy merry crowd in the vineyards gathering the rich fruit? In many places the purple clusters are rotting as they hang, and in others the vines are trampled down, and destroyed by horses' hoofs.

The people, too, on the high road, instead of giving the customary gay salutation, or stopping to gossip with their neighbours, pass each other hurriedly, with suspicious glances.

My readers will scarcely need to be told that the period to which I refer was that unhappy time for Protestantism in France, when Louis XIV., encouraged by his flatterers, and inflated by ideas of his grandeur, and of his absolute right over the consciences as well as the lives of his subjects, formed the resolution to make the whole nation Roman Catholic. I need say nothing of the wickedness, nor of the suicidal folly of such a resolve, nor of the utter impossibility of its being fulfilled. Louis tried it, and the result, as we all know, was that France lost half a million of the best and noblest of her sons, as well as many of the principal of her manufactures, arts, and inventions, to say nothing of the blood shed, and the country desolated. And were the Huguenots exterminated and their faith abandoned? No. Persecution is a soil in which religion flourishes; if seemingly

crushed, it rises up again more vigorous than ever, and increases by the very means taken to destroy it. A martyr's influence and example is felt far and wide; a faith which enables frail women and even children to endure tortures rather than deny it, impresses even its enemies with a sense of its reality. And in spreading the persecuted ones throughout the country to escape from their tormentors, did they not take their religion and their Bible with them? Thus the wrath of man was made to spread abroad the truth of God.

The crowning act of folly of which the king had been guilty, was the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which for the last eighty-seven years had been the sole defence of the Protestants in France. Under its protection, although excluded from many privileges, they had enjoyed comparative rest. Of late, however, the spirit of oppression, not dead, but only sleeping, had revived again, and various indications were evident of the storm about to burst.

In 1685, the king, choosing to believe the reports purposely circulated by his Romish advisers concerning the wholesale conversions of the Huguenots, put forth the Edict of Revocation, by which all the pastors were banished from the country, and their lay congregations forbidden, on pain of the severest punishments, to follow them. The ports were closed, the peasants bribed and armed to stop all refugees, and soldiers let loose over the country. In spite of all precautions, however, hundreds daily found means to escape.

After this brief sketch of those troubled times, we will return to our traveller, who has stopped to rest by the road-side. He is apparently an old man, slightly lame, and leaning on a stout stick; his hair, what little we see of it below his wide peasant's hat, is snowy white; his dress is of the commonest, and his donkey's panniers, filled with eggs, show him to be a huckster taking his goods to the next village. After a long anxious look over the landscape, he carefully rearranges and examines the well-filled panniers, and leads his patient beast into the road again, whistling a tune as he hobbles by its side. Presently an ominous sound is heard in the distance—the galloping of horses along the hard road, and in another minute several dragoons appear. At first they hesitated whether or not to stop, but muttering something, two of them suddenly dismount, and seizing the donkey's rein, begin to question the old man. "Who are you? Where are you going? Give an account of yourself?"

"I am taking these eggs to market, Messieurs, and hard work it is, so many miles along this hot road," replied the huckster.

"Oh, how do we know that your fine story is true?" cried another, "and that you are not a cursed Huguenot in disguise?"

"How do you sell your eggs, old man?" asked a third, "and what have you got hidden underneath?"

Not a tremor shakes the peasant's frame, as he calmly replies, "You can search, Messieurs, if you do not believe me; I am at your mercy. But I am tired and thirsty, and a few sours to drink your health in a glass of cider, would be very welcome."

"Well, take out your eggs, and let us see that you are hiding nothing, and say an 'Ave,' and you shall have your cider," said the first and most suspicious of the speakers.

With hands that did not tremble, the man begins to take the eggs slowly from the pannier, and to lay them carefully on the grass.

But the leader of the party gets impatient. "Come, comrades," he called, "we must be off; don't waste any more time on that old fellow, there's more important work yonder."

They all seemed satisfied, but one. He, with a brutal laugh, takes out his sword, and saying, "I'll show you a quicker way than that, my friend," plunges it rapidly into each of the panniers. Then leaping on his horse, and wiping his sword, amid the noisy merriment of the party, they gallop off.

The peasant remains motionless till the last sound has died away. Then, pale as death, with large beads of sweat standing on his brow, and no signs of age or lameness, he hurries the donkey to the shelter of some trees close by, and with several vigorous movements clears away the eggs from one of the panniers, and lifts into his arms a lovely little girl.

"Thank God!" he ejaculates, pressing her to his heart. "But are you hurt, my precious one? Yes, you are bleeding! Where is it?"

"Only my arm, Papa!" cries a little voice, as the child clings trembling to his neck; "and I did not cry! You did not hear me, did you? Was I good?"

But the father cannot speak, his manliness gives way, as he tries to give the little one the praise she deserves. He examines the arm. The cruel sword has grazed it from the shoulder to the elbow, and must have caused the brave child intense pain as well as terror. But God be praised it was no worse! Tearing up his handkerchief, he winds it over the wound. There is no time to lose! Even now the soldiers may return, or more arrive! Hiding his emotion, lest it alarm the child, he takes her again into his arms. "My brave little

Ernestine," he said, "you have saved us both by keeping quiet, as father told you. Now lie still a little longer, and then you shall have some supper and go to bed. You won't be frightened, Ma Petite?"

"No, if you keep quite close, Papa, and speak to me now and then."

"God bless thee, my daughter, and keep us safe," whispers the father, as he tenderly wraps her in a shawl, and places her once more among the cushions at the bottom of the pannier. Then, collecting the unbroken eggs, he replaces them carefully over the child, hiding all traces of her as before.

I must now go back a little, in order to introduce to my readers the disguised peasant.

Among the numerous attendants at the court of Louis XIV., was a doctor of the name of Roussel. He was about 40 years of age, well educated, of good birth, rich, and respected by all who knew him. He was of the Reformed Faith, as his father had been before him, and it may be wondered, that this being the case, his presence should not only have been tolerated, but desired, by Louis. The fact was, that on more than one occasion, the doctor's skill had benefited a personal friend of the king, and both gratitude and interest combined to influence him in keeping so valuable a physician near at hand. The good man himself would willingly have retired from court life; its follies and vanities sickened him, and he mistrusted his royal master. Many persuasions and arguments had been used to induce him to change his religion, but in vain. Pierre Roussel was a man who would have died for his faith, but he was not a man to change it. In person, he was tall, well-made and singularly handsome. Beneath straight brows were set deep penetrating grey eyes, showing insight into character, eyes that could be stern, but also soft and loving; an aquiline nose, and a firm mouth and chin, denoting the decision of character for which he was well known. He had been a widower for seven years, his young wife having died after the birth of their only child. Since this event, which he felt keenly, his whole heart had been given to his little daughter, Ernestine. She was a sweet child, the image, her father said, of her lost mother, and she seemed to have inherited, besides that mother's blue eyes, golden hair, and fair complexion, her gentle affectionate nature; combined with this was certainly some of her father's courage and self-reliance. Perhaps, too, the loneliness of her childhood, without maternal care, or the companionship of brothers and sisters, had made the little maiden

more independent and thoughtful than children of seven often are. As soon as she could run alone, her steps would always lead her to her father, and as she grew older, to fetch his slippers, go errands for him, and in a hundred little ways to wait upon him, was her delight, and she learned to know all his moods. If he came home in good spirits, Ernestine was the merriest of the merry; if grave and anxious, she would quietly lay her golden head upon his knee and try in her childish fashion to comfort him. Of late the last had been by far the most usual. The doctor could not but foresee the troubles that were so close at hand; already he had received pretty strong hints that a Huguenot, however great his skill, had better leave the court, unless he was willing to be converted. And he knew what this meant. For himself he had no fear; and had he but himself to think of, he would have quietly remained at his post, doing his duty, leaving the rest to God. He had no wish to desert the land of his birth, and the grave where lay his beloved wife. But when he looked at his child and thought of her danger, he determined to lose no time in attempting an escape. He knew the difficulties, but with the aid of money, and a disguise, and several friends near the coast upon whom he felt he could depend, unless, indeed, their own danger made any help impossible; and above all, with the aid of the God in whom he trusted, he hoped to effect the perilous journey—perilous, indeed, it would be, with that young delicately-nurtured child, but it was less risk than remaining where they were. All was arranged, and the night before they left their home for ever, Pierre Roussel took his little daughter on his knee and tried to make her comprehend all that it was necessary for her to know.

"Ernestine," he said, "I am going a long journey, will you come with me?"

"Oh, yes, Papa, I will go—you could not go without me, you know."

"But it will not be a pleasant journey. Father will have to dress like a poor old man, and you must be covered up and lie quite still, and never make a sound, however uncomfortable or frightened you may be; will you promise to do exactly what I tell you, if you come?"

"Yes," said the child, doubtfully, and fixing her large eyes wonderingly on her father's face, "but, Papa, you mustn't leave me alone."

"No, darling, I shall always be close to you, even when you cannot see me; just as our Heavenly Father will be with us both though we shall not see Him."

"Shall we come back soon?" asked Ernestine.

"No, we must not come back. We must try and reach another country, where we can live in peace." The father said this more to himself than to the child. She sat silently looking at him for several minutes, then his lips began to quiver.

"Papa, why must we go? I do not want to go quite away."

"Listen to me, Ma Petite," he said tenderly. "If Papa does not go away, cruel men may come and put him in prison."

He had struck the right chord in the unselfish little heart. Ernestine turned pale, but said resolutely, "Then we will go at once, Papa. I will be no trouble—I will do everything you tell me—I promise."

Taking her in his arms, the father knelt down with her, and commended his life and the life that was more precious than his own, to the care of One who was able to deliver them from their enemies.

Before daybreak next morning they had left Paris. How well the courageous child had fulfilled her promise we have already seen, and we will now return to where we left the wanderers.

The day was closing when, without further adventure, they reached a cottage on the outskirts of a small village. Here they were evidently expected, and it was with great thankfulness that Pierre Roussel saw a prospect of a few hours' comparative rest and safety. As they approached, an old woman came out eagerly.

"Here you are," she exclaimed. "I have been watching for you the last hour. Is La Petite safe? bless her. Go in, you'll find no one there. I have sent Jacques and François away—it was safest. I will take the donkey and feed him, poor beast, and then return to you."

The father entered with his child in his arms, and presently the bustling little woman came back.

"Now then, you must be hungry, and I have a good hot supper ready; do not you want some bread and milk, little one?"

"Yes, please," said Ernestine, looking with much satisfaction at the preparations for their meal, while her father took off his coat.

"Pauvre Petite, she is quite stiff," said the old dame; "and look! whatever's the matter with her arm?"

"Ah, these are sad times!" she observed, sighing when she had heard their story, "but Ciel! what a brave little girl: one knows where she got her courage. Do you know, my child, that when your father was a little boy, not older than you are now, I was his nurse; and many a story I could tell you of him—he was afraid of nothing. But she is tired," she continued, as Ernestine, having finished her

supper, leaned her head back wearily. "And her bed is all ready. Come, my pretty one."

The child went willingly, and was presently sleeping soundly, while the elders sat and talked below.

Dr. Roussel was not much less anxious by his old nurse's report—soldiers had that very day searched the cottage, and they were everywhere on the look-out for refugees.

"Not a soul but myself knows of your being here; its best to trust no one," said she.

"I must be off early to-morrow," he replied. "God grant the child's arm may not inflame."

"I don't think it will; I have bathed it and put a fresh bandage, as you told me, and if you will let me put some healing oil to it, that my husband used to say cured everything, it will get well quickly."

"Ah, you were always fond of doctoring, Nurse," said he, smiling. "It was but a graze, and if the heat and fatigue of the journey to-morrow does not make her feverish, it will be all right—I shall give her a cooling draught before we start."

"You shall have a good breakfast ready as soon as it is light; and now, can you not take some rest?"

"I will try," he replied; and after reading a chapter in the Book which never failed to refresh his spirit, he laid himself down under the protection of the eye that slumbers not, and was soon in forgetfulness of all his troubles.

Very early next morning the travellers left their temporary refuge, and set out to encounter fresh perils. We cannot follow them through them all. More than one night was spent out of doors, with only the sky for a covering: the weather turned wet and chilly; their supply of provisions came to an end, and it was difficult to obtain more. Several times they narrowly escaped a party of soldiers,—on one occasion, they heard the trooper's horses below the garret where they lay concealed among some straw.

Worst of all, little Ernestine's health gave way; never robust, it was wonderful that she had kept up so long. Uncomplaining and gentle as ever, she seemed each day to grow paler and more fragile, and the father began to fear that their escape, if indeed they managed it, would be too late to save his child.

A night came, however, at last, when, tired and footsore, Pierre Roussel arrived at the little village on the coast, from which he had been promised a passage to England in a vessel laden with merchan-

dise. Leaving the little one at a fisherman's hut, under the care of a woman, the doctor hastened to the shore, where a bitter disappointment awaited him. The vessel had sailed several days before! The captain on whom Dr. Roussel depended, and whom he had befriended in old times, left word that he could not help it; he was suspected, and had to be off to save himself. Soldiers were on their way now to the village, the old sailor said, with orders to search every boat of any sort that left the land. For almost the first time, Pierre Roussel's heart sank, and his faith well-nigh failed him. As he walked up and down the beach in the starlight, distracted with the fears of what this new disaster might involve, he observed a tall figure, also pacing the beach as if waiting for something. It appeared to be dressed like a pilgrim, with a staff and rosary, and a long beard hanging over the breast. The doctor endeavoured to avoid one who was probably a spy; but the seeming pilgrim followed, and suddenly seized his arm, whispering, "Are you not Pierre Roussel, from Paris?"

"Who are you?" returned he, shaking off his hand.

"Do not be alarmed, my good friend," said the other; "I am no more what I appear than you are; have you forgotten my voice? I knew yours at once," and the stranger gave the name of one of the doctor's old patients in Paris.

Never was friend more welcome! The unexpected relief and comfort of such a meeting raised their spirits, and gave them both fresh strength and hope. Together they consulted what to do, for they agreed that it was unsafe to wait another hour: and with the aid of an enormous bribe, four sailors were found who consented to make the attempt to row them across the channel in a little open boat. The risk was less for our travellers than remaining on shore, and it was with a thankful heart that the doctor rushed back for his daughter, wrapped her in shawls, and carried her to the boat. They were not a moment too soon. Even as the sailors pushed off, steps were heard running down the beach, and voices cried, "Stop, in the king's name, or we will fire." But the glimpse of the gold in the employers' hands hastened the rowers, and they pulled manfully. Several shots were fired, but in the darkness they missed, and there was no pursuit.

Under the quiet stars, every stroke of the oar increasing the distance between them and their enemies, and the fresh sea-breeze fanning their feverish brows, a blessed sense of freedom stole into their hearts of the refugees. Pierre Roussel closed his eyes, and

after fervent thanks to their Preserver, he slept as peacefully as the child in his arms.

Their dangers, however, were not over. Wind and storms, if less treacherous, were as deadly enemies as those they had left behind. Many times their frail bark was nearly swamped; the men, too, got discouraged and threatened to go back. Poor little Ernestine, unable to eat, soaked with wet, and nearly perished with cold, lay like a faded lily in her father's arms.

It seemed like a miracle when at last the little boat reached Dover, where an eager crowd welcomed the fugitives. Safe at last, and among friends! With what deep thankfulness Pierre Roussel lay down that night, after seeing his child soundly sleeping, watched and tended for by loving hands, we, who have never known his dangers, can scarcely conceive.

They remained in Dover for several weeks. A Church had been formed there by the French refugees some years before, and the doctor found several old friends living there, who gladly made him welcome. The little one, too, needed rest and care. When she had quite recovered, the doctor proceeded to London, where he had made up his mind to settle. Large numbers of the Huguenots had taken up their abode in Spitalfields and its neighbourhood, and were quietly pursuing their various callings, and among them the doctor made his home. He had saved a remnant from his lost fortune, and with that and his profession he hoped to live, while the good that he might do among his poor suffering countrymen—and there were many such—was one of his chief reasons for deciding to remain there.

(To be continued in our next.)

THE STORY OF POLYCARP.

BY THE REV. H. OLLARD, F.S.A.

AT the close of the first century, Smyrna was one of the most beautiful cities of the East. It owed its origin to the wisdom and munificence of Alexander the Great. Its inhabitants claimed Homer as their countryman, and a cave is still shown in the vicinity of the city, in which it is said the bard of all time composed his immortal verses. Situated at the entrance of a lovely bay, in the midst of a landscape which for many months in the year resembles

a garden of flowers, Smyrna was celebrated in poetry and song as "the ornament of Asia," and "the crown of Ionia."

