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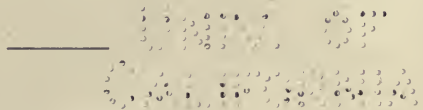


FATHER DAMIEN AND OTHERS

BY

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|

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and '*Father Damien*.'



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P R E F A C E .

BY the kindness of Messrs. Macmillan, I am enabled to reprint my story of Father Damien—with a few additions, and some omissions of what was only of temporary interest.

It is good to find how his character and work still influence the world at large. How little he guessed in that distant island—almost cut off from humanity—that his life there would prove a power to lead numbers of people whom he had never seen or heard of into paths of greater devotion and usefulness. Truly, “He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”

I have added a selection of short stories. Many of them have appeared before. My hope is that they may prove interesting and not wholly unprofitable to other people than those who are directly connected with the Church Army. Some may judge them to be a very mixed collection, but my friends will not be surprised, for they know that I have found it good to learn from the vision which teaches us to reckon nothing which God has cared for common or unclean.

E. C.

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FATHER DAMIEN.

(The following account is reprinted by the kind permission of Messrs. Macmillan & Co. It is selected from my book, "Father Damien," published by them in 1889.)

I MUST begin my story of Father Damien by a short account of the place where he lived and worked.

The Hawaiian or Sandwich Islands lie in the Pacific Ocean, about half-way between America and Australia, and they were discovered about a hundred and twenty years ago by Captain Cook. For fifty years they were visited by no white people except merchantmen and whalers, who often exercised a pernicious influence which it makes one's blood boil to read of. The natives were a fine muscular race, with brown skins and handsome countenances. They were hospitable, and they welcomed the foreigners almost as if they had been gods, giving them freely the best of their food, their shelter, and their daughters. They numbered about four hundred thousand. Their visitors brought them vices—drunkenness and evil diseases—and now the number of natives has shrunk to forty thousand. Of these it is feared that two

thousand are infected with leprosy. But the same hospitable smiles adorn their friendly faces, and the same simple manners grace their behaviour.

Happily there is a bright side as well as a dark side to the incoming of the whites.

In the year 1809 a brown boy was found crying on the threshold of Yale College, in America. His name was Obookiah, and he came from the Hawaiian Islands. His father and mother had been killed in battle in his presence, and as he was escaping with his baby-brother on his back, the little one was slain with a spear and he himself was taken prisoner. By-and-by circumstances brought him to America, and at last to the doorsteps of Yale College. In his extremity he was taken in and kindly used by Mr. Dwight, a resident graduate.

Obookiah loved his people, and soon he asked that he might "learn to read this Bible, and go back home and tell them to pray to God up in heaven." Two other lads, Tennooe and Hopu, had come to America with him. They were all taken and educated by Mr. Dwight, and the result of intercourse with them was that in ten years a band of twelve men and women started from Boston for the Hawaiian Islands, with Tennooe and Hopu as guides. Obookiah had died a peaceful Christian death about a year after his arrival at Yale.

When the party left Boston it was said to them at their farewell meeting, "Probably none of you will live to witness the downfall of idolatry, but you will

sow the good seed, and doubtless your children or grand-children will reap the fruit."

But when the missionaries reached the islands the downfall had already mysteriously come.

Kamehameha the First—a king as great in his way, perhaps, as our King Alfred—had effected a revolution. He had, after long wars, united all the islands in one sovereignty, and he had abolished the degrading laws of caste, or "tabu." By this system it was death for a man to let his shadow fall upon a chief, to enter his enclosure, or to stand if his name were mentioned in a song. No woman might eat with her husband, or eat fowl, pork, cocoanut, or bananas—things offered to the idols. Death was the penalty.

"How did you lose your eye?" said Mrs. Thurston, a missionary's wife, to a little girl. "I ate a banana," replied the child.

If any man made a noise when prayers were being said he was killed. When the people had finished building a temple some of them were offered in sacrifice. I myself saw a great quadrangular temple, on the coast of Hawaii, which contained hundreds of decapitated human skulls. A cord is preserved with which one high priest had strangled twenty-three victims. Infanticide was a common practice. Maniacs were stoned to death. Old people were often buried alive or left to perish. There was no written language.