History has preserved for us no trustworthy account of the introduction of the Gospel into Smyrna: even tradition is silent respecting it. It seems probable that "the good news of the kingdom" was first announced to its inhabitants by some zealous Christian converts from the neighbouring city of Ephesus. But though the founder of the Church is unknown, we have positive proof of its existence before the close of the Apostolic Age; its poverty, trials, and future victories, being distinctly traced by St. John in the Book of the Revelation.

In one of the streets of this beautiful city lived a noble Christian matron, named Calisto. Beneath her roof was also a young slave, Polycarp. From the lips of his mistress, and those of "the angel of the Church at Smyrna," the youthful captive received his first instructions in the Gospel of Christ. He proved to be an apt scholar. Light dawned like sunrise upon his mind. Divine truth penetrated and changed his heart; and under its blessed and subduing power, he became "free indeed," and laid the foundations of his future eminence in the Church of Christ. Polycarp enjoyed the friendship and instruction of the Apostle John, and thus became the connecting link between the Church of the Apostolic Age and that which immediately succeeded it. To this fact there is a touching allusion in a letter, still extant, written by Irenæus to his friend Florinus. "I can tell," says he, "even the spot on which the blessed Polycarp sat and conversed, and his outgoings and incomings, the character of his life, the form of his body, and his conversations with the multitude. I remember how he related his familiar intercourse with John, and the rest who had seen the Lord: how he rehearsed their sayings, and what things he heard from them concerning our Lord's miracles and teaching." Having lived thus in free and familiar intercourse with the immediate followers of Jesus—his soul richly imbued with the principles and spirit of Christianity—he became an earnest defender of the faith against those who sought its corruption or overthrow. Of this, several traditions have been preserved in the literature of the early Church.

Having been for many years the "overseer" or bishop of the poor but faithful flock of Christ in Smyrna, the cloud of persecution gathered around it, and Polycarp was speedily convinced that he could only win "the crown of life" by martyrdom. Of this persecution, which took place under the Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius,

A.D. 167, the Church itself at Smyrna became the historian. Following an example which appears to have been common in those days, and by which the bonds of love and unity must have been greatly strengthened, it addressed a "circular letter" to the Church at Philadelphia, and to other Christian communities in Asia Minor. This epistle is a noble testimony to the simple faith and dauntless heroism which inspired the hearts of the early Christians. They did not fear their foes. They did not quail in the presence of death. Love to Christ made them bold and strong. What is the testimony which the survivors of this persecution bore to the character and constancy of their brethren? "They made it evident to us all (says the Church), that in the midst of their sufferings they were 'absent from the body,' or rather that the Lord stood by them and walked in the midst of them: and staying themselves on the grace of Christ they bade defiance to the torments of the world." What is this, but the faith which in every age conquers danger and difficulty, and renders him who has it invincible? No sooner were the foes of Christ and His "little flock" let loose in Smyrna, than they determined to hunt down Polycarp as their first victim. The saintly man knew this. Like a good sentinel, he had kept watch at the post of danger, and was fully acquainted with the tactics of the enemy. The Church says, "He expected to be delivered up, as the Lord also was, that we should imitate His example." Happy the Church that has such a pastor! Looking through the dim vista of seventeen centuries, we behold a venerable man, calm and cheerful, though a prisoner, led through the streets of Smyrna the Beautiful. He is no stranger there. Quite otherwise indeed. To some who surround him he has been a true friend and gracious benefactor: to others his character and words have been for years a standing rebuke. This old man is now a captive in Smyrna—and yet its most illustrious citizen! Hooting and surging around him, the crowd bear him into the presence of the proconsul. "Recant!" exclaims that officer. "Never!" replies Polycarp. Urging him to take pity on himself—to spare his old age and grey hairs—the Roman judge says, "Swear by the Emperor, curse Christ, and I release thee." Persuasion and threats are alike vain. "Eighty and six years," exclaims Polycarp, "have I served Christ. He has done me nothing but good. How could I curse and deny my Lord and Saviour now?" The populace was waiting outside the hall for the verdict. It was soon announced: "Polycarp has declared himself to be a Christian." This was the

knell of death. The martyr was ready for the final conflict. He dares not be a traitor; but he could die. The crowd, by a terrific shout, demanded that Polycarp should be burned alive. "This," writes Eusebius, "was no sooner said than done." Wood and straw from the neighbouring baths and shops was speedily collected, in which work the fanatical Jews of the city cheerfully rendered their assistance.

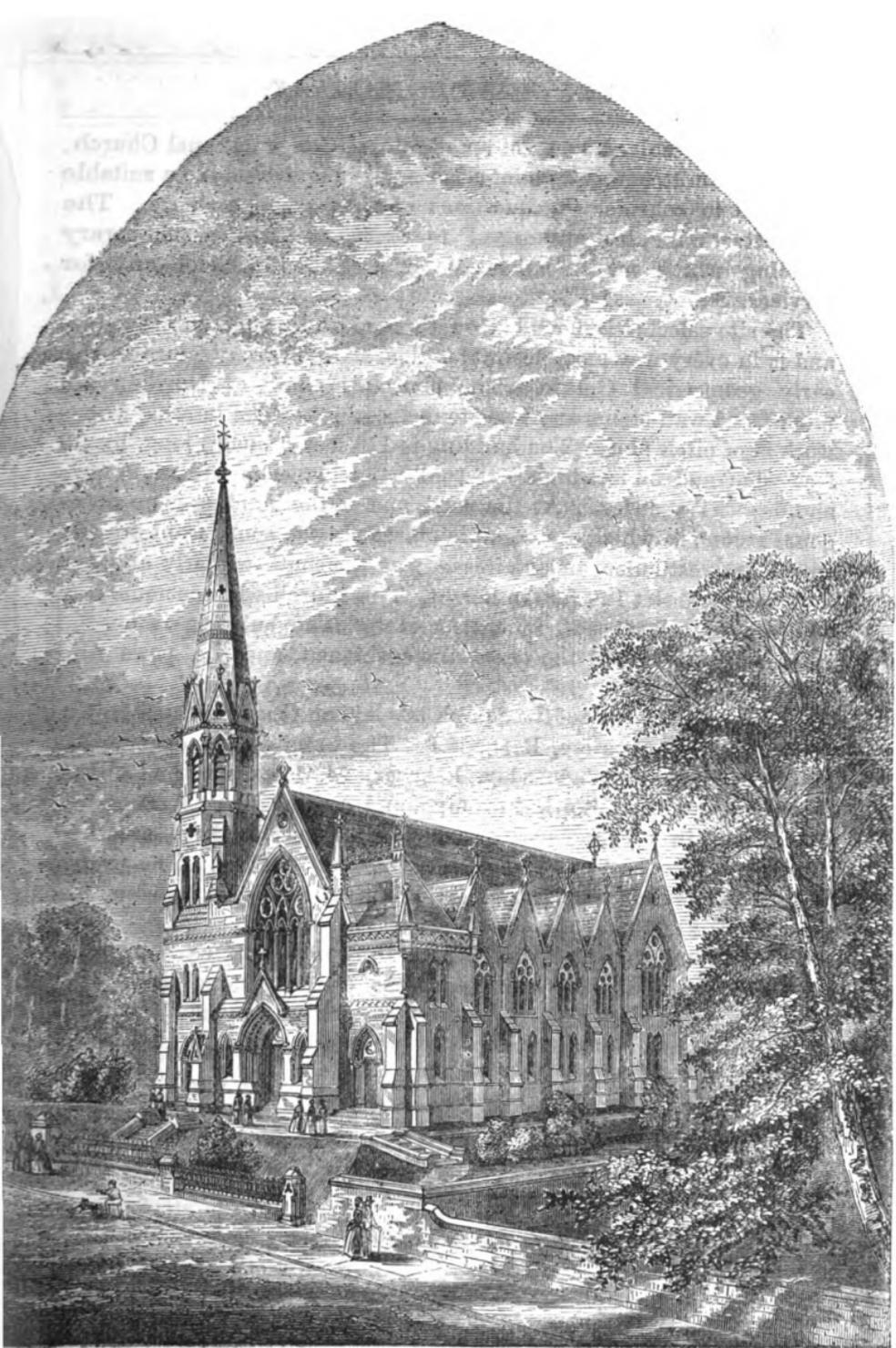
The spot was selected: a stake was driven into the ground, and to it the venerable martyr was fastened. Undaunted by his sufferings, Polycarp presented his humble and hearty thanksgivings to God. He prayed thus: "Lord Almighty God, Father of Thy beloved Son, Jesus Christ, through whom we have received from Thee the knowledge of Thyself: God of angels and of the whole creation, of the human race and the just that live in Thy presence: I praise Thee that Thou hast judged me worthy of this day and of this hour, to take part in the number of Thy witnesses in the cup of Thy Christ."

Faggots and logs of wood having been piled around the stake, the executioner applied the match. The body of the martyr, his eyes turned up to heaven, was speedily enveloped in flames, to use the words of the historian, "as the sail of a vessel is filled with the wind." But he did not die. To put an end to his tortures, one of the executioners thrust him through with a sword. An hour after, on the spot where Polycarp, "the angel of the Church at Smyrna," had stood, there remained only a small heap of ashes and bones. Another saint had passed away from earth, to join "the noble army of martyrs." "The crown of life" was won.

PARK CHURCH, HALIFAX.

PARK CHURCH, Halifax, was erected in 1867, to meet the requirements of an entirely new neighbourhood. Twenty-seven years had elapsed since any addition had been made to the number of Congregational Churches in the town, and it was felt by the existing Churches that the time had come when an effort should be made to meet the requirements of the increased population, and especially that the new and growing district in the upper part of the town claimed immediate attention.

A meeting of the three congregations was consequently held,



PARK CHURCH, HALIFAX

when it was resolved to erect an additional Congregational Church, and a committee was appointed to make inquiries as to a suitable site, and to consider the questions of size, style, cost, &c. The committee was also authorised to erect at once a temporary building which might be used for a Sabbath-school and for services.

The site selected is bounded on three sides by good public roads, and is in every way most desirable. The style of architecture is the early geometrical Gothic. The church is built of Northowram pitch-faced wall-stone, and free-stone dressings. The internal wood-work is of pitch pine. The building is 113 feet 6 inches long, by 53 feet wide and 56 feet high externally, exclusive of the minister's and deacons' vestries. At the north end of the building is an octagonal recess, in which the organ is placed; in the south front are the entrances, vestibules, and staircases; at the south-westerly angle a tower and spirelet 120 feet in height. The church will accommodate 932 persons, allowing 20 inches for each. The building is heated with hot water. All the seats are cushioned, and the pews and aisles are carpeted.

The memorial-stone of the church was laid on Good Friday, April 9, 1867, by Sir F. Crossley, Bart., M.P. The building was opened for public worship on Wednesday, February 24, 1869, and the Church was formed on the following evening, and consisted of 89 members, who came in nearly equal proportions from the three existing Churches. The cost of the Church was over £13,000. The organ is a very fine instrument, built by Hills and Sons, of London, for the sum of £1,000.

The building is free from debt, and the congregation are now engaged in erecting school premises, at the estimated cost of £5,000. The number of Church members on the 1st of January last was 240. The able and successful pastor of the Church is the Rev. John Bartlett.

THE following is extracted from an advertisement in a High-Church contemporary:—"Birettas—We import these direct from Rome, and are thereby enabled to sell them at half-price. Priests' stocks, now so universally worn. They are the only correct collars that should be worn by a priest! Zuchettas, made from correct Roman models, and are most worn by priests at funerals."

OUR WEEK-DAY SERVICES.*

BY M. WILLIAM BUTLER, ESQ.

IT may be pertinent, at the outset, to inquire what authority have we for the observance of week-evening services? Whichever view we may entertain of the obligation to observe the Lord's day—whether we regard it as having all the sanction of Sinai's law for keeping holy the Sabbath, or whether we class it among the days spoken of by the apostle in the fourteenth chapter of the Romans—its use as a day of assembly and worship has come down to us with the stamp of universal custom from earliest ages, and is consecrated in the hearts of all Christ's disciples as the season of spiritual refreshment and most holy associations. Week-day services claim no such authority or example. No Scripture command can, I think, be shown for them, unless, indeed, they are embraced in the comprehensive precept of the apostle, "Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is."† I regard, therefore, week-day services simply as offering opportunities of communion with Christian brethren, and of spiritual refreshment by the way; opportunities which spiritually-minded people will always gladly avail themselves of, as often as they can do without neglecting other plain duties.

If this be so, then, we may regard attendance on week-evening services as affording a better test of the life and spirituality of our Churches than attendance on the more public and popular services of the Lord's day. The Lord's day is a day of abstinence from worldly occupation, and is set apart by the common consent of Christendom for the public worship of God; and lax attendance on its services would indicate such a want of propriety as would be inconsistent with the Christian profession. Then on the Sabbath day there is every accessory in the conduct of the services, both as regards the pulpit and the psalmody, to make them attractive, or, at any rate, less wearisome, even where a true relish for spiritual things is absent; so that multitudes attend these services who make no profession of being constrained so to do by the love of Christ. But on the other hand, on the week day the general obligation to attend is not recognised; the popular form is, to a great extent,

* This article formed part of an address delivered at a recent meeting of the Berks, South Oxon, and South Bucks Association. It is about to be reprinted, and published by Messrs. John Snow and Co. Price 6d. per doz., or 4s. per 100. † Heb. x. 25.

absent; and, in this age of ceaseless activities, some sacrifice of time, and careful arrangement of affairs is demanded, that we may snatch an hour from the world for the service of God. In other words, these services must be observed for their own sake—for the spiritual advantages realised and valued by the worshippers.

Now, looking at our week-day services from this point of view, is there not throughout our Churches much in the present state of things that is greatly to be deplored? The attendance on them bears no fit proportion, not only to the number of the Sabbath congregation, but to the number of persons in communion with the Church; and it is to be feared that it may be said of many who are found around the table of the Lord, that their visits to the week-evening services are few and very far between. This paucity of attendance of godly men and women (and especially of the former) is greatly to be regretted; not only as indicating a low state of spirituality, but as exercising a depressing effect on the services themselves. Both ministers and people feel the lack of sympathy thus manifested by their Christian brethren—members of the same Church, and all equally sharing the responsibility of promoting its well-being. From this cause the devotional exercises lose their variety, and often become cold and formal, and the service drags on heavily to its appointed end. What a chilling and discouraging effect, too, does this state of things have on young converts and members first entering into communion with us. We have said to them, "Come with us, and we will do you good;" and when they come at our bidding, they find few to welcome them, and a state of things that, to their newly-awakened zeal and love, must seem utterly inconsistent, as well as most hurtful in its influence on their future course. Do we not, my brethren, often go and return, and realise how truly Dr. Watts describes our feelings as he sings—

"Our souls can neither fly nor go
To reach eternal joys."

But to point out a disease is a much easier work than to effect a cure; to see defects and to find fault is a much simpler process than to discover a remedy. It is here that I hope for the benefit which will accrue from the advice and counsel of this assembly. If many have to mourn the evil I have indicated, there may be some who can tell of better things, and show the way out of the difficulty. I fear, however, that it may be expected that some suggestions on this head ought to have a place in this paper; and,

therefore, with a great deal of misgiving, I proceed to this portion of my allotted task.

All will readily join in the earnest aspiration that it may please God to send down on His Churches "a time of refreshing," "a rich outpouring of the Holy Ghost," to turn the parched land into streams of water, and the wilderness into a garden of the Lord. But then we cannot sit down and resolve our coldness into an act of Divine sovereignty in withholding His gracious influences. We are taught, rather, in His word, that the blessing comes to those who ask and work for it. The hand of the diligent maketh rich, in spiritual as well as in temporal things; and we must not sit down and wait, but gird up our loins and run. Let me say, then, that every one who names the name of Christ should regard attendance on week-day services, on all possible occasions, as one of the duties imposed on him by his profession; not only as a spring of spiritual benefit to himself, but as one of the means by which he can witness for God and Christ, and as one of the ways in which he can contribute to the spirituality and prosperity of his fellow-members. If all our Church members felt their obligation, and were found regularly present at our weekly assemblies, giving them their hearty sympathy, and where possible their personal aid, what a delightful change should we see! Our own hearts would be warmed; our prayers and praises would be more hearty; the minister's heart would be cheered; and new energy and spirit would be thrown into the conduct of these services. And what a blessed result might be expected from such a revival of interest. The inquirers, the anxious and even the apathetic who might join with us, would catch the spirit; the one would be helped onward in his course, the other be helped over his difficulties, while the last, by God's blessing, would have "the secret of his heart made manifest, and falling down on his face he will worship God, declaring that God is with you of a truth."*

Then what a reflex blessing would this have on the preaching of the gospel! The minister would feel he was sustained by the prayers and sympathies of his people, and while his hands were thus held up, "the word of the Lord would have free course and be glorified."