The missionaries reached Hawaii on the 31st of March, 1820, after a long, wearisome journey round

South America, and one can imagine how delightful the sight of these delicious islands must have been when they came in view. The whole scene is so exactly described in the following lines from Tennyson's "Lotus Eaters," that it seemed to me, when I was there, as if they must have been written to describe it—

"Courage!" he said, and pointed toward the land,
 "This mounting wave will roll us shoreward soon."
 In the afternoon they came unto a land
 In which it seemed always afternoon.
 All round the coast the languid air did swoon,
 Breathing like one that hath a weary dream.
 Full-faced above the valley stood the moon;
 And like a downward smoke, the slender stream
 Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall did seem.
 A land of streams! some, like a downward smoke,
 Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn, did go;
 And some thro' wavering lights and shadows broke,
 Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below.
 They saw the gleaming river seaward flow
 From the inner land: far off, three mountain-tops,
 Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,
 Stood sunset-flushed.

The mountains and the river are there, and the streams are for ever falling by scores down the green precipices of Hawaii into the blue sea. How lovely that sea is can scarcely be told. One puts one's hand in, and all round it is like the softest and most brilliant blue velvet; below are growths of pure white coral, and among them swim fishes as brilliant as paroquets. Some are yellow like canaries, some are

gorgeous orange or bright red. I tried to paint a blue fish, but no pigment could represent its intensity. The loveliest of all was like nothing but a rainbow as it sported below me. Groves of cocoanut trees rise from the water's edge. The gardens are rich with roses, lilies, myrtles, gardenia, heliotrope, and passion-flowers.

Near by is a tropical forest, which I almost feared as I entered, for there is an element of the terrible in this tremendous vegetation, and in the silence of it all. The trees are wreathed with humid creepers; the ferns are fourteen feet high; even the stag's-horn moss grows taller than a man. Every foot of space is occupied with rank vegetation.

When the Bostonians reached the coast they sent Hopu on shore to reconnoitre. He soon returned, and as he came within hail he shouted, "Kamehameha is dead. His son Liholiho reigns. The tabus are abolished. The images are burned. The temples are destroyed. There has been war. Now there is peace!"

This was news indeed. The great king had one day risen up from the place where he was feasting and had stalked over to his wives' table, and sat down with them to eat and to drink. The high priest had followed his example. The people were aghast with apprehension; but no judgment from heaven followed, and soon the tabu was broken everywhere, and a new freedom spread through the islands.

Kamehameha's work was done; he fell ill, and took

to his bed. As he lay dying he asked an American trader to tell him about the Americans' God. "But," said the native informant, in his broken English, "he no tell him anything." Alas! alas!

The missionaries had arrived at the right moment, and they were cordially welcomed. The new king, with his five wives, came to call—straight out of the sea, and all undressed. The missionaries hinted that it would be better if they wore clothes, and the next time the king came he wore a pair of silk stockings and a hat. He threw himself down on the bed (the first he had ever beheld), and rolled himself over and over on it with extreme delight.

The Princess Kapuliholiho said to the missionary's wife, "Give us your eldest son, and we will adopt him." But the tempting offer was politely declined. There were five dowager-queens, one of whom was dressed with great state in a robe made of seventy thicknesses of bark. The white ladies found favour in the eyes of the brown ladies, who described their visitors in the following terms:—"They are white and have hats with a spout. Their faces are round and far in. Their necks are long. They look well."

The royal feasts were on a large scale; sometimes as many as two hundred dogs were cooked, and it was a favourite joke to put a pig's head on a roasted dog, to deceive a too fastidious white visitor.

The royal personages and the chiefs claimed the privilege of first learning to read, but the king's intemperate habits make him an irregular pupil.

A majestic chieftainess, six feet high, named Kapiolani, was one of the first converts to Christianity, and a faithful ally of the teachers of the new faith. It was she who in 1824 broke the spell which hung over the great volcano, Kilauea, the supposed home of the terrible goddess Pele. She marched with her retinue across the plains of lava till she reached the lake of fire. On the brink of the crater she had gathered a quantity of the sacred red and yellow ohelo berries, which ripen there every month of the year (it is said), and are a delicious fruit to eat. These berries (sacred to Pele) she flung into the boiling lake of fiery lava, and defied the goddess to avenge the insult.

There was a horror-stricken silence, but no calamity followed, and Kapiolani calmly turned to her people and told them of Jehovah and of her new-found faith in Christ. It is said that a third of the population became Christians in consequence of this brave deed.

We who do not believe in Pele may scarcely appreciate the heroism of Kapiolani's action, but she had all the beliefs of her youth to combat, and must have stifled many qualms before she performed her act of desecration and defiance.

I have heard an interesting account of the first Sunday school held in Hawaii. The native monitor was found arranging the classes into divisions of Christian and non-Christian. He asked every one the question, "Do you love your enemies?" If they said "Yes," they were arranged with the Christians, if

they said "No" with the heathen. I have known less sensible divisions made in England; but the Missionaries took a different view, and checked their pupil, much to his surprise.

Only one thing was taught on this first occasion to the scholars. They were asked, "Who made you?" and they were taught to answer, "the great God, who made heaven and earth."

It was a simple beginning, but great results soon began to appear. The most intense religious interest was felt all over the islands. Thousands of converts were baptized, a wonderful devotion became apparent, and in a comparatively small number of years the whole population became nominally Christian, and has remained so ever since.

The first band of missionaries were Congregationalists, and to their zeal and godly living is due mainly the praise of changing the religion of the Islands from heathenism to Christianity.

The Roman Catholic religion was established there in 1839, and our English Church raised its cathedral later still, at Honolulu.

It was about forty or fifty years ago, I believe, that the terrible scourge of leprosy made its appearance in the Hawaiian Islands, and it spread with quite unparalleled rapidity. When I visited Molokai in 1888, Father Damien had been working there nearly sixteen years, and the leper settlement had been established for about 22 years.

The following account of my visit to him was written at Honolulu, in January, 1889.

I reached the Islands in November, and on the 17th of December (1888) I took my passage to Molokai, and went on board the little steamer "Mokolii."

The sunset was orange, with a great purple cloud fringed with gold. It faded quickly, and by the time we reached a small pier-head outside the town, the moon was casting a long greenish light across the sea. From the pier came a continuous wail, rather mechanical, but broken by real sobs. I wondered what it meant, but soon I could see a little crowd of lepers and lepers' friends waiting there. "O my husband!" cried a poor woman again and again. Thirteen lepers got into the boat and were rowed to the steamer. Then we sailed away, and gradually the wailing grew fainter and fainter till we could hear it no longer.

These partings for life between the lepers and their families are most tragic, but they are inevitable; for however the disease is propagated, the necessity for segregation is certain. And the Hawaiian Government has risen to the emergency—would that our Indian Government, with its probable two hundred and fifty thousand lepers, would do likewise!—and, sparing neither labour nor expense, has sought out the cases one by one, and provided a home so suitable to their needs, so well ordered, and so well supplied, that, strange to say, the difficulty often arises of preventing healthy people from taking up their abode there. I know many sadder places than Molokai, with its soft breezes, its towering cliffs, and its sapphire sea.

The Hawaiians are a happy, generous people, the fit

offspring of these sunny windy islands; they yield themselves up readily to the emotion of the present whether for grief or laughter, and smiles and play follow close behind tears and sorrow.

The sleeping accommodation on the *Mokolii* is necessarily limited, but being a foreigner, and therefore a passenger of distinction, a mattress was spread for me on the little deck. It was very short, and, moreover, it was soon invaded from the lower end by two pairs of legs—Chinese and Hawaiian. I could not be so inhospitable as to complain of their vicinity, and as a lady enlivened the company by continuous guitar music, accompanied by her own voice and by as many of the passengers as chose to chime in, I relinquished my couch, and retiring to another part of the vessel, gave myself up to the enjoyment of the moonlit precipices and ravines of Molokai, which we began to coast about midnight. Very solemn they looked.

The island is long, and shaped like a willow-leaf; it lies in the form of a wedge on the Pacific, very low on the south coast, and gradually rising to its greatest altitude, from which the descent—1500 feet—to the northern coast is precipitous. Between the base of these precipices and the sea lie the two leper villages of Kalawao and Kalaupapa. Not improbably half the island is sunk in the sea, and if so the villages are in the actual cup of the crater of an immense volcano, half of which is submerged.