Permit me also to add that our ministerial friends might greatly contribute to this good end. Some of our pastors scarcely ever,

* 1 Cor. xiv. 25.

in their ministrations, dwell on the specific duties which devolve on us in the several relations we sustain to the Church and the world. They appear to act on the principle that the grace of God in the heart will do everything. But, surely, we need to know as well as to love; and having regard to the various classes in our Churches, and the different standpoints of knowledge and experience among them, there is need that our specific duties should be fully taught, as well as our blessed privileges unfolded. And then, may I dare to ask, do our pastors everywhere sufficiently magnify their sense of the importance of these services by the energy they throw into them and by their general bearing in relation to them. Pardon me if I seem treading on tender ground; but, "like priest like people." If the minister manifest a sense of the value of these services, the people will, I believe, catch his spirit and sustain his efforts.

Then, finally, I would ask, Is there no modification that might be profitably made in the conduct of these services? It seems to me that, if by any means a more free and social character could be imparted to them, a want in many minds would be met. In old times "they that feared the Lord spake often one to another;" and in the time of the early Christian Church, as we gather from the Epistles, greater freedom of intercourse in the conduct of the meetings of the Church prevailed.* They seem to have been meetings for mutual edification, where all were on an equality, and each contributed something to the general good; where a more general acquaintance with God's word was sought after, and a more common sympathy and interest in each other's spiritual well-being was manifested and expressed. Are not the frequency of meetings of Christians for "Bible readings," as they are called, apart from our Christian organisations, and the spread of Plymouth Brethrenism, due to the fact that the social principle in our religion is not sufficiently recognised, and the craving for it provided for, as it might be, in our Church arrangements?

My hope and prayer is that a new life and vigour may be imparted to our Churches; that, fed by that "spring of living water" within, their spiritual life may become so vigorous, that, overflowing its own borders, it may become a source of life and refreshment to all around.

High Wycombe.

* 1 Cor. xiv. 23.

OUR CHURCH NEWS.

THE forthcoming meetings of the Congregational Union at Huddersfield will be invested with unusual interest and importance, on account of the intended discussion of a subject that touches not only the private interests of hundreds of our Christian homes, but also the highest welfare of the denomination itself. We refer to the question of the incomes of our ministers. Proposals will be submitted to the consideration of the Union by those from whom they have most appropriately and competently originated—the laymen of our Churches; and we need not say that the suggestions they will submit will be received with the deference they deserve. It is an incident honourable to all parties, that the first public expression of anxiety on this matter has been given, not by the ministers, but by the people, and especially by some who are ready to support the persuasiveness of their arguments by the munificence of their deeds. We shall await with the deepest interest, and at the same time with the highest expectation, the disclosure of the principles and the methods to be announced.

The recent movements of the Conservative Government have done much to press upon public attention the solution of the grave question of the relation of the Church to the State. The last five weeks of the session, under a Tory government, did more to give urgency to the consideration of this matter than the previous five years of Liberal rule. "We have no hesitation," says the "Nonconformist," "in declaring our judgment that, logically speaking, the theory of Church Establishments has been surrendered by Parliament; that the position of the contending parties has been considerably narrowed; and that, looking at the whole controversy in its inevitable bearings, we have seen, in the legislation of the session just closed, 'the beginning of the end.'"

Nor is this opinion confined to Nonconformists. In a letter by the Rev. Gerard Moultrie, vicar of South Leigh, a well-known High-Churchman, in the "Church Times," on "Disestablishment," the writer says that it seems to him that there is a good deal of misapprehension on this subject.—"Whenever I converse with any one about this coming state of affairs, I notice that I almost invariably get an answer to this effect: 'Ah, what a sad thing it will be for the country parishes. How will they ever provide for their ministra-

tions?' It seems to be thought that in the towns people will shift for themselves pretty well, but that in country districts there will be a great failure in the ministrations of the Church. I cannot see that this will be the case."

Mr. Moultrie proceeds to state what the Free Church of Scotland has done for the country districts, and how the ministers of those districts are a great deal better off than they would have been in the Establishment. He then applies the case to England. "But when disestablishment comes upon us, we shall be infinitely better off, of course, than they. None but a fool would think of twenty thousand clergy, spread broadcast over the land, being unable to hold their own. In such a matter, at all events, the Church of England would at least be unanimous. There would, no doubt, be a rearrangement of funds (as in the Irish Church), and this would be a very good thing. The bishops would retire from the House of Lords to the House of the Lord, and this also, as it seems to many, would not be a matter to cry over. The Church would be ruled by her own synods, and there would be no more ecclesiastical bills run through Parliament over the heads of the clergy and in spite of their protest. The monarch would not be anointed on his accession by the Archbishop of Canterbury; a pleasing ceremony, but now nothing more than a ceremony.

"'Oh! but,' says some one, 'you will lose your churches. You will have to share them with Dissenters, who will claim their share in the national property.'

"I reply that, if there really be any danger of our losing our churches, that danger will probably come from a delay of disestablishment, until the country has been educated by Mr. Disraeli and others into a belief that the Church, being merely a department of the State, may be legislated for by the nation, which (as represented by the secular Parliament) may at its will dispose of its own. This I take to be the only real danger. And it is a real one."

Another writer in the same journal makes this suggestion:—"Can we not combine with every and any others of our country for disestablishment? Prophetically, historically, morally, we are bound to do this without reserve. It is beyond endurance that any spiritual society should be at the bidding of a civil tribunal of men of almost every and no creed. If some well-known leader would only sound the trumpet in this direction, we could soon liberate our chiefs from the temptations of their worldly policy."

Another writer in the "Church Review" speaks in a similar strain:—"Mr. Richard, an avowed, intentional, and leading Dissenter, asserted the other day in the House of Commons, that by law he was a member of the Established Church, and, as such, had a voice of authority in its affairs, its rites and ceremonies, and the discipline of the clergy. The late Mr. J. S. Mill, whose infidel and atheistical principles are well known, was another of our Church legislators, and a still stronger instance in point. Does it not seem absurd that such men, claiming such authority over the clergy, should not be treated as loyal and living members of the Church, and should not be admissible to the rites and offices of the Church for which they legislate? Is there anything analogous to it in Scripture? Is such a Church to be found there either in the Old Testament or in the New? or in primitive ecclesiastical history?—a Church with legislators and rulers incapable of admission to its rights and offices? Truly our National Church does seem to be a wonderful paradox, a monstrous anomaly, a stupendous self-contradiction. And this is the National Church, consisting of all the people of England, Catholics, schismatics, infidels, and heathens; to which, as represented in Parliament, the archbishops and bishops of the Church of Christ in this country have just been appealing to keep the priests in order; and to debate not only on matters of ritual, but on the spiritual things, 'the deep things of God,' symbolised by ritual. The death of the Establishment, which is of human creation, will be the life of the Church, which is of Divine."

The "Guardian" also calls attention to "the unfortunate fact that the Church of England no longer commands the allegiance of all Englishmen—that there lie outside her pale large multitudes, whose claims and rights cannot be ignored. There is in all ecclesiastical legislation an element of confusion, arising from the contrast between her ideal and her actual position; and that confusion can only be removed, either by the absorption into the Church of all foreign elements, or by the rough-and-ready process of disestablishment."

And thus does "Blackwood" utter its predictions:—"Mr. Gladstone did not object to terminating lay patronage, but objected to the power of appointment being entrusted to the worshippers. And in developing this objection, he made his first formal bid for the disestablishment of the Church of Scotland, as a few evenings later he made his first formal bid for the disestablishment of the Church of England. Dissociating himself from the whole of his past life, he

is ready for the policy of disestablishment on high sacerdotal, as well as Radical, principles, and to combine in its support the followers of Mr. Bright and those of Dr. Pusey."

Meanwhile some confusion has been created in the Church Defence Association by the course taken by Lord Hampton (late Sir John Pakington) at one of their meetings. Instead of dealing only with the defence of the Establishment, he launched out into deprecation of some within the Establishment. In referring to the Ritualists, he declared that they were "amphibious Christians. They were not Dissenters, they were not Protestants, and he could not describe them better than by calling them amphibious Christians. What was this Ritualistic movement? They had heard it described by the Prime Minister in the House of Commons not long ago. It was certainly something which the laity of the Church of England would not have; and they, the laity of the Church, did feel aggrieved when they saw ministers of the Protestant Church dressing themselves up as Roman Catholic priests, with stoles, and short surplices, and black petticoats."

With regard to the new tribunal to be set up for the "putting down of Ritualists," &c., the following epigram on the appointment of Lord Penzance has been written:—

"Penzance, by Thomson named and Tait,
To bind together Church and State
With Worship Regulation;
Accustomed only to divorce,
Will bring about in speedy course
Judicial separation."

The Ritualists, however, are not willing, despite the threats of the Premier, to be "put down." And thus they express themselves with regard to recent legislation. The "Church Review" says:—"While every Dissenting sect in the three kingdoms is suffered to be completely autocratic, while Cæsar is resigning the slight hold he still retained on the established religion of Scotland, while the Church of Ireland has been dismissed from bondage free and laden with spoils, the ancient Church of England remains as violently Cæsarised, Tudorised, Stuartised, King and Parliament ridden, as in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The condition of the Church of England is the anomaly of the age."

Again. The Rev. A. Bovay, writing from Herne Bay, on the conduct of the bishops, declares: "The archbishops have betrayed the

Church they swore to protect into the hands of the secular power, and the bishops have by their cowardice, toadyism, or sympathy, abetted the archiepiscopal treachery. By this course they have interfered with the rights of the laity, who may object to having their worship misregulated by a meddling archdeacon, an illiterate, ignorant, consequential churchwarden, or any three disreputable parishioners, whose services may be secured by the Church Association for the sake of a pint of beer each."

Two men, each eminent in his own way, though in very different ways, have been called away from us—Joshua Wilson, of Tunbridge Wells, and Henry Parkinson, of Rochdale. Although of a peculiarly retiring disposition, and of secluded habits, Mr. Wilson's name was well known throughout the Congregational denomination, "as that of one who took a lively and practical interest in the progress of religion, both at home and abroad. His counsel and his purse were alike at the service of the Churches, and his decease cannot but be felt to be a real loss. Probably all our readers will be perfectly familiar with the fact that Mr. Joshua Wilson was the son of Mr. Thomas Wilson, of Highbury Place, whose memory will for ever be associated with the early chapel-building efforts of Congregationalism, and with the Highbury Independent College."

Mr. Parkinson has, during his ministerial career, had but one pastorate—at Rochdale. "As a literary man," says the "English Independent," "Mr. Parkinson had abilities of the highest order. His published works chiefly consist of sermons, or lectures on religious, social, or political subjects, all exhibiting great intellectual power and a happy faculty of expression. He has, we know, been recently engaged in the preparation of a work in answer to the 'Peek Prize Essays' in favour of Church Establishments, which we hope will be published before long. It is satisfactory to know that the volume has received the author's final corrections. We also know that it was Mr. Parkinson's intention to publish a volume or two of his sermons, but whether or not any steps have been taken we are not able to say."

The superintendent of the Oxford University Press is Mr. Edward P. Hall, brother of the Rev. Newman Hall. The Rev. Dr. Cuyler has been paying Mr. Hall a visit at Oxford, and writes:—"He showed us through the extensive rooms, and the forty double-power steam presses which turn out seven completed Bibles per minute! The building is superb, with its quadrangles and gardens similar to the colleges. His lithe, boyish-looking son, is not only a first honour

man and fellow of Oriel, but he has been coxswain in the last four University boat-races with Cambridge."

It is rumoured that a gold medal is to be presented by the Liberation Society to the Bishop of Lincoln for his recent services in "educating" the Wesleyan Methodists to more advanced views on ecclesiastical questions. We cannot vouch for the accuracy of the report, but no honour which the Society could confer on the bishop would be undeserved.

An important movement for Congregational church extension in East Yorkshire is about to be made. Sites have been secured for new churches at Bridlington Quay, Filey, and on the Hessel and Beverley roads, Hull.

A new Congregational church has recently been erected at Leyton. It is of modern Gothic design, and at present capable of accommodating 400 persons, but so arranged that an enlargement at an early period can be readily carried out. The total cost has been £2,026, of which £1,200 have been raised.—The Congregationalists at Leyburn are building a new church, which will be a great addition to the architecture of the town.

The memorial-stone of a new Congregational mission hall has been laid in Colwick Street, Nottingham, by Mr. Alderman Herbert. The mission has been in operation for ten years, and much result has followed the earnest efforts of the two preachers, Mr. S. P. Hodgson and Mr. Cutts. The building is intended to accommodate between 500 and 600 persons, and is to be erected at a cost of £1,450.—A site has been secured and a committee formed for the erection of a new church and schools at Carnforth, Lancashire.—A new mission hall has been opened at Radford, Nottingham.—The foundation stone of a new church has been laid at Lincoln, for the use of the congregation under the pastorate of our esteemed friend, the Rev. William F. Clarkson, B.A.

The Rev. James Ervine, of Dunmow, has resigned his pastorate, and accepted a unanimous invitation to become the pastor of the united Churches of Wellingborough, for whose worship a new, handsome, and commodious chapel is in course of erection, intended to seat 1,200 people.—Rev. R. Henry, of Hoxton Academy Chapel, has undertaken the ministerial charge of the Church at Stoke-sub-Hamdon.—Rev. Henry Hooper has undertaken the pastorate of the Church at Torquay.—Rev. D. Anthony has announced his intention of resigning the pastorate of the Church at Devizes.

A STORY OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

PART II.

NEARLY ten years have rolled away since we left our travellers in their adopted home. Into their quiet life not many changes have come. A few silver streaks have appeared in the doctor's dark hair, and a few more lines on his brow, but the eyes are as bright and penetrating as ever, the smile as genial, and the heart as generous and kind. And the merry child has become a fair and graceful maiden; but the warm heart, fearless, unselfish, and loving, has not changed, and she is still her father's darling and his chief blessing.

It is a cold frosty night, and a cheerful fire burns in Dr. Roussel's cosy library. Tea is on the table, and a cat purrs upon the rug, while a young girl now kneels before the fire to stir it into a blaze, the light dancing on her golden hair, and then she peeps through the curtains into the starlight night. It is a pretty picture of domestic comfort, and so the doctor thinks, no doubt, when at last he enters the room.

"Papa, you are late," exclaims Ernestine; "tea is ready, and you must want it, for you left in the middle of dinner. Here, I'll take your coat—go and sit down in your arm-chair by the fire."

"Yes, little tyrant, I'll be obedient, or I suppose I shall get nothing to eat. How English we are with our tea and chops. Well, it is pleasanter inside than out, to-night, certainly."

"But how acclimatised you have grown, Papa. The cold does not hurt you now, and how you used to grumble at the English winters."

"And the springs too! But you see, one gets resigned to one's trials. You are grown a thorough little English woman. Ernestine, I don't believe you remember your native land—in fact you could not—you were a baby."

"No, Papa, not a baby, a child; and now I am a woman, but I remember everything;" and the girl's beautiful eyes become thoughtful as she looks back into the past.

"How is your patient, Papa?" she asks presently, looking up.

"Better," replies her father briefly; and now it is his turn to look thoughtful. Tea being cleared away, and the doctor still remaining silent, Ernestine, who as of old, always seemed to understand her father's moods, went to the piano and sang song after song in her clear pure voice, till it became late. Her father called her back after

she had said good-night. "Ma Petite, he said, holding her face between his hands, "You are a good girl, and your father's right hand, as the English say, but do not talk of being a woman! that is simple nonsense."

"Very well, Papa, I will be your baby as long as you like," replied Ernestine, laughing merrily as she left the room.

The doctor still sat looking into the fire for hours after he was alone. He was in some perplexity, to explain the cause of which I must go back a little. One day, when out on his rounds, he was accosted by a woman whom he knew to be the landlady of a boarding house usually filled with French refugees.

"There is some one in here, sir," she said, "who is very ill. It would ease my mind if you would just look at him, though he would not let me send for you."

The doctor followed her upstairs into a dingy, shabbily furnished room, where a young man lay apparently in the last stage of exhaustion. There were signs of refinement, both in the arrangement of the room and in the delicately cut features, that left no doubt in the mind of the observer that he was a gentleman, but evidently poverty as well as disease had overtaken him. After hastily administering restoratives, Dr. Roussel had a talk with the landlady, which resulted in sundry comforts being conveyed into the sick room.

"He has been here several weeks," she said, in answer to his inquiries; "but was ill when he came, and not fit to sit writing all day; but he would not give in, and laughed at me if I spoke about a doctor. It's my belief, sir, he's very poor."

It was the doctor's belief too, and also that absolute want of food and warmth had brought on the low fever from which he was suffering, though no doubt pride had made him conceal it. It was not by any means the first time that the good doctor had helped his patients in other ways than by his skill; and he took a special interest in this case, not only because the invalid was a suffering countryman, but because there was a look in his face that made him fancy they had met before. He resolved before long to have a conversation with him. The opportunity soon came. The sick man's spirit did not improve with returning health. A dejection and hopelessness seemed to have taken possession of him, which by no means suited the doctor, who maintained that mind and body must go together in these cases, or there was little chance of a cure. So one morning, finding his patient dressed and lying on a couch by

the window in the sitting-room, he prepared to give him a lecture. But directly he entered, facing the light, the young man looked at him fixedly, and then said, "Dr. Roussel, my landlady calls you '*Dr. Russell*,' and I did not half see you in the bedroom, but I remember you perfectly ten years ago in Paris."

"Then I am not mistaken, and your face is familiar to me," exclaimed the doctor. "Stop, let me think! I have it! You are Paul Blanchard, the son of my old friend."

"And I have to thank my father's friend for my life, and every comfort that I at present possess," replied the invalid, with much feeling, as he grasped the hand held out to him.

"My dear boy," returned the doctor, sitting down, "you will best thank me by getting well, and doing credit to my treatment, which as yet you by no means do. The fever has left you, and you ought to be getting stronger. The fact is I have done my part, and you must do yours. There, I came this morning on purpose to scold you."

"You see, sir," observed Paul, with something of a twinkle in his eyes, "there's one thing to be said, and only one, to excuse my ingratitude. I was not asked whether I preferred to be brought back to life and all its troubles; if I had been, I should probably have said 'No.'"

"Then it is a good thing you were not asked," replied the doctor, gravely. "If a man is unfit to bear the well-known troubles of this life, he is scarcely prepared to encounter another of which he knows so little. But, my poor fellow, suppose you tell me why you consider your life so valueless."

Paul sighed, but did not refuse to comply with the doctor's request; and while he is relating his adventures at length I will give my readers a slight sketch of his history.

When only ten years old, Paul Blanchard lost his father, and was left an only child in his mother's care. He was a quick clever boy, and when about seventeen, his pleasing manner and appearance, his ready wit and good spirits, together with his father's name and influential friends, made him a welcome guest at court, where he found plenty of congenial companions among the gay throng by whom the king delighted to surround himself. It was about as bad a training as a young man could have, and, happily, came to an end in a short time. M. Blanchard had been a Protestant, and had brought his son up in his own faith. The young man cared

little, however, for religion, and although he saw through the superstitions and follies of the priests, and was ready enough to ridicule them, there is no doubt but that he would have consented to call himself a Catholic, and to attend Mass, had he been required. But he was devoted to his mother, and she was a devout Huguenot. For her sake, when persecutions began, he remained firm to her faith; and for her sake he fled with her from the country, suffering numberless hardships and privations before they reached Dover, where they had settled. In fact Madame Blanchard could not be moved farther. The fatigues and sufferings of the journey had broken down a naturally feeble constitution, and although she lived for several years, surrounded by friends and comforts, it was as a confirmed invalid. Paul proved himself a good son. He worked hard at whatever employment he could get, though his bringing up had unfitted him for earning his bread. Their fortune, like that of Dr. Roussel's, was confiscated on their leaving France; but notwithstanding their poverty the mother somehow got the indulgences she needed. While she lingered, the youth had something to live for, a motive for struggling on, and keeping up his own spirits to cheer her. But when she died all hope seemed gone. He was advised to go to London, where he hoped to get work, and after repeated failures tried to earn something by writing, when illness had overtaken him.

"And now that you have taken upon yourself the responsibility of giving me back my life," concluded Paul, with rather a weary smile, "what am I to do with it?"

"We must see," said the doctor, cheerfully. "Let me have a look at your writings—on chemistry, are they? The difficulty is getting things published; but I needn't tell you that, poor fellow. Well, I will go home and think it over. As you say, I am responsible. Meanwhile, do not despair; there are more hopeless cases than yours. I do not believe that one of those who have left home, and country, and friends, for conscience sake, will be forsaken, even in this life."

"But that is just the thing," said the young man, eagerly, as he raised himself on his elbow. "I did not do it for conscience sake. One religion was no better to me than another, and I fear it is much the same now."

"Young man," replied Doctor Roussel, "you had a pious mother. You tell me she prayed for you on her death-bed. I believe those prayers will be answered. Good-bye; I will see you again to-morrow."

(To be concluded in our next.)

JOHN JANKIN'S SERMON.

THE minister said last night, says he,
" Don't be afraid of givin' ;
If your life ain't nothin' to other folks,
Why, what's the use of livin' ? "
And that's what I say to wife, says I,
There's Brown, the mis'erable sinner,
He'd sooner a beggar would starve than give
A cent towards buyin' a dinner.

I tell you our minister's prime, he is,
But I couldn't quite determine,
When I heard him a-givin' it right and left,
Just who was hit by his sermon.
Of course there couldn't be no mistake,
When he talked of the long-winded prayin',
For Peters and Johnson they sot and scowled
At every word he was sayin'.

And the minister he went on to say,
" There's various kinds o' cheatin',
And religion's as good for every day
As it is to bring to meetin'.
I don't think much of a man that gives
The loud Amens at my preachin',
And spends his time the followin' week
In cheatin' and overreachin'."

I guess that dose was bitter enough
For a man like Jones to swallow ;
But I noticed he didn't open his mouth,
Not once after that to holler.
Hurrah, says I, for the minister—
Of course I said it quiet—
Give us some more of this open talk,
It's a very refreshin' diet.

The minister hit 'em every time,
And when he spoke of fashion,
And riggin' out in bows and things,
As women's rulin' passion ;
And comin' to church to see the styles,
I couldn't help a winkin'
And a nudgin' my wife, and says I, " That's you,"
And I guess it sot her thinkin'.

Says I to myself that sermon's pat,
But man is a queer creation,
And I'm much afraid that most of the folks
Won't take the application.
Now, if he had said a word about
My personal mode of sinnin',
I'd have gone to work to right myself,
And not set there a grinnin'.

Just then the minister says, says he,
" And now I've come to the fellars
Who've lost this shower by usin' their friends
As sort o' moral umbrellas.
Go home," says he, " and find your faults,
Instead of huntin' your brothers';
Go home," says he, " and wear the coats
You've tried to fit for others."

My wife, she nudged, and Brown, he winked,
And there was lots o' smilin',
And lots o' lookin' at our pew ;
It sot my blood a-bilin'.
Says I to myself, our minister
Is gettin' a little bitter.
I'll tell him, when meetin's out, that I
Ain't at all that kind of a critter.

Harper's Bazaar.


 DEACON'S
 
 MORNING
 
 WALK.

III.

ONE more visit Mr. West had marked out for himself as part of the morning's work, and this visit he had reserved to the last, although such arrangement necessitated the retracing some few steps.

So Mr. West returned down High Street, then across the windy bridge, past the church, and through the churchyard, towards a row of small neat houses overlooking the quiet burial-place. At the further gate stood an elderly man, resting a heavy load upon the low railed wall, and singing in a wavering, untuneful voice, a hymn sang the day before at High Street—

“Jesus, confirm my heart's desire,
 To work and speak and think for Thee;
 Still let me guard the holy fire,
 And still stir up Thy gift in me.
 “Ready for all Thy perfect will”—

He stopped as Mr. West neared the gate, and looked up with a bow and a pleasant “Good-morning, sir.”

“Rather a heavy load that, John,” said Mr. West, after returning the salutation.

“Yes, sir, pretty heavy; but I can manage, with a rest now and again.”

“Do you happen to know how Gibson is lately?” asked Mr. West.

“Much as usual, sir; rather better, may be. I was there last night: he likes me to come in after service of a Sunday night. It's not much of the sermon I can tell in general, sir, but there's the text; and we sing over the hymns together, most times. Poor sort of a singing 'tis we make, but he can't get out to get no better, and we enjoys it. Yes, sir,

‘'Tis good to raise

Our hearts and voices in His praise.’

Sir,” said old John, with some hesitation, “I have been a-thinking and a-thinking ever since the Sunday-school Anniversary whether I could be of any sort of use in the Sunday-school, and a-wishing that I could. Not to teach a class, sir; I don't mean that,” said John, anxiously, noticing Mr. West's somewhat doubtful face. “No, I am not scholar enough for that. I can make out most chapters pretty right, taking it slowly and spelling a bit, and God be thanked I can.

But that's not the reading as will do for teaching; no more could I explain Scripture fit for that. But I'll tell you, sir, what I was a-thinking of. My little grandson, as is in the little one's class—infant class they call it—was telling me how the young gentleman who minds the little lads while the teacher is talking to them, is going to leave, and I thought, 'Now that's a thing I might be fit for, just keeping them children still.' Then, sir, there's children as bides away, and wants looking up: that, may be, I could help in doing. Leastways, I might keep the rude boys outside from racing over the yard, and hanging about the windows, disturbing the school as they do. I would like to do something."

"I should have thought after a hard week's work you would have been glad to have rested Sunday afternoons."

"Well, sir, I have been used to take a nap, but I don't know as I needs it. We used to be kept at work until ten or eleven o'clock Saturday nights: now the warehouse shuts at six, so I get to bed early. You see, sir, I began to serve the Lord so late in life, and I have such poor powers to serve Him at all, I would like to do what I can while I can.

'Rest comes sure and soon,'

as the dear children sang that Sunday."

"True, John. I will mention the matter to the superintendent: I dare say he may find something for you to do; but of this I am sure—our Master accepts the desire. 'It was well that it was in thy heart.'"

"Thank you kindly, sir," said John, shouldering his burden and stooping under its weight. "Good-day, sir."

"If there be first a willing mind," thought Mr. West, as he crossed the road, "it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not—as true this of service as of gift. I don't know what Mr. Morland would say should he see John on our staff of Sunday-school workers. Yet it may be John will receive a 'well done,' before Mr. Morland."

So thinking, Mr. West knocked at a door. "Good-morning, Mrs. Butler. How is your sister?" he asked, as it was quickly opened.

"Better again, sir, thank you. It really is wonderful how she rallies, suffering so much pain at times, and taking scarcely any nourishment. Will you walk in, sir?" And Mrs. Butler opened the door of a back room, small, and with confined outlook, yet rendered

cheerful in aspect by comfortable arrangement, exquisite cleanliness, and a bright fire and well-swept hearth.

The invalid was pillowed upright in bed, her long transparent fingers engaged upon the trimming of a rich silk dress; for in the intervals of most severe illness she resumed her former avocation. She was not very young, and her face, now pale and wasted, could never have been handsome; yet there was a certain grace, almost beauty, in the patient sweetness of the clear brow and mild blue eyes.

"I fear it is longer than it should have been since my last call," said Mr. West, after some inquiries as to her health. "I hope other friends have treated you better. Have you seen Mr. or Mrs. Morris lately?"

"Not very lately. Every one is very kind, Mr. and Mrs. Morris especially; still I cannot say I have had many visitors. A minister has so many demands upon his time and thoughts, beside visits to the sick, and then there has been such unusual sickness and sorrow among the friends at High Street, lately. New cases of illness must be attended to promptly, or the opportunity may be lost, either by death or recovery. There seems little urgency in my case on either account," the invalid added, with a smile and a sigh. "Ten years, this month, since I was first taken ill; three years, next August, since I was last in High Street Chapel. And Miss Hale is really recovered? We were so anxious about her."

"Yes, quite recovered. But her alarming illness, the sad trouble in another family, and Mrs. White's death, occurring all together, cast a great gloom over us at High Street."

"Yes, indeed. I used so to think of Mrs. White, as I lay awake, hearing what terrible nights she had. All that is over now. But, poor Mr. White, how lonely he must be—loss after loss. Ah, well—

'When the shore is won at last,
Who will count the billows past?'

And how are you getting on at school? I am sorry Mr. Hall is obliged to give up his class; who will you find to take his place?"

"We do not know—we do not know, at all," said Mr. West, despondently. "The labourers are few—few, and half-hearted, some of them. We have one or two teachers so irregular and unpunctual, and one or two others so crotchety and crooked-tempered, I scarcely know whether their loss would be a loss. But it is not fair to come and trouble you with grumbling and despondency, and, indeed, we

have many earnest workers among us, and there are yet willing minds;" and Mr. West narrated his conversation with old John.

The invalid listened with a brightened smile. "God hath chosen the weak things, and things which are despised.' You cannot tell, sir, what good may be wrought through John's simple loving words and Christian influence; and I have ever felt him to be a man of prayer."

"Yes, truly. And, dear friend, you can pray. Pray the Lord of the harvest that He will send forth labourers into His harvest."

"Yes, Mr. West, I can, and do. All that concerns the welfare of High Street Chapel, the school especially, is as dear to me as ever it was—I am quite as much interested, only less anxious. Looking on, as it were, from a distance; put aside without power to help or hinder, I seem to see more clearly how certainly it is God's work, under His control; and how, though one worker may give up, another be laid aside, another taken to his reward, the work goes on, and will go on, and shall accomplish that which He pleases. Do you remember when we lost Mr. Locke, as superintendent; and again, when that disagreement arose, how hopeless we felt? What would become of the school? Yet time has proved these fears needless. When I was first ill, my great trouble was about my class, foolish that I was, as if God could not get His work done without me. But my place has been supplied—much more than supplied. Do not be cast down, dear Mr. West. 'Oh, rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him.'"

"I thank you much. A word fitly spoken, how good it is. And I am sure you do not speak of waiting patiently without having occasion for patient waiting. If it is difficult, sometimes, to work on without becoming weary, it must be much more difficult to suffer on without weariness."

"I don't know. Grace is given according to the need. But, sometimes, when the pain is very intense and very protracted, a fear comes over me that I may murmur and grow impatient; but I trust not, oh, I trust not. Have you seen Miss Little lately? What friends visit her now?"

"I saw her myself last week. I am afraid the visits she gets from others are few and far between."

"Poor Miss Little! She has peculiarities, no doubt, and not very agreeable ones; but I do not think she ought to be so neglected. Now some of our dear old members have gone home, could you not

induce one or more of the friends who used to visit them to visit her sometimes? I have experienced no end of kind sympathy from High Street, yet I often think how much more pitiable her case is than mine. Here I am, at home, with the kindest of relatives; she in lodgings, with strangers; and a mind full of grievances, suspicions, vexing fancies, must be much harder to bear, I should think, than a body full of aches and pains. She once confided to me the story of her life, and then I wondered less at her captiousness and distrust. Would you remember me very kindly to her when you next call? And do please try to interest some friends in her behalf. Doubtless the Lord Jesus loves her, in spite of her infirmities: surely we should try and love her too."

"Yes," said Mr. West, "that is not Christ-like love which can only love where there is natural attractiveness. But I have allowed you to talk too much," for the invalid's voice had sunk nearly to a whisper. "I fear you will be the worse for the exertion."

"Thank you, no. I shall have plenty of time to rest, I am much alone. Please do not go yet, I will be a listener now; and you will kindly pray with me before you leave."

A little later in the day, and Mr. West was once more seated by his own parlour fire.

"What have been your experiences this morning, papa? you seem full of thought?" asked his daughter.

"My experiences, Mary? Various. Apropos to some of them, I was inventing an addition to the Litany: From all petty ambitions, unreasonable expectations, selfish discontents; from all vain dreaming, indolent self-indulgence, pride of superiority, good Lord deliver us. And in regard to others, such words as these were running in my mind: 'Blessed are the poor in spirit;' 'She hath done what she could;' 'Well, thou good servant, thou hast been faithful in a very little;' 'We glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts;' 'We faint not, but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day;' 'Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory.'"

A MINER'S EXPERIENCE.