The Hawaiian Islands are a collection of volcanoes of which the fires appear to have died out in

southward order. In Hawaii, the largest and most southerly island, they still rage. Out of its great lake of liquid boiling lava (Kilauea) the fire-fountains toss themselves high into the air, red as blood in daylight, orange at twilight, and yellow as a primrose by night—a fearful sight, and approached by three miles of scarcely less terrible lava, black and glittering, and hardened into monstrous shapes like gigantic crocodiles and serpents. Sometimes the traveller sees that it is red-hot only eight inches below the sole of his foot. Sometimes the surface is torn by earthquakes into great cracks and rents.

Even more wonderful, perhaps, is the great extinct crater of Haleakala on the island of Maui. It is the largest crater in the world—nine miles in diameter—and it contains in its hollow fourteen great tumuli or extinct volcanoes, some of them 700 feet high. As I watched the scene one day at sunrise, it seemed to me as if I were not only in another planet, but in another dispensation. Except the crater, there was nothing to be seen around or below me but miles and miles of white clouds, slowly turning pink before the coming sun. Above them arose two distant mountain-tops, Mona Loa and Mona Kea, and occasionally there was a gap in the tracts of cloud, and a bit of blue sea appeared.

The vast crater yawned in the foreground, a deathly abandoned place, but not without the beauty which almost always marks Nature's works, if we have but eyes to see them aright. The lights and shadows

were unlike anything which I have beheld before or since. The colours of the tumuli were dim but splendid, going through the range of dull purple, dull pink, dull brown, dull yellow, dull green. The floor of the crater was gray and black, composed of the dust of lava accumulated through centuries, and probably never trodden by the foot of man. Long ago it was an expanse of boiling fiery liquid similar to that which is still to be seen at Kilauea, but nine miles in extent.

As we approached Molokai I found that the slow work of centuries had nearly covered its lava with verdure. At dawn we were opposite Kalaupapa. Two little spired churches, looking precisely alike, caught my eye first, and around them were dotted the white cottages of the lepers, who crowded the pier to meet us. But the sea was too rough for us to land. The coast is wild, and, as the waves dashed against the rocks, the spray rose fifty feet into the air. I never had seen such a splendid surf.

We steamed on to Kalawao, but were again disappointed: it was too dangerous to disembark. Finally it was decided to put off a boat for a rocky point about a mile and a half distant from the town. Climbing down to this point we saw about twenty lepers, and "There is Father Damien!" said our purser; and slowly moving along the hillside, I saw a dark figure with a straw hat. He came rather painfully down, and sat near the water-side, and we exchanged friendly signals across the waves while my

baggage was being got out of the hold. The captain and the purser were both much interested in my medicinal oil, and they spared no trouble in unshipping it. At last all was ready, and we went swinging across the waves, and finally chose a fit moment for leaping on shore. Father Damien caught me by the hand, and a hearty welcome shone from his kindly face as he helped me up the rock. He immediately called me by my name, "Edward," and said it was "like everything else, a providence," that he had met me at that irregular landing-place, for he had expected the ship to stop at Kalaupapa, whither Father Conradi had gone, expecting that we should come on shore there.

He is now forty-nine years old—a thick-set, strongly-built man, with black curly hair and short beard, turning gray. His countenance must have been handsome, with a full, well-curved mouth, and a short, straight nose; but he is now a good deal disfigured by leprosy, though not so badly as to make it anything but a pleasure to look at his bright, sensible face. His forehead is swollen and ridged, the eyebrows are gone, the nose is somewhat sunk, and the ears are greatly enlarged. His hands and face look uneven with a sort of incipient boils, and his body also shows many signs of the disease, but he assured me that he had felt little or no pain since he had tried Dr. Goto's system of hot baths and Japanese medicine. The bathrooms that have been provided by the Government are excellent.

I think he had not much faith in my gurjun oil, but to please me he began using it, and after a fortnight's trial the good effects became evident to all. His face looked greatly better, his sleep became very good instead of very bad (he had only been able to sleep with his mouth open because of an obstruction behind the nose), his hands improved, and last Sunday he told me that he had been able that morning to sing orisons—the first time for months. One is thankful for this relief, even if it should be only temporary; but it is impossible not to fear that after several years' progress the disease has already attacked the lungs or some other vital organ, and that the remedy comes too late.