I WAS once talking with a man in humble circumstances, a plain, hard-working miner, on the subject of personal salvation. I had long thought him one of God's children. His outward walk, as far as I knew, was consistent, and he bore a good name, free from reproach, unusually so for one in his situation. I asked him to tell me candidly if he hoped he was a Christian, and the reason for the hope that was in him. He answered me :—

“ You know I am no scholar, but I'll tell you the best way I can what I hope in. It is not what I do, but what Christ does for me. You've been down in the shaft. Now for a long time I'd been trying to do what was right, to live as I ought to, and I was trusting to my own self. And yet all the while I felt as if I were in the bottom of the shaft, and all I could do didn't get me out of the pit. God showed me that all my righteousness was but filth and rags, as the Bible says. Well, how can I get out of the shaft? Why, just get in the bucket when it comes down, and trust to the men at the windlass to draw me out. And so it is about my soul. I can't draw myself out, but I trust in Christ's plan, and leave it all to Him. I used to try and do right because I was afraid of God and the judgment day; but I try now because I love Him.”

“ The wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err therein.”

HEXHAM CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

THE Hexham Congregational Church was first formed under the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Robinson. The first place of worship was a large room at the Globe Hotel, which was rented for the purpose. This was about the year 1787. Considerable success attended the ministry of Mr. Robinson, and a Church was formed, consisting of between twenty and thirty members. In 1789-90, a chapel was built, capable of seating 300 persons; a vestry was added in 1824, and this was subsequently enlarged into a commodious school-room. This chapel continued in use up to the year 1869, when the present structure was opened for public worship. With school-rooms and vestries, it has cost more than £4,000, the debt on which has been reduced to £300. An organ is now being built, at a cost of £270.



HEXHAM CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

and it is expected that it will be ready in November, the amount of which has been provided for. The present membership of the Church is upwards of 110; and the pastor is the Rev. W. E. Peel, who entered the ministry in the year 1867, having been a student at Airdale.

TO A RITUALISTIC PRIEST.*

TELL me, Priest, what mean those candles,
Blazing in the face of day?
Did your Lord and Master need them
When He left the crowd to pray?

Did He ask for Jewish tapers
When upon the mountain's brow?
He breathed the murky, midnight vapours,
Rising from the plains below.

Or did Paul and Peter teach thee
Thus to stench His house with flame,
When thou comest to thy Maker
In the great Redeemer's name?

Did they so degrade the worship
Of a Spirit all Divine?
Did apostles ever practise
Childish mummeries like thine?

Be quick, thou Priest! bind on thy sandals,
And hie thee to thy proper home.
We can spare thee, and thy candles,
For thy friend, THE POPE OF ROME!

Depart! for we can do without thee;
Take thy traps, and quickly go;
We ask no light but that from Heaven,
Bestowed on humble souls below.

* A Correspondent sends us the above.

Make no delay, Old England scoras thee,
 As a pest upon her shore;
 While each rustic loudly warns thee
 To tease his cottage home no more.

Begone! begone! we have our Bible,
 And we mean to keep it too;
 God's Holy Book will guide to Heaven,
 Without your "candle-light" or you.

A POLICEMAN'S HOME.

ROBERT and I first became acquainted in the heart of an Irish row in one of the London slums. Robert was contending single-handed against sundry children of the sod, who proclaimed in raciest brogue their collective-solicitude to jump on him; while two ladies of the same nationality, one with something hard in the foot of a stocking, and the other brandishing a stoneware pitcher, were concerning themselves with a flanking movement that boded no good to Robert's cerebral structure in the neighbourhood of the occiput. In company with a colleague of the force, who opportunely arrived on the scene, I projected myself into the shindy, the issue whereof was that the Patlanders betook themselves to flight, leaving in Robert's stalwart grasp a prisoner who blubbered as he protested that his name was Patrick Donovan, and that he was innocent as the babe unborn. We parted with expressions of mutual goodwill.

My attention being called to the recent agitation on the part of the force for an increase in their wages, I bethought myself of Robert, all the more readily that he had told me he was a constable of long standing, was married, and had a large family. I found him residing in a dingy house in a dingy street, all the shabbier for a faded air of cheap pretension. When I called Robert was in bed, having come off night duty between six and seven; but he arose—a great, broad-shouldered, open-faced, red-bearded fellow—and welcomed me cordially in his shirt-sleeves. His mood changed, however, when I told him what I wanted, and he sunk at once into a pitiable abyss of embarrassed trepidation. His prolonged puzzled stare of mingled suspicion and anxiety to be civil was downright ludicrous. Is this

—said the stare as plainly as if the words had been spoken—is this a trap to get me into trouble; is this specious fellow Colonel Henderson in disguise, or Captain Labalmondriere, or some cunning district Superintendent from another district? From staring at me Robert turned his troubled gaze upon the missus, and fumbled nervously with the top band of his breeches. I had to bring him up all standing. “The missus will serve my turn better than you can—and you don’t need to know anything about it”—with which words I took him by the shoulders and bundled him into the back-kitchen, where he meekly seated himself on the copper.

The all-pervading and engrossing characteristics of Robert’s missus were extreme limpness and exceptional leanness. I ventured to hint that she was looking so ill that I feared her health was not good. The *argumentum ad hominem* character of her reply was startling to one who had not so much as approached consideration of the subject from the point of view in which she put it. “If you had had five children in less than nine years, and been half-clemmed in your confinements, you would find that you would not be looking particularly well this wet morning.” The woman spoke in sad earnest, eccentric as was the form of her reply.

After some other remarks she continued: “Well, now, you see, sir, the rent’s the first thing to look at. If we didn’t choose to of our own accord, we’re bound by orders to reside in respectable lodgings, and within the district of the subdivision; and the inspector visits once a month, to see that every constable has decent accommodation and is living in a reputable neighbourhood. Well, you can’t pack a man and wife and eight children into less than three rooms, try your hardest; and you won’t get three rooms anywhere within our district under 7s. a week. That’s what we pay. Married men with smaller families pay for two rooms from 5s. to 6s., and some take houses and let them out; but there’s a deal of risk and responsibility in that. Well, sir, come to take 7s. off £1 4s., and—well I knows it—there’s but 17s. left. There’s our last week’s bill for bread—I can show you ’em for weeks back, and they all come to about the same amount—10s. Do your best, you can’t have more left arter you takes ten from seventeen than seven; and them seven shillings is all as I has to find the week’s food, all except the bread, and to clothe myself and them eight children. Of a Saturday night, when I’m out marketing, I often stop at the street corner and have a good

cry, arter I've been along all the butchers' shops in — road, and found nothing like a bit o' meat fit to bake under twice the money I can afford.

"Five of the children go to school—we pay tenpence a week schooling for them; and this brings my spending money to twopence more than six shillings in the week. You wonder how I do with it? Well, sir, to tell you the truth, I don't do with it." At this juncture there emanated a series of warning and cautionary coughs and grunts from the region of the copper—an intimation that she was on dangerous ground. But the missis had paid me the compliment of settling in her own mind that I was genuine, not bent on inveigling people to their detriment. She persevered, "We don't do it, sir; we can't do it. Six months ago the loaf was sixpence; last week it was eightpence, and they've put another ha'penny on this week. Tatur is five farthings the pound now, and it hain't long ago since the very same sort—regents, they're the cheapest in the end, 'cause they peel more saving—were three pound for twopence. Coals! bless you, sir, we only keep a fire in to cook by now—for all that we use coke; and I'm sure that's a tiny enough grate, for Robert has put brick arter brick in, till, as I tell him, he's all but bricked it up altogether. Coals is one and tenpence a hundredweight now, and even at this price full of slate and dross.

"Them children hasn't wittles enough, not by a good bit," she continued, pointing to the tallow-faced brats clinging around her, "not by a good bit. And for all that we pinch, and screw, and clam"—from her use of this word I fancy the missis must have come originally from the midland counties—"for all we pinch, and screw, and clam, we're going slow but sure to the bad." Profuse coughings from the copper, the missis whimpering while she rummaged in a jelly-jar on the mantelpiece, whence she extracted sundry documents, with the aspect of which no man who knows the lower classes of London can be at all unfamiliar. "We've put away sheets and blankets—that was in the summer when we didn't want them—now we do, but we can't have 'em; then the sofa was put away, and the chimbley mirror went arter it last week." It may be requisite to explain that "put away" is the universal euphemism used to signify that an article has been pawned.

Robert himself now joined in the conversation. After some other remarks he said: "I hain't 'xacly in a decline; I don't say as how I am. But arter twenty years' service a man comes to feel it hard on him

when he hain't enough wittles for to put heart in him. And, mind you, it's the old soldiers of the force that keep it what it is. . . . All we are asking for, so far as I know, is the common fair play, that we should get paid a full day's wage for each of these two days that have been taken from us. I'm an old constable, and I don't like to grumble; but I put it to you, sir, how can you expect that constables will be what they ought to be—honest, independent, and scorning bribery—when they are hungry themselves, and when the missus and the young uns are going without?"

Such were the terms, not long ago, in which the home of a policeman was recently described to a representative of a London journal. They indicate, with a strange mingling of humour and pathos, some of the trials to which those are exposed who watch over the property and lives of their fellow-citizens. And it is well that we—whose safety is thus so largely secured—should know at what cost these privileges are purchased, and should have our sympathies drawn forth towards those to whom we are thus indebted.

THIRTY REASONS

WHY THE EARLY CONVERSION OF CHILDREN SHOULD BE SOUGHT.

1. BECAUSE children are sinners, and may be lost.
2. Because Jesus Christ died for them, and they may be saved.
3. Because the simple plan of salvation through faith in Christ is the same for children as for grown-up people.
4. Because there is a special promise for the young: "Those that seek me early shall find me."
5. Because very many dear children have found the Saviour, and are now happy in His love.
6. Because the Holy Spirit is striving in the hearts of many more.
7. Because it is constantly found that there are little ones who want to come to Jesus, but who do not know the way.
8. Because they are not safe until they have come.
9. Because the child's heart is tender, and not yet hardened by a long course of sin.
10. Because the child receives the truth in more simple faith than the adult.

11. Because it is easy for children to love, and therefore they may be taught to love Jesus.

12. Because it is easy for children to trust, and so they may be led to trust in Jesus.

13. Because those converted in early life make the most earnest and consistent Christians.

14. Because those who spend their youthful days in learning in Christ's school will become the wisest Christians.

15. Because, having life before them, they are likely to become the most useful Christians.

16. Because we now have the children with us, and it is easy to get them to listen to the story of the Cross.

17. Because when they grow up to be young men and women, it will be very difficult to reach them.

18. Because thousands of children leave our Sunday-schools at thirteen or fourteen, and leave them unconverted.

19. Because it is a startling fact that these old Sunday-scholars form nine-tenths of the criminals in our gaols and the unfortunates on our streets.

20. Because we live in a fast age, when children rapidly learn the manners, and too often imitate the vices, of grown-up people.

21. Because these children may become the fathers and mothers of the next generation.

22. Because they may die while they are still young.

23. Because the Lord may come, and none of them may ever grow up to be men and women.

24. Because children may be so readily gathered together in the school-room, the cottage, or the drawing-room; in the open air, and by the sea-shore.

25. Because a little book or tract given to a child will always be accepted and read, which is not always the case with grown-up people.

26. Because a letter written to a child is sure to be treasured up, and read again and again.

27. Because a word can be spoken with freedom to a child, and all of us meet with children sometimes, and have many opportunities of individually pointing them to Jesus.

28. Because this work amongst the young does not want special gifts so much as earnestness and love to souls.

29. Because it is a work that brings us so near to Christ.

30. Because the lambs are so dear to the heart of the Good Shepherd, who said: "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

T. B. Bishop.

SIR BARTLE FRERE ON MISSIONS.

I AM thankful to God that before I left those shores I saw a practical proof of the truth of what had come into my mind from other directions, and that was a proof derived from the labours of your own missionaries. We were carried by duty to the port of Majunga on the west coast of Madagascar, where, so far as I could learn from the books and reports at my disposal, I did not expect to meet with one single convert; but I found the whole of the ruling race, the whole of the Hovas who were under the direction of the Queen of Madagascar, united in Christian worship, and acting upon Christian principles, as far as I could learn, in all the ordinary affairs of life.

It was by the merest accident that I learnt, on the evening of a Saturday, that on the next morning there would be Christian service conducted by the Hovas. It was a large commercial port, with a great deal of trade with the opposite coast, a considerable Hova garrison, and a very intelligent governor, with a very efficient staff at his disposal; but I was not even aware that there was a church in the place, till in my walk on Saturday evening I found a very spacious building, larger than any other I saw, which was capable of containing some 600 or 700 people; and when I asked what this was, they said, "Why, it is our church: we are Christians, and we shall be all here to-morrow morning." And, mark you, this was without the slightest warning, because we came upon them entirely by surprise. We went down to that church, and we found them at six o'clock in the morning assembling for service. Well, we were told, "You had better not stop here; you had better go to the other church up in the stockade; they have gone on to say that you have landed, and the governor is waiting." I said, "Is there another church?" However, I followed the messenger, and leaving the congregation down below to assemble naturally, I went up to the upper church in the stockade, and there I found a large attentive congregation already assembled, and the church almost as full as it

could hold. It was as good a room as you could find for the purpose in any part of India—a large mat building, with five or six doors on each side, and large windows, and better ventilation than Exeter Hall has. There on the one side sat the women, on the other side the men, everybody coming in apparently to their accustomed place, sitting down and covering their faces in prayer for a few minutes; some with their hymn-books furnished by your society, some with Testaments, many with both, all printed in London in their own language. And as we sat on a kind of raised dais like this, with 500 or 600 attentive worshippers, and many standing at the doors—every one of them, remember, bringing a small piece of money, and dropping it into the money-box at the doors—the governor's son, who acted as it were as the minister on the occasion, came and explained to me through the interpreter what were the passages that were going to be read, what was to be his text, and what was to be the text of his fellow-minister.

POLITICAL DISSENTERS.

THE charge brought against us that we are "Political Dissenters," comes with bad grace from the lips of members of the State Church—a Church which owes its social position to political favour; most of whose most venerable sanctuaries and richest endowments have been transferred to it from another Church by political power; whose constitution, articles, liturgy, and ceremonial, have been appointed by political authority; a Church which, from the days of Whitgift and Laud, has enforced uniformity and punished nonconformity by political enactments; a Church whose temporal head is the political sovereign; whose highest officers are appointed by the political advisers of the crown; whose disputes about creeds, formularies, clerical practices, are discussed in the political arena, or tried in political courts of justice. Surely it is futile and unseemly for a radically Political Church to attempt to stigmatise Nonconformists as political, when they only seek to liberate religion from the control of political power, to emancipate religion from political bondage and thralldom, and that all religious sects and parties should be placed on an equality before the political government. And this they demand, and will assuredly secure, as a political right.

Rev. B. O. Bendall.

GLEANINGS.