I had brought with me a case of presents from English friends, and it had been unshipped with the gurjun oil. It was, however, so large that Father Damien said it would be impossible for his lepers either to land it from the boat or to carry it to Kalawao, and that it must be returned to the steamer and landed on some voyage when the sea was quieter. But I could not give up the pleasure of his enjoyment of its contents, so after some delay it was, at my suggestion, forced open in the boat, and the things were handed out safe and unspoiled one by one across the waves. The lepers all came round with their poor marred faces, and the presents were joyfully carried home by them and by our two selves.

First came an engraving of the "Good Shepherd," from Lady Mount Temple; then a set of large

pictures of the Stations of the Cross, from the Hon. Maude Stanley; then a magic-lantern with Scriptural slides, which I had used the winter before during a Mission tour in India, then numbers of coloured prints; and finally an ariston from Lady Caroline Charteris, which would play about forty tunes by simply having its handle turned. Father Damien immediately began to play it, and before we had been at the settlement half an hour he was showing his boys how to use it.

There were beautiful silver presents from Lady Grosvenor and Lady Airlie, and several gifts of money. And, most valuable of all, there was a water-colour painting of the Vision of St. Francis by Burne Jones, sent by the painter. This now hangs in Father Damien's little room.

I did not feel disposed to have my bag carried by a leper, so the walk to Kalawao was a tiring one, partly through a broad stream, and then along a beach of boulders shaded by precipices. But the pleasure of discovering that Father Damien was a finer man than I had even expected made the walk delightful. And about half-way I refreshed myself by a bathe in the foam of the waves, which were too big to allow of a swim, even if the sharks which infest the place had not been a sufficient reason against it. I was impressed by the quiet way in which he sat down and read and prayed while I bathed, retiring at once into that hidden life which was so real to him. When I was ready to walk on with him he

was all animation again, and pointed out to me all the objects of interest.

The cliffs of Molokai are in many places almost perpendicular, and rise to a great height from the water's edge. They are generally in shadow, but the sun casts long rays of light through their sundered tops, and I shall always remember these rays as a distinguishing mark of the leper towns. The sea foam, too, rises up from their bases in a great swirling mist, and makes an enchanting effect in the mornings. Where the slopes are not precipitous the tropical vegetation grows very rank, and not beautiful, I think, to eyes that have learned to love the birch, the gorse, and the heather.

The coarse wild ginger with its handsome spikes of flowers grows everywhere, and quantities of the Kite-tree, from the root of which can be made the intoxicating spirit which has done such a disastrous work among the natives. The ferns are magnificent. Of birds, the most noticeable that I saw were an exquisite little honey bird, with a curved beak and plumage like scarlet velvet; a big yellow owl, which flies about by daylight; a golden plover, which is very plentiful and very nice to eat; and a beautiful long-tailed, snowy-white creature called the bos'un bird, which wheels about the cliff heights. Besides these there are plenty of imported mynahs and sparrows. The curious little apteryx is almost extinct, I only saw it stuffed.

As we ascended the hill on which the village is

built, Father Damien showed me on our left the chicken farm. The lepers are justly proud of it, and before many days I had a fine fowl sent me for dinner.

On arriving at Kalawao we speedily found ourselves inside the half-finished church, which is the darling of his heart. How he enjoyed planning the places where the pictures which I had just brought him should be placed! He had incorporated as a transept of the new church the small building which had hitherto been in use. By the side of it he showed me the palm-tree under which he had lived for some weeks when he first arrived at the settlement in 1873.

His own little four-roomed house almost joins the church, and here Father Conradi, who lives on the ground-floor, and who is a man of considerable refinement, met us, and ushered us into the tiny refectory where a meal was prepared. Here we found Brother James and Brother Joseph Dutton, who had arrived as helpers not many months before.

By Father Damien's desire we sat at a separate table, as a precaution against contagion. But he was close by, and we were all very happy together.

After dinner we went up the little flight of steps which led to Father Damien's balcony. This was shaded by a honeysuckle in blossom. A door from it led into his sitting-room—a busy-looking place, with a big map of the world—and inside it another door opened on his bedroom.