MENTION has been made of the tree that David Livingstone planted at Newstead. Long may it flourish! But oh, Mr. Chairman, David Livingstone planted more trees than that. Ay, trees that have been taken up out of the desert sands into the paradise above, trees that are standing 'mid Afric's waste to-day; and as their roots strike deep, and their branches extend, they shall shake their living seed abroad, and the time shall come when the desert shall be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field as the garden of the Lord, and the living trees shall declare His glory.—*Rev. J. P. Chown of Bradford.*

My grandfather was a very poor minister, and kept a cow, which was a very great help in the support of his children—he had ten of them—and the cow took the “stagers” and died. “What will you do now?” said my grandmother. “I cannot tell what we shall do now,” said he, “but I know what God will do: God will provide for us. We must have milk for the children.” The next morning there came £20 to him. He had never made application to the fund for the relief of ministers, but on that day there were £5 left when they had divided the money, and one said, “There is poor Mr. Spurgeon down in Essex, suppose we send it to him.” The chairman—a Mr Morley of his day—said, “We had better make it £10, and I'll give £5.” Another £5 was offered by another member if a like amount could be raised to make it up to £20, which was done. They knew nothing about my grandfather's cow, but God did, you see, and there was the new cow for him. And those gentlemen in London were not aware of the importance of the service which they had rendered.—*Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.*

And in that country which has been so long the especial field of the society's labours—I mean Madagascar—(I do not forget that Ellis in his work also claims the Polynesian islands for this society) we have an excellent and interesting example of what are the difficulties which a missionary has to go through, and what are the successes that he may hope for. I notice that there are there no less than fifty ordained ministers—(that was the number mentioned in last year's report; there may be more perhaps in this year)—fifty ordained ministers and three thousand native teachers. It is by machinery such as this that a great country like that could be

brought over to God. When men speak despairingly, as many persons are inclined to do in the present day, of missions, it is because their own zeal, perhaps, is not so warm as it was, or because the general tone and tendency of the days in which we live is to advance in mental culture, perhaps to the lessening or weakening of the moral sentiment within us.—*The Dean of Canterbury at the Meeting of the London Missionary Society.*

Why, we are as broad as the world; we claim kindred with all mankind, and we are the persons who insist that all mankind shall be reckoned, none left out, for to us there are no lines of clearage which we cannot easily overpass; there are no skins so dark that we cannot see some lingerings of the Divine light that fell at first from the face of the creating God upon the creature; and there are no noses too flat to be brought in some way or other within our lines of Christian beauty. We believe that God hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth.—*Rev. Dr. Raleigh.*

One of my colleagues had a somewhat similar experience. I refer to the Rev. William Hall, of the Methodist New Connection Mission. A most touching incident occurred just before he left. It was the day before he was leaving, and this old Chinaman came in, attended by a number of his companions, to say farewell to their pastor. Said he, "We want to say 'Farewell.'" Why, bless the good man, they had been in again and again to say "Good-bye." "I am," said he, "an old man; I cannot go with you to England. I wish I could go to England and America, and tell English and American Christians what I feel; but I cannot go; and these young men here—whether they will ever go I do not know, but any rate, they won't go just now; and we have agreed to send a message to the Christians of America and England, and we want you to deliver it." Supposing you were parting from some friends whom you did not expect to see again, you would grasp each other's hands, and choke in the throat, and say, "Good-bye, we may never meet on earth, but we will meet in heaven." The Chinese message, however, was grander than that. "Tell our friends yonder we shall never see them on earth, but when we get to our Father's house we will go up and down and look them up, and there, in the presence of Jesus and the holy angels, we will thank Heaven for what they have done for us."—*Rev. T. Lees of Tien-tsin.*

THOUGHTS—GRAVE AND GAY.

TO tax men for the support of a religion they conscientiously believe to be untrue and harmful, is unjust. Whatever is unjust is immoral, whatever is immoral is irreligious, whatever is irreligious is ungodly.

Two children were playing together. Little Jane got angry and pouted. Johnny said to her: "Look out, Jane, or I'll take a seat up there on your lips." "Then," replied Jane, quite cured of her pouts, "I'll laugh, and you'll fall off."

Zuingle, the great German reformer, was killed in battle, in the year 1531. His last words were cool and brave. Gazing calmly, and with undaunted courage, at the blood trickling from his death-wounds, he calmly exclaimed, "What matters this misfortune? They may indeed kill the body, but they cannot kill the soul."

"There will come a time," says Richard Hooker, "when three words uttered with charity and meekness shall receive a far more blessed reward than three thousand volumes written with the disdainfulness and sharpness of wit."

M. Janin, who recently died, was afflicted by a grievous malady, which affected both body and mind. His weakness, we are told, weighed upon him terribly, and some of his last words are full of pathos. To M. Houssaye, he said: "I am a great writer; I am celebrated; I belong to the Academy. Well, I would willingly give all that to be able to walk round this room alone." To another friend he remarked: "Here I am, a millionaire three times over since my father and mother-in-law died; and of what use is all this money to me? I can't eat, I can't drink, and I do not care about horses." How vain at such a time are all the consolations of earth. How priceless then the promises and hopes of religion!

A Methodist minister, called to preach at an out-of-the-way town in California, says an American paper, was informed, before entering the pulpit, that he must be careful, as many of the assembled congregation were "roughs," and would not hesitate to disturb him if his remarks didn't suit. The holy man made no reply; but having reached the desk, he took from his pockets two revolvers, and placing one on each side of the Bible, gave a significant glance around the house, and said, "Let us pray." A more orderly service was never conducted.




THE CHRISTIAN'S PENNY MAGAZINE,

AND

FRIEND OF THE PEOPLE.

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TO THE DEAF.

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OURSELVES AND OUR READERS.

AS another year draws silently and swiftly to its close, it is not unfit that an Editor and his readers should interchange a few words more personal and direct than those which usually occupy our pages. In doing so now, we cannot refrain from the expression of thanks for many kindly services rendered by our numerous readers, for valued suggestions, for efforts to extend the circulation of our Magazine, and for signs of widening usefulness in our Churches. That some, at least, of the articles contributed to our pages are of unusual value, may, we think, be inferred from the fact that it is by no means uncommon for permission to be sought by our readers that particular contributions may be reprinted in large numbers as tracts and handbills, for the use of our own and other denominations.

For ourselves, though full of hope, we are not without some solicitude. The multiplication of undenominational periodicals, supported by wealthy and powerful societies or individuals, makes the maintenance of other periodicals increasingly difficult. The systematic support of denominational institutions and appliances which is given by almost all other sections of the Christian Church, is so singularly lacking in our own, that the very existence of our periodical literature may be imperilled. Yet such an issue cannot be contemplated without alarm. Our ministers scarcely ever enforce our principles, or expound and urge the improvement of our denominational methods from the pulpit. What if our press and our pulpit alike were silent? When, too, a Romanising and Ritualising literature is ceaselessly spreading its poison over the land, teaching the young, the busy, and the old, deleterious and destroying error, shall the press of the old Puritan and Nonconformist Churches be dumb?

Surely this ought never to be hazarded or even contemplated for a moment. And therefore, at this season of the year, we expressly entreat our readers kindly to renew again those good offices which they have rendered in the past, that so far as the Periodical Literature of Independency is concerned, its influence, through another year, shall be maintained and enlarged in growing usefulness, efficiency, and success.

The Editor is happy to announce the following subjects for the New Year, and he trusts they will form a sufficiently attractive banquet for all his readers and their friends:—

1. ORIGINAL STORIES :

Illustrative of the Persecutions endured by Protestants and Nonconformists. The first will be "The Hidden Bible, an Incident of the Times of the Inquisition."

2. CHRISTIAN THOUGHT AND LIFE :

The Sabbath-School and the Bible. Faithful to the End. A Scotch Sabbath. A Father's Kiss. "And then?" The Talking Book. Immortality. The Conversion of Children. The Little Ones. "To-day." The Christian Heaven. Ministers' Sabbaths. "Without Price." "Instead of the Fathers—the Children." Grace Preservative.

3. MINISTRIES OF MERCY :

The Little Pipe Makers. The Minister's Wife—a Retrospect. Among the Sick Children. Agnes Jones. Christian Civilization in England. Self-Conquest. Miss Stride. Jottings from a Pastor's Note-Book.

4. POPULAR TOPICS OF THE HOUR :

What have we to do with the Old Catholics? "Erastianism—What is it?" Bismarckism. Ultramontaniam. Disestablishment. How to get a good Minister.

5. STORIES FOR OUR CHILDREN :

A New Year's Gift. Story of a Cradle. Maud and Mattie; or, Two Birthdays. Little Elsie; or, a Child's Faith. The Little Copperas Gatherers. A Homeless Baby. The Old Fisherman's Story. "Lots just like 'em." Joe Black.

6. MISCELLANEA :

Jenny's Journal. Female Blacksmiths. The Deacon's First and Last Sermon. Judging by Appearances. The Memorial Hall. A Woman's Prison. The Battle Field. The Massacre of Church Music. Profaneness. French Politeness. The Glories of the Needle. The Burial Service. Bethany. The Church of Christ and the Church of Rome.

7. THOUGHTS—GRAVE AND GAY.

8. OUR BI-MONTHLY BUDGET OF CHURCH NEWS.

A STORY OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

PART III.

IT was on the evening of the day that the doctor sat over the fire meditating on an idea which had come into his mind. This was no less than to take his old friend's son into his house as assistant to himself. Something must be done for him. It was of no use curing his body without easing his mind, and how could that be done while he was starving? The writing seemed a hopeless business. He was, no doubt, an active, clever young fellow, and would be a help to him, and he could afford it. But, on the other hand, there were difficulties—difficulties which every father will understand, and which seemed at first almost insurmountable. To admit a third into the sacred little home where the two were all in all to each other, was a serious matter, even though it might be the saving of the young man. Well, there is a French proverb which the doctor was fond of quoting: "Do what is right, whatever may happen;" and a text which was also a favourite of his: "In all thy ways acknowledge God, and He shall direct thy paths." These both seemed applicable on the present occasion, and with them in his mind he went to bed, and slept as soundly as a child. The next day the proposition was made to Paul, and accepted thankfully. The hope of work seemed to revive him wonderfully, and in a very short time we find him established in the doctor's surgery. The plan answered well. Perhaps it had been a father's foolish vanity that had made him fancy that no one could see his Ernestine without falling in love with her. She and Paul became excellent friends, but apparently nothing more; he seemed to look upon her as a child. The fact was, Paul had a good deal to think about; he was not happy. He had always felt that things were wrong with him, as they were right with his mother and the father of whom she used to talk to him; and now there was the good doctor, his every act and word testifying to the reality of his religion, and the bright, happy, lovely girl, finding her happiness and her brightness in its promises. What was the difference? What was it they had that he had not? It seemed something real and tangible enough, that peace and confidence in God's love; that wonderful faith that made all things easy; that light that shone upon their paths, while he groped in darkness; that inward contentment which was not, like his, at the mercy of circumstances, but altogether in-

dependent of them. He saw it all, but how could he get it? Not by talking to the doctor, gladly as his old friend would have helped him; these talks only showed more plainly the difference between them. Not by reading the Bible, for he could not find in it what they did; in fact, it only puzzled him more, and he closed it in despair. In old times these things had not troubled him; he was easy enough, and felt the need of nothing; but either his poor old mother's influence, or the loss of wealth and all that he used to care for, or his illness, had robbed him of his former comfort, and had given him nothing in its place.

"You must go to the Fountain-head," said the doctor, one day, after a long talk. "Your soul needs a doctor, just as much as your body did when I found you lying nearly dead for want of help. You trusted in me and took what I gave you; can you not trust in the Great Physician?"

"And ought I to find what I want in this Book?" returned Paul, laying his hand on the Bible. "But it is all Greek to me."

"My friend," replied the doctor, "suppose when my patients come to me I were to point them to my surgery and say, 'You are ill; there is medicine, take what you want.' How many cures should I have? They need the physician as well as the phycic, someone who understands the exact nature of their complaint, and the condition of the patient, as well as the properties of the remedy and the best way of applying it. Such a doctor you want, and such a one you may have."

"Paul did not reply, but he thought more and more on these matters, and at last we may infer that he took his friend's advice, for an expression of peace was observable in his face which had long been a stranger to it. Ernestine and her father noticed it, but asked no questions, only prayed for him as they had always done.

"I do think," said Paul, suddenly, one day as he was busy in the surgery, the doctor standing by, "that the cure is going on."

"I think so too," said his friend; "the symptoms are favourable."

"How wonderful it is," resumed Paul, "the infinite relief of feeling that we may give up our lives and all our concerns into the hands of One who is no strange unknown Being, but a Father watching over His children."

"Do you feel this, Paul?"

"I have got a glimmering of it," replied Paul, "and even that is rest."

The young man found many difficulties in his study of the Bible, and he was not one to pass them over. Many were the discussions in the doctor's library during these winter evenings, in which sometimes Ernestine joined, and even she not seldom helped by her simple trusting spirit and clear intelligence.

And Paul found, as all thoughtful students do, that there were difficulties that could not be got over, mysteries that could never be solved, but he also discovered that there is a great difference between mysteries that stagger us and mysteries that we may humbly and calmly leave. It is not only in God's word that we are required to believe what we cannot prove or even understand. As yet, in most things, "We see through a glass darkly." With our finite faculties, our ignorance, and imperfections is this strange? Paul found that there is a peculiar blessedness in believing where we cannot see, and in becoming, in faith, like the child at the feet of the Saviour. Meanwhile, winter was changing into spring, not only in the heart of the young man, but in the outward world. There were, in those days, green fields and trees round Spitalfields, as the name implies, and Ernestine would often ramble among them, bringing home wild flowers to deck their room. She had become much more thoughtful of late, though as gentle and loving as ever. There was a difference too, in Paul, the doctor thought, and then again he told himself it was fancy. His old fears and prophecies he had forgotten, and when one day the young man came to him in his library, with a grave face, Pierre Roussel was more surprised at what followed than my readers will be.

"I must leave you, sir," began Paul.

"Leave me; what for? To set up for yourself, and become a rival, eh? What's the matter?"

"It would be an ill return for your saving my life, body and soul, if I were to rob you of your daughter," replied the young man, looking down.

"My daughter! my little Ernestine!" repeated the father. "No, I cannot let her go."

"I said so," exclaimed Paul, vehemently. "And you would not be so cruel, sir, as to ask me to stop here, day by day seeing more of her sweetness and goodness, her loveliness of face and character—loving her more and more without telling her so? You see, I must go."

Dr. Roussel did not answer; he only got up and walked up and

down the room. "My little daughter," he said, presently, as if to himself, "why, she is a mere child! And you cannot marry, young man, and what's the use of a long engagement? Why couldn't you have waited?"

"I have not spoken to your daughter," said Paul; "but I cannot wait here without doing so. Could you, in my place?"

Again the doctor paced the room. "You are sure the child knows nothing of this?" he asked.

And Paul repeated, "I have told her nothing."

"Wait till to-morrow," said Dr. Roussel, presently, "and I will speak to you again. If my little one does not think of you—and she cannot, she is too young to dream of lovers—it had better be as you say; you must go for a time; you will see other girls and forget her. You see, Paul, she is my only treasure, and she is happy with me; she does not want any one else."

When alone, the father sank into a reverie, only broken by the entrance of his daughter.

"Papa, I have been looking for you," she said; "What are you doing here? If your patients don't want you, I do. Come into the garden, and see how everything is growing this lovely day."

"Come here," he called, and she ran and knelt down before him. "You will never leave your old father, will you, my pet?" he said.

"No, papa," she replied, softly, looking down.

"Not till you are asked, eh?" he added, smiling. "Where is Paul? Why can't he go with you into the garden?"

The fair face became crimson, as she replied, "I wanted you, papa."

"Ma petite," said the doctor, "Paul has been in here talking to me; can you guess what about?"

The girl only blushed yet deeper, and hid her face in her father's knee. But he made her look at him as he asked, gazing into her truthful eyes, "Ernestine, do you care for Paul?" There was no need to force an answer, looking at her tell-tale face. Yes, the father's fears had come true, as indeed might have been expected; and, as he consoled himself with reflecting, if he must have a son-in-law, Paul was certainly the one he should choose. That evening all was arranged, Paul and Ernestine having had a walk, which they often looked back upon as the happiest in their lives. The doctor met them at the door.

"Can I ever thank you, sir?" cried the young man, grasping his hand.

"My son," replied Pierre Roussel, "I could not well help myself; but I will trust you, and I suppose an old man must lose his daughter some time."

"Papa, you are not going to lose me; is he, Paul?" said Ernestine, looking up shyly at her lover.

"No, darling, he will have two children instead of one, that's all! It's of no use shaking your head, *mon Père*, we have both decided that we will never be married at all, unless you live with us."

So they were engaged, and with every prospect of the engagement being a long one. But fate favoured them. During the last few years the persecution of the Protestants in France had considerably lessened; indeed, Louis had other things to think of, being engaged in a war with Holland. Some of the exiles even ventured to return to their native land, and others managed, through the interest of friends, to get back part of their confiscated estates. Among the latter was Paul Blanchard. Soon after this unexpected good fortune there was a quiet wedding, and in the happy home, from which the doctor did not find himself excluded, blessed with health, friends, means of usefulness, love for each other, and, above all, the "perfect peace" in which those shall be kept whose minds are stayed on God, we may leave our friends, and end our story.

Or, shall we, ten years later still, take one more glance at them before we leave them? They have remained in the land of their adoption, which they have learned to love even as their own. A larger house holds an increased household, but the neighbourhood is the same, for Dr. Paul Blanchard has taken his father-in-law's large practice, and carries it on less from necessity than for the opportunity it brings of doing good. In this he is helped and encouraged by his wife, our brave little Ernestine of old, now the mother of five boys and girls, who know no greater treat than to climb upon grandfather's knee, and hear from his lips stories of former times. There is one special story of which they never tire, at the conclusion of which mamma is invariably called upon to pull up her sleeve, and to show upon her yet beautiful and shapely arm, a scar reaching from the shoulder to the elbow, on which the children gaze with unbounded awe and admiration.