Some of my happiest times at Molokai were spent

in this little balcony, sketching him and listening to what he said. The lepers often came up to watch my progress, and it was pleasant to see how happy and at home they were. Their poor faces were often swelled and drawn and distorted, with blood-shot goggle eyes; but I felt less horror than I expected at their strange aspect. There were generally several of them playing in the garden below us.

I offered to give a photograph of the picture to his brother in Belgium, but he said perhaps it would be better not to do so, as it might pain him to see how he was disfigured.

He looked mournfully at my work. "What an ugly face!" he said; "I did not know the disease had made such progress." Looking glasses are not in great request at Molokai!

While I sketched him he often read his breviary. At other times we talked on subjects that interested us both, especially about his family, to whom after 24 years absence he was still deeply attached.

His mother was an earnest praying woman, and it was probably from her that he had first learned his habit of continued and instant prayer.

In a letter home to Belgium he writes, "My dear parents,.....In the midst of the waters of the Pacific Ocean, on this island you have a son who loves you, and a priest who daily prays for you. I am in the habit of daily paying you a short visit in spirit."

I much like the following story of his early life, while yet a student.

When the Picpus Fathers were building the chapel of their Louvain house, the younger members of the college assisted the workmen when and where they could. In preparing the site, a high and rickety chimney had to be taken down. All the workmen refused the dangerous task. Damien quietly asked for a ladder, got someone to steady it, and fetched down the chimney brick by brick. The men stared. "Mon Dieu! quel homme!" they cried.

He often talked to me about the work of the Church Army, and sometimes I sang hymns to him—among others, "Brief life is here our portion," "Art thou weary, art thou languid?" and "Safe home in port." At such times the expression of his face was particularly sweet and tender.

One day I asked him if he would like to send a message to Cardinal Manning. He said that it was not for such as he to send a message to so great a dignitary, but after a moment's hesitation he added, "I send my humble respects and thanks." (When I gave the message to the Cardinal, he smiled and said, "I had rather he had sent me his love)."

I need hardly say that he gives himself no airs of martyr, saint, or hero—a humbler man I never saw. He smiled modestly and deprecatingly when I gave him the Bishop (Magee) of Peterborough's message. "He won't accept the blessing of a heretic bishop, but tell him that he has my prayers, and ask him to give me his."—"Does he call himself a heretic bishop?" he questioned doubtfully. I tried to explain.

One day he told me about his early history. He was born on the 3rd of January, 1841, near Louvain in Belgium, where his brother, a priest, still lives. His mother, a deeply religious woman, died about two years ago, and his father twelve years sooner.

On his nineteenth birthday his father took him to see his brother Pamphile, who was then preparing for the priesthood, and he left him there to dine, while he himself went on to the neighbouring town.

Young Joseph (this was his baptismal name) decided that here was the opportunity for taking the step which he had long been desiring to take, and when his father came back he told him that he wished to return home no more, and that it would be better thus to miss the pain of farewells. His father consented unwillingly, but, as he was obliged to hurry to the conveyance which was to take him home, there was no time for demur, and they parted at the station. Afterwards, when all was settled, Joseph revisited his home, and received his mother's approval and blessing.

His brother was bent on going to the South Seas for mission work, and all was arranged; but at the last he was laid low with fever, and, to his bitter disappointment, forbidden to go. The impetuous Joseph asked him if it would be a consolation for his brother to go instead, and, receiving an affirmative answer, he wrote surreptitiously, offering himself, and begging that he might be sent, though his education was not yet finished. The students were not allowed to send out letters till they had been sub-

mitted to the Superior, but Joseph ventured to disobey.

One day, as he sat at his studies, the Superior came in, and said, with a tender reproach, "Oh, you impatient boy! you have written this letter, and you are to go."

Joseph jumped up, and ran out, and leaped about like a young colt.

"Is he crazy?" said the other students.

He worked for some years in the island of Hawaii, but it happened that he was one day in 1873 present at the dedication of a chapel in another island, when the bishop was lamenting that it was impossible for him to send a missionary to the lepers at Molokai, and still less to provide them with a pastor. He had only been able to send them occasional and temporary help. Some young priests had just arrived in Hawaii for Mission work, and Father Damien instantly spoke.

"Monseigneur," said he, "here are your new missionaries; one of them could take my district, and if you will be kind enough to allow it, I will go to Molokai and labour for the lepers, whose wretched state of bodily and spiritual misfortune has often made my heart bleed within me."

His offer was accepted, and that very day, without any farewells, he embarked on a boat that was taking some cattle to the leper settlement. He told me that when he first set his foot on the island he said to himself, "Now, Joseph, my boy, this is your life-work."

I did not find one person in the Sandwich Islands who had the least doubt as to leprosy being communicable, though it is possible to be exposed to the disease for years without contracting it, and it is said to be five years in the system before it shows itself. Father Damien said that he had always expected that he should sooner or later become a leper, though exactly how he caught it he does not know. But it was not likely that he would escape, as he was constantly living in a polluted atmosphere, dressing the sufferers' sores, washing their bodies, visiting their deathbeds, and even digging their graves.

I obtained while I was in the islands a report he had written of the state of things at Molokai sixteen years ago, and I think it will be interesting to give a portion of it in his own words.

“By special providence of our Divine Lord, who during His public life showed a particular sympathy for the lepers, my way was traced towards Kalawao in May, 1873. I was then thirty-three years of age, enjoying a robust good health.

About eighty of the lepers were in the hospital; the others, with a very few Kokuas (helpers), had taken their abode farther up towards the valley. They had cut down the old pandanus or punhala groves to build their houses, though a great many had nothing but branches of castor-oil trees with which to construct their small shelters. These frail frames were covered with ki leaves or with sugar-cane leaves, the best ones with pili grass. I myself was sheltered

during several weeks under the single pandanus-tree, which is preserved up to the present in the church-yard. Under such primitive roofs were living pell-mell, without distinction of age or sex, old or new cases, all more or less strangers one to another, those outcasts of society. They passed their time in playing cards, hula (native dances), drinking fermented ki-root beer, home-made alcohol, and with the sequels of all this. Their clothes were far from being clean and decent, on account of the scarcity of water, which had to be brought at that time from a distance. Many a time in fulfilling my priestly duty at their domiciles I have been compelled to run outside to breathe fresh air. To counteract the bad smell I made myself accustomed to the use of tobacco, and the smell of the pipe preserved me somewhat from carrying in my clothes the noxious odour of the lepers. At that time the progress of the disease was fearful, and the rate of mortality very high. The miserable condition of the settlement gave it the name of a living graveyard, which name, I am happy to state, is to-day no longer applicable to our place."

In 1874, a "cona" (south) wind blew down most of the lepers' wretched rotten abodes, and the poor sufferers lay shivering in the wind and rain, with clothes and blankets wet through. In a few days the grass beneath their sleeping-mats began to emit a very unpleasant vapour. "I at once called the attention of our sympathising agent to the fact, and very soon there arrived several schooner-loads of

scantling to build solid frames with, and all lepers in distress received, on application, the necessary material for the erection of decent houses. Friends sent them rough boards and shingles and flooring. Some of the lepers had a little money, and hired carpenters. For those without means the priest, with his leper boys, did the work of erecting a good many small houses."

Since the accession of King Kalakaua the care and generosity of the present Hawaiian Government for their lepers cannot be too highly praised. The Queen and the heir-apparent (Princess Liliuokilani) have visited the settlement. The cottages are neat and convenient, and raised on trestles so as not to be in contact with the earth. There are five churches, and the faces one sees are nearly always happy faces. Each person receives five pounds of fresh beef every week, besides milk, poi, and biscuits. There is a large general shop where tinned fruits and all sorts of things can be bought. The food no doubt, is somewhat monotonous in quality, and it pleases me to remember how Father Damien enjoyed some raisins which I had brought from America as he sat on my balcony.

Of course I saw cases in the hospitals that were terribly emaciated and disfigured, but there is no doubt that the disease has taken a milder form than it wore years ago. As a rule, the lepers do not suffer severe pain, and the average length of life at Molokai is about four years, at the end of which time the disease generally attacks some vital organ. Women

are less liable to it than men. One woman accompanied her husband to Molokai when he became a leper, and at his death became the bride of another leper. He died, and she married another, and another after his demise