DR. MULLENS ON MADAGASCAR.

IN travelling over the island of Madagascar, I confess to a certain amount of disappointment in certain aspects of the country which I saw. I had often heard of Madagascar as a very beautiful country. In certain parts of the island I certainly witnessed that beauty, and enjoyed it immensely. Taking the lower parts of the island near the sea-coast, you will find vegetation profuse; the waters coming down from the hills and the rich soil in the valleys producing an abundance of vegetation. Some of the trees of these forests are peculiar, and have beauties of their own. That wonderful tree, the travellers' tree, is found here, and the Rufeo palm is seen in thousands. From the east coast as you begin to rise, you are met by huge walls of hills. As you go on through the great undergrowth of trees, you find you are climbing, and come out, after several days' journey, upon the great rolling plain of Imerina. In the quiet valleys you see the green patches of rice and the villages clustering along them and around them, while those majestic hills as they glow red in the setting sun, strike me as something peculiarly impressive in this great and widespread land. When we came to the province of Imerina and proceeded to Betsileo, 4,500 feet above the sea, the south-east wind—which in my judgment is the great trial of Madagascar—was blowing over the plain and destroying vegetation. As we travelled along we found scarcely any trees, or even brushwood. It is with difficulty the inhabitants of that part provide themselves with fuel. I never saw such a mountainous country. Hour after hour, for days we were carried down and up, down and up, until nature was well-nigh exhausted. Hills have to me always spoken with great force and power, and in that clear air, with that wonderful blue of the heavens lit up with the most glowing fires—with that wonderful moon, which came out with a silvery brilliance indescribable, we had great compensation for the toil of the day, for the number of the hills and the difficulties of the road.

My colleague and myself found numberless sources of enjoyment. We could look with pleasure upon the blue water-lilies flourishing in the numerous streams; upon the little rice fields, especially those wonderful rice terraces which are carried up the hills, right away to the very fountain where through the rock the little stream came out, and was led down step by step, watering those little narrow

terraces. Out of it all came great crops of rice for the sustenance of the people. The provinces are widely extended, with a thinly-scattered population. The population in some of the great provinces has been, I consider, rather overstated. The province of Imerina, the most advanced and best peopled, which has villages in hundreds, probably does not contain more than 750,000 inhabitants, or perhaps, not to reduce the number too much, we may find there a whole million of people. But this rich plain of Imerina, in which so large a number of our churches and converts are found, is only about fourteen or eighteen miles wide by twenty-five to thirty miles long. We make full allowance for the villages along the ridges if we reckon one million of people. If we calculate that in the whole island of Madagascar there is a population of from two to two and a half millions, I think that will be nearly correct.

In carrying out the objects for which we were sent, one of the most important was that we should go and personally visit all those spheres of labour in which our countrymen were engaged, or to which their attention was directed, with a view to establishing new stations. Six years ago, when we heard of the burning of the idols, every one at home felt anxious that the number of missionaries should be enlarged, and this was done on two occasions. When my colleague and myself went out, we went not out to criticise, nor to find fault, nor to show our missionaries they did not understand their work. We knew that their work was sound and healthy, and that they had acted wisely. Many of us thought the discretion which they had shown in regard to many affairs which had happened in the political life of the island was something wonderful. But in going out we did feel this—that those on the spot could not understand all the purposes which the directors and their constituents had in their minds, the number of men we wanted to send, and the resources at command. The end was, we were able, and with very little real difficulty, so to combine our judgments and come to such a substantial agreement that we have formed a plan to shape out an enlarged framework for the mission in Madagascar, which our directors in London will, I think, find no difficulty in carrying out as soon as my colleague and myself have had the opportunity of laying it before them and telling them what it involves.

Among other important matters the directors had wished that while our mission had important headquarters in the capital of the island, Antananarivo; a college well instructed by two competent

brethren at least, and a normal school well cared for, with an inspector of public instruction; while we sympathised with our brethren of the medical mission; while we provided good schools and competent pastors in the chapels in the capital, and superintendents of district churches, under the charge of churches in the capital; several of our brethren should be placed in some central spots, twelve, sixteen, or twenty miles away, that they in their spheres might also visit a larger number of persons, and be at hand to counsel and arrange all differences.

This was no easy thing to do. Our missionary brethren had previously given attention to the subject, and formed committees of two or three, who were requested to go to the different districts and examine into the claims of this town and that town in a certain section of the country, and give in writing their opinion as to the best mode of forming and the best places for establishing new stations. Owing to these previous inquiries, which had been admirably conducted, our way was made plainer. Still it was our duty to visit these places, and I believe, in the course of our stay in Madagascar, we visited every one of them; we saw, with a single exception, all who were there labouring, and all the places where they wished new stations to be appointed.

We went far away to the north, where only one English missionary had ever been before; and to the north-west, where not one of the English missionaries has ever been. Everywhere we found Christian converts and Christian Churches, the Hova officers sent from the capital acting as pastors, teachers, and advisers, some of them admirable Christian men, doing all they could. There they were, perfectly hidden from the world at large, certain that no one in England knew anything about what they were doing, yet in their various spheres striving to serve their Master in their day and generation according to the will of God.

We were able to shape out the framework of an enlarged mission, that involved the thorough furnishing and fitting of the college; it involved the consideration of the claims and the wants of our normal schools, the claims of the Churches in the capital and the Churches in the districts, the claims of education generally, of native agency generally, and everything involved in the enlarged agency which grows up in England round a successful mission, and which our missionary brethren in Madagascar help to establish.

What was the condition of our native Churches? You all know

the old story. It is six years ago since the burning of the idols in Madagascar. The priests, who wanted the kingdom still to be subjected to their influence, came to the Queen distressed and dissatisfied because their exclusive privileges were taken away, and they were compelled, in common with others, to render feudal suit and service to their sovereign. They asked that their privileges might be restored, and that the kingdom might be again placed under the charge of the idols. Under a sudden impulse, one of the officers said, "What shall we do with the idols?" It was agreed that they should be burned. There was a crowded assembly at Umboola, with its great cactus hedges, wonderfully bright with yellow and scarlet flowers. Bringing out the little bundle of clothing in which the idol was dressed, an officer asked: "Whose idol is this?" who could rule it, and who was to guide it? It was acknowledged that the Queen could rule it. She sent out this word, that it was to be burnt, and the idol was burnt. When the people heard it, of their own accord, and without any command from any one all over Imerina they did the same thing. More than 300,000 people, in two or three years after destroying their idols, built chapels. Their cry was, "Do tell us what this new religion is; we have followed the example set us, but now we don't know what to do. What is this book we hear of? Who is this Jesus Christ, the Saviour? Send us teachers who shall explain all this."

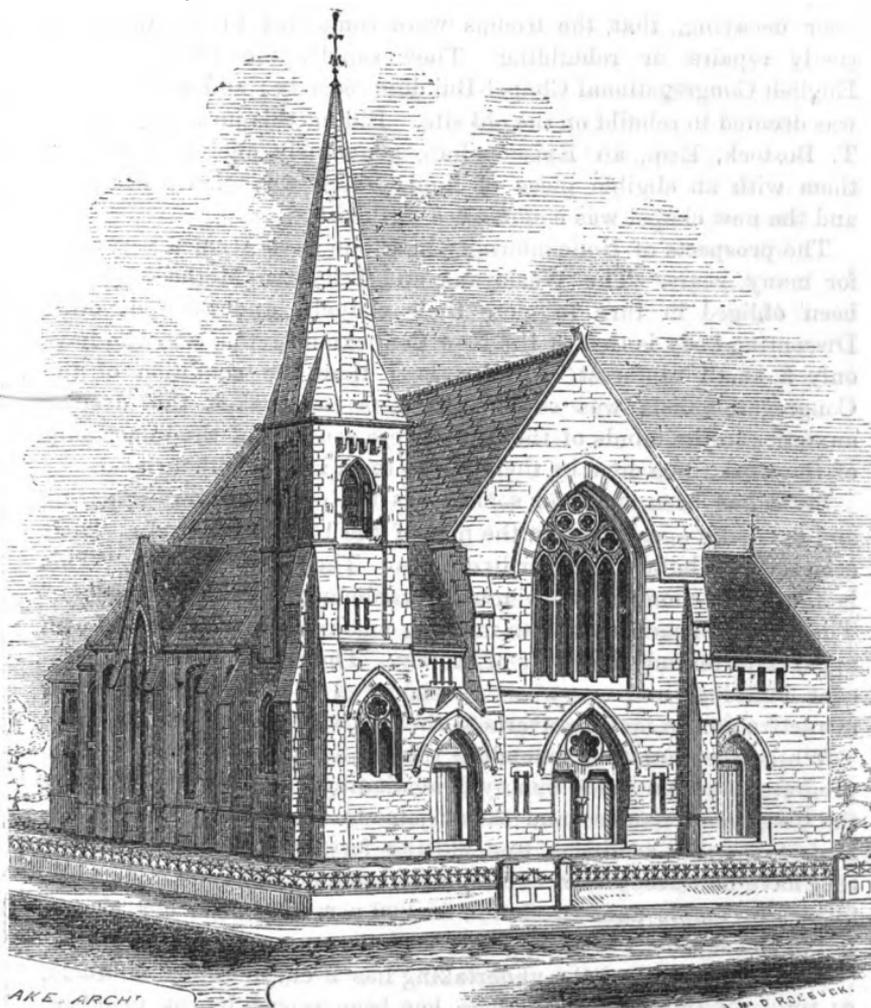
At the conference we held at Antananarivo, Mr. George Cousins, in speaking to his brethren, said that some 60,000 out of 300,000 were on the nominal roll of Church members—that the missionaries had had reason to criticise and find fault with the eagerness, the easiness, and readiness with which the native pastors, especially at a distance from the capital, admitted members, so that persons who ought to have remained as catechumens had not been kept outside the Church—even when knowing almost nothing, had been admitted amongst the members themselves. He asked the question very pertinently,—Are you satisfied that these are sincere Christians?—that twenty or twenty-five thousand are so? They all acknowledged that the nominal roll contains a large number of persons who ought not to be there, and were occupied with the thought how this large roll of names shall be properly decreased, or how it shall not be increased except by the addition of thoroughly trustworthy and believing converts. But take it at its lowest, here are

300,000 people who want instruction, enlightenment, and want to get the Bible. Out of 60,000 nominal Church members, the missionary brethren will accept twenty or twenty-five thousand as real converts.

Just look at that fact, that in the course of five, six, or seven years since that mission was renewed after the days of persecution came to an end, and the influence of the Gospel fairly began to tell upon the people, you find twenty-five thousand members of churches, reading the Bible, endeavouring to lead a Christian life, and striving to fight the devil. Are you not satisfied with the goodness of God in giving you that result? Such a phenomenon as this has never before been seen in the whole history of the Christian Church. I know it is out of that 25,000 men and women that we are to take the men and women who by their example shall supply to the ignorant among the larger band, the knowledge, the instruction, the stimulus, and the enlightenment they require. It is because they have such a faithful band of Christian men and women, that we are looking forward to having in our College thirty, or forty, or fifty students. There is, too, the Normal school. So quietly, firmly, and prudently, our brethren are anxious to enlarge the agencies of the mission, and promote the spiritual good which an able, sound mission is enabled to effect. That is the view I take of the general position of the churches. I, for one, as a missionary of many years standing, and having held correspondence with many engaged in mission-work, am content to regard the position of affairs in Madagascar as a great gift of God's loving favour. Let us by our sympathy, our gifts, our money, and our prayers, strive to make this mission an increased blessing.

It was a great satisfaction that we were present at the opening of one of the memorial churches. You will remember that at the wise suggestion of Mr. Ellis, an application was made to the King that the places where our martyred brethren had suffered should be appropriated as the sites for Christian churches, and how the King Radama readily gave over the land for our society, or rather to the local churches; while £14,000 were collected here in order that the churches should be built. First the church at Ambatonakanga; then the church at Ambohipotsy, which just stands where Ratsileo was put to death; the children's church, at Faravohitra, where four martyrs were burned on the 20th of March; and there was yet another church overhanging the great rock of Ampamarinana,

the place of the throwing over of the martyred fourteen. The church was finished during our stay, and when we saw how near it was to completion, we pressed upon Mr. Briggs and our builder, Mr. Pool, the desirability of finishing it so that we could actually open the church on the 29th of March, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the day on which the martyrs suffered.



CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, STONE, STAFFORDSHIRE. (See next page.)

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, STONE, STAFFORDSHIRE.

THE old chapel at Stone was built in the year 1786, and was slightly constructed and badly arranged. In 1869, its dilapidated condition became so marked, the roof being rotten and floor decaying, that the friends were compelled to determine on costly repairs or rebuilding. They sought the advice of the English Congregational Chapel-Building Society; and eventually it was decided to rebuild on the old site. But, at this juncture, the late T. Bostock, Esq., an Episcopalian, generously offered to present them with an eligible piece of land, which was gladly accepted, and the new chapel was commenced forthwith.

The prospects of Nonconformity in Stone have seemed very dark for many years. The Wesleyans and Primitive Methodists have been obliged in turn to close their chapels, and the only other Dissenting body is that of the New Connexion Methodists, who have only a small "interest." For a long time the condition of the Congregationalists was so depressed as to awaken the deepest anxieties in the minds of those who were sensible of the importance of the work to be done by them in the town and neighbourhood.

Stone has been made for some years the centre of very imposing and energetic operations on the part of the Russian Church. Their ecclesiastical buildings cover five acres. The "Tablet" says, "This is the most complete conventual establishment in the kingdom." Their work is carried on with untiring vigour, and is sustained by an apparently unlimited supply of money. Their church is a magnificent building, and every art is employed to render the services attractive and to make converts to their faith.

Whilst they are thus extending their influence, no commensurate progress has been made by any denomination of Protestants, except the Congregationalists; and they rejoice to see, that by making the largest possible sacrifices, and putting forth their greatest efforts, they have now secured an edifice, alike commodious and comfortable, furnishing ample accommodation for 800 persons in the chapel, and 400 in the schools.

The total outlay of the undertaking has been, in round numbers, £4,100. Of this large sum, there has been raised by the members themselves, with the assistance of kind and valued friends, £2,250,

leaving a balance of £1,550 to be provided for. The work is one in which our readers will have especial interest, and in which some doubtless will gladly aid. The treasurer is Mr. T. W. Barlow, the Mount, Stone, Staffordshire.

KNOWLEDGE.*

THE knowledge here spoken of is not religious knowledge in the narrower sense of the phrase — knowledge, that is, of theological ideas and doctrines—but rather that practical knowledge which is needed to give to our religious convictions their due expression and application amidst the manifold exigencies of common life. In order to success in any art we need not merely the intuitions and impulses proper to it, but also the practical knowledge, the technical training and discipline, without which these intuitions would be ineffective and useless. The inspiration of genius is not independent of study and hard work. No doubt it is true that the poet is born, not made; that no man can become a true artist merely by culture. Without the Divine afflatus—the intuition or sense of beauty that comes as an inspiration of the gifted mind—a man may be a maker of verses, a second-rate painter, a musician laboriously grinding out pieces faultlessly correct according to the technical rules of harmony; but the best achievements of such men will lack the indefinable element of originality, the interpenetrating spirit and life that captivates the soul in the works of the great masters in the realm of art. Yet, on the other hand, grant to a man this heaven-born instinct, endow him in highest measure with the æsthetic vision and faculty divine, it is not less true that he needs something more, something which patient study, and labour, and discipline only can give him before he can command or merit real success in his vocation.

Not only must science come in to furnish technical knowledge, and many an hour of painful labour be spent in acquiring practical skill and dexterity in the use of the materials with which he has to work, but the great artist above all men is one who must be possessed of that knowledge of the world, that sympathetic acquaintance with Nature, that large discernment of man, and society, and human life which comes only of profound study and observation. A great poem is not the mere frothing up of fancy and feeling combined with a copious

* "Add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge."—2 *Pet.* i. 5.

flow of rhythmical speech. I could name poems into which are distilled the results of the most comprehensive observation and thought, which are the fruit and the flower of a mind that has been nurtured by the philosophy, the science, the highest political and social ideas of its time. In short, what success in any great art demands is that to inward feeling and intuition and the ardent creative impulse there should be added a large measure of practical knowledge.

And the same principle holds good in the higher sphere of the spiritual life. In the nobler art of goodness our text seems to teach that we need, besides faith or religious insight and the ardour of virtuous impulse or the desire to do good, a third quality, without which we shall not be fully equipped for a Christian's work in the world—namely, practical knowledge. Fervent devotion, enthusiastic religious feeling, philanthropic ardour, a spirit glowing with love to God and man—these are noble things in themselves, and a man can scarcely possess them without proving in some measure a blessing to his fellow-men. But to fulfil in largest measure the benign mission of a Christian in the world he needs something more. To do good to men he must know men. To serve his time he must needs know his time. To take part in the great work of helping on the progress of society, the physical, intellectual, and social amelioration of mankind, he must acquire some acquaintance with its existing condition and relations, its wants and weaknesses, the sources of its corruptions and diseases, and the best means and appliances for alleviating or curing them. If he would not prove merely a religious voluptuary, or let his zeal evaporate and end in fine feelings and fervid aspirations, he must, if I may so express it, be not merely a sound believer and a sincere pietist, but, in some measure, an adept in social science. He must "add to his faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge. . ."

It cannot but be to all thoughtful men a matter of profoundest interest to prepare for the change that soon must come, and the new world into which death shall usher us. But, be that world what and where it may, what other better preparation can we make for it than in the noble task of making mankind wiser, holier, happier? What discipline for a human spirit better fitted to draw out and mature its loftiest affections and energies than to labour for the emancipation of the world from sin and sorrow and the incoming of the reign of truth and righteousness in the hearts and lives of men?

To live not for self, but for others, to find our deepest joy, not in the delight of sense, or in personal ambition, or in the more dignified life of an intellectual voluptuary—nay, not even in merely seeking the future safety of our own souls, but in seeking the highest good of our brother men—of those who are dear to the Father in Heaven, as His children, and for whose redemption the Son of God lived and died,—say, can a nobler school of virtue be found than this? Where shall thought find grander scope; or love, and sympathy, and compassion, and self-sacrifice richer expansion; or high courage and dauntless devotion a nobler field for their display than in the war with evil; and hope and faith a more entrancing aim than in the victory over sin, and sorrow, and death, which, if Christianity be true, shall one day crown the strife of ages? Live for this, find your life's dearest work in this, and then—let death come when it will, and carry you where it may, you will not be found unprepared. The rending of the veil that discloses the secrets of the world unseen, the summons that calls you into regions and worlds unknown, need awaken in your breast no perturbation or dismay, for go where you may, you will not, cannot go in God's universe to a region where love, and truth, and goodness have ceased to be, or the spirit that has learnt to live for these shall find itself a stranger.—*Rev. Dr. Caird.*

OUR CHURCH NEWS.

THE proposals submitted at Huddersfield for a general Board of Finance to aid in the development of our resources for the support of our poorer Churches and counties, met with as cordial an acceptance as could have been expected. The scheme now goes on to the County Unions for their consideration and approval. The more it is examined, the more we believe will its chief outlines commend themselves to the judgment of the Churches. That the stronger counties should help the weaker, is but an extension of the principle on which our County Unions themselves are constituted, in which the stronger Churches help the weaker Churches. The new Board will represent an Association of Associations, a Union of Unions.

The recent Liberation Conference in Manchester has produced important results. Even Tory journals are beginning to discuss the question with some approach to reasonableness. Others too, who have

till lately taken no part in the proceedings of the Society, are now coming forward in advocacy of the objects it contemplates. And this is their right as well as their duty. Mr. John Morley, for instance, may well complain of those who praise the Church of England for its mild tolerance, when its clergy "strain their consciences by subscribing to articles and formularies and by administering rites which they do not believe in at all, or else which they only believe in by the help of downright evasion and non-natural interpretation, which would have been a discredit to the Jesuits in their worst days."

In the course of a powerful address Mr. Henry Richard, M.P., showed how the Established Church had always ranged itself against the political interests of the nation at large. "Did it not set itself," he asked, "against all the efforts of the Puritans to vindicate the right of private judgment and free speech? Did it not range itself against the struggle of the patriots of the Long Parliament and the Commonwealth to establish upon firm and lasting foundations our political liberties—against the Revolution of 1688 and the Settlement of William III., who preserved us from the tyranny of the Stuarts—against all the endeavours made in the reigns of the Georges to mitigate the despotic laws that oppressed the Nonconformists—against attempts made by Romilly, and Mackintosh, and others, to reform the most barbarous and sanguinary criminal code that ever dishonoured the statute-books of any civilised country—against the American colonies when they stood up to resist arbitrary legislation and unjust taxation—against the repeal of the Corporation Acts—against Roman Catholic Emancipation—against Parliamentary Reform in 1832, when the representation of the people was a mere mockery and sham—against (or at least they were indifferent to) the Abolition of Slavery—against the repeal of the Corn Laws—against abolition of the taxes on knowledge—against the opening of the the universities to the nation—against the abolition of Church rates—against the extension of the suffrage—against the disestablishment of the Irish Church—against the Irish Land Bill—against the Ballot Bill—against a system of really national and unsectarian education of the people—against the emancipation of the agricultural labourers?"

"Now, why was this? Was it because the clergy of the Church of England were men less just, and generous, and humane, and benevolent than the rest of their countrymen? No. Ten thousand voices coming from the parishes of England attested the noble self-sacrifices

in the cause of education and their charity to the poor, to their varied exertions in the cause of philanthropy, and contradicted any such uncharitable imputation as that. Why was it that they, as a class, had thus been systematically arrayed against measures which most of them would now acknowledge as beneficent to the nation? He would tell them why. It was because they were the clergy of an Established Church, and they thought it their duty, or imagined, it their interest, to take the side of whatever else was established, however monstrous the views, and however flagrant the wrong. What had produced the state of things existing on the continent of Europe at this moment? What was it that had divorced the cause of liberty from the cause of religion in every nation on the Continent? It was this. The friends of freedom had had Christianity presented to them always associated with the name and the offices of priests who had done their best to strengthen the hands of tyranny. Of all the unholy alliances, that of tyranny and priestcraft was the worst, and was the cause of bringing down the greatest odium on Christianity. Was it not a fact that the State Church was actually the means of retarding all Liberal legislation? Look at what had taken place during the last session of Parliament. There were two classes of people who gave them in the House of Commons no end of trouble, and who prevented the passing of important measures for the well-being of the country. Those two classes were the publicans and the parsons."

The demoralising influences of the Establishment upon individuals could not have been better illustrated than by various facts that have recently transpired with regard to the procedure of certain of the Irish clergy, since disestablishment. "The position," says the "Times," "apparently thrust upon England in this matter is that of a very large receiver of stolen goods, harbouring as she does a large number of young men qualified by what in Ireland is considered an English episcopate for gathering and carrying off the spoils of a huge robbery. Whatever explanatory or even extenuating circumstances there are we shall be delighted to hear, for we certainly did think the Irish Church had outlived the age of such misdoings. If, indeed, there were substantial truth in the statement, it would be sufficient to silence all further lamentations over the downfall of the Irish Church. It would simply have died as it lived. For centuries immense fortunes have been made, families have been founded, castles and palaces built, power acquired, and titles accumu-

lated, out of Irish pluralities, capitular endowments, and episcopal revenues. It has been the best of trades, the most profitable of speculations—a hundred times better than vulgar shopkeeping or laborious agriculture. It was the harvest without the sweat of the brow, and the incoming with scarcely the trouble of adding it up. If ‘A Layman’ speaks the truth, the ruling passion has been strong in death, and the Irish Church, at her last gasp, has been clutching at wealth to be spent far away.”

In Mr. Mill's posthumous work on “Religion: Nature, Utility of Religion, Theism,” Mr. Mill makes the following remarkable admissions—remarkable from his standpoint: “The most valuable part of the effect on the character which Christianity has produced by holding up in a divine person a standard of excellence and a model for imitation is available even to the absolute unbeliever, and can never more be lost to humanity. For it is Christ rather than God whom Christianity has held up to believers as the pattern of perfection for humanity. It is the God incarnate more than the God of the Jews or of nature, who, being idealised, has taken so great and salutary a hold on the modern mind. And whatever else may be taken away from us by rational criticism, Christ is still left; a unique figure, not more unlike all his precursors than all his followers, even those who had the direct benefit of his personal teaching. It is of no use to say that Christ, as exhibited in the Gospels, is not historical, and that we know not how much of what is admirable has been superadded by the tradition of his followers. The tradition of followers suffices to insert any number of marvels, and may have inserted all the miracles which he is imputed to have wrought. But who among his disciples or among their proselytes was capable of inventing the sayings ascribed to Jesus, or of imagining the life and character revealed in the Gospels? Certainly not the fishermen of Galilee; as certainly not St. Paul, whose character and idiosyncrasies were of a totally different sort; still less early Christian writers, in whom nothing is more evident than that the good which was in them was all derived, as they always professed that it was derived, from the higher source. . . .

“About the life and sayings of Jesus there is a stamp of personal originality, combined with profundity of insight, which, if we abandon the idle expectation of finding scientific precision where something very different was aimed at, must place the Prophet of Nazareth, even in the estimation of those who have no belief in

his inspiration, in the very first rank of the men of sublime genius of whom our species can boast. When this pre-eminent genius is combined with the qualities of probably the greatest moral reformer and martyr to that mission who ever existed upon earth, religion cannot be said to have made a bad choice in pitching on this man as the ideal representative and guide of humanity; nor even now would it be easy, even for an unbeliever, to find a better translation of the rule of virtue from the abstract into the concrete, than to endeavour so to live that Christ would approve our life. When to this we add that, to the conception of the rational sceptic, it remains a possibility that Christ actually was what he supposed himself to be, . . . a man charged with a special, express, and unique commission from God to lead mankind to truth and virtue, we may well conclude that the influences of religion on the character which will remain, after rational criticism has done its utmost against the evidences of religion, are well worth preserving, and that what they lack in direct strength, as compared with those of a firmer belief, is more than compensated by the greater truth and rectitude of the morality they sanction."

The first statistics of the London School Board showed that efficient school accommodation was needed for 112,000 children, and later inquiries have shown that this estimate was too low. To meet this deficiency the Board has already built and opened sixty-five new schools, and is erecting, or about to erect, sixty-nine others. These schools are most of them large; five accommodating, each of them, 1,500 or more, and thirty-two having room for 1,250 each. They are all spacious, airy, furnished with good playgrounds, improved furniture, the best attainable books, maps, and pictures, and every appliance which sanitary considerations suggest.

Rev. Henry Ollard, who was for twenty-one years the minister of the London-road Chapel, Derby, has been presented with an expression of sympathy from the congregation and from friends of other denominations—a purse containing a cheque for £437 10s. 6d. At the presentation many ministers bore testimony to the high esteem in which the late pastor was held. We understand that Mr. Ollard has left Derby for Llandudno, to spend the winter.

Eighty of the scholars connected with Victoria-street Church School, Derby, have joined the Church during the past year, and sixty had done so the year previous. More than two hundred of the scholars are now members of the Church.

At the annual meeting of the London Missionary Society held at South Molton, where the Rev. S. T. Williams, son of the martyr of Erromanga, attended as a deputation, the contributions were collected in a war shell from the Polynesian Islands, and the wooden hat of a converted heathen.

The Church and congregation assembling at Union Chapel, Islington, under the ministry of the Rev. Dr. Allon, have resolved to erect upon the site of the present building a new and commodious edifice, in a style more in accordance with modern ideas of church architecture and the eminent position which pastor and people occupy in the denomination. The present building has been used for worship for seventy years, and has at various times undergone alterations to meet increasing requirements. During the thirty-one years of Dr. Allon's ministry his people have contributed for Church support, schools, home and foreign missions, and benevolent purposes, an annual average of between £4,000 and £5,000. Upwards of 4,000 children are receiving the benefits of education in the schools. The present church seats about 1,100 worshippers, the new edifice will accommodate about 1,600. The minimum cost of the new church and school will be £18,000, but that sum will probably be largely exceeded. More than £7,000 have already been subscribed, and there is a general determination that the church shall, if possible, be opened free from debt.

A new church is about to be erected at Newton Abbott, at a cost of £4,000, for the Church and congregation under the pastoral care of the Rev. J. Sellicks. About £1,650 have been subscribed, and the English Congregational Chapel-Building Society have granted a loan of £400 without interest, repayable in annual instalments.

The corner-stone of a new Congregational Mission-room in connection with Ebenezer Chapel, Dewsbury, has been laid at Batley Carr. The new building will accommodate about 300 worshippers, and is expected to cost about £600.

A meeting of the Independent Church and congregation has been held at Penzance, for the twofold purpose of celebrating the second anniversary of the Rev. A. W. Johnson's pastorate, and the presentation by the church and school buildings committees of their complete balance-sheets. The work of church restoration cost £1,136. The enlargement of the school-rooms and the enclosure of a portion of the space under the church for an infant class-room, effected in 1873,

cost £85, making a total of £1,221. All liabilities having been met, there remains a credit balance of £28 8s. 4d. The repayment of the loan of £150, liberally granted without interest by the Congregational Chapel-Building Society, has been antedated by four years.

The foundation-stone of Emmanuel Church has been laid at Bootle. The congregation for whose use this structure is being erected was formed about three years ago under the auspices of the Lancashire Congregational Union, and has hitherto worshipped in the Assembly-rooms, Merton-road. A Church has been formed which numbers about fifty communicants, and there are nearly 200 children and young persons in attendance at the Sunday-school. Bootle has rapidly grown from a village into a town, with a population of about 20,000. The new church, which will be Gothic of an early Geometric character, will cost £6,000, and will accommodate 700 persons. It is proposed subsequently to add galleries and a tower and spire.

The memorial-stone of a new chapel has been laid in Oak-road, New Wortley, Leeds. The new edifice will cost £4,500, and provide accommodation for 750 persons.

A chapel, which is to bear the name of Tyndale, in memory of the eminent divine who translated the Scriptures into the English vernacular, is about to be erected in Gloucester, to assist in supplying the spiritual needs of a population of between ten and twelve thousand who have recently settled in the surrounding district. The edifice, which is to be in the early Gothic style, will ultimately seat 750 adults. For the present it is divided into two parts by a cross wall, the nave alone forming in the mean time the chapel, with accommodation for upwards of 500 persons, the transepts and cross being provided with a temporary ceiling, and fitted up as a school or lecture-room. The cost of the portion now in course of erection will be about £3,000, towards which £2,600 have been raised, including a donation of £1,000 from Mr. W. Somerville.

A new church erected in Burnt Ash-lane, Lee, has been opened. The church, which is of handsome Gothic design, and is capable of seating about 600 persons, has been erected principally at the cost of the congregation at Blackheath, at an outlay of £7,400. The freehold site, worth £600, was given by Mr. Pound; and Lord Northbrook, the Governor-General of India, who has an estate close by, on being applied to, sent the liberal donation of £500.

The Congregational Church, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, was erected a few years since at a cost of between £6,000 and £7,000. The last £1,000 has just been cleared off, and by the liberal efforts of the congregation, almost alone, this handsome church is now free from debt. To assist in this last effort, the ladies held a garden sale and bazaar, and realised more than £300.

A new church, at a cost of £5,000, is about to be erected at the rapidly-increasing manufacturing town of Leigh, Lancashire, in substitution for the chapel erected in 1813, for the Rev. William Alexander, father of the late Rev. John Alexander, of Norwich. About £1,800 have already been subscribed by the congregation. A bazaar recently held produced a sum of £620 towards the building fund.

The foundation-stone of a mission chapel in connection with Salem Chapel, Leeds, has been laid in South Accommodation-road, Hunslet. The mission was commenced by the church and congregation of Salem Chapel in 1866, in an old building where a Sunday-school has been conducted, and a service for adults held every Sunday. The premises have been found to be inadequate for the operations of the mission for some time, hence the recent proceedings. Seats will be provided for three hundred, and the total cost is estimated at £1,250, exclusive of the land, which, with the building at present in use, has cost nearly £1,000 more. Towards this outlay of £2,200, from £800 to £900 have been already subscribed.

A new church at Winchmore-hill, to replace one taken down about five years ago by the Great Northern Railway, has been opened, the delay having been caused by the difficulty in obtaining a suitable site.

On Monday the foundation-stone of new Sunday-schools, in connection with the Congregational Church, Drybrook, was laid by the Rev. Dr. Brown, of Cheltenham. No less than £300 was deposited. At the close of the afternoon service between four hundred and five hundred sat down to tea, and in the evening the place was crowded, a most interesting public meeting being held under the presidency of A. Goold, Esq., J.P.

A new chapel at Old Radford, Nottingham, has been opened.

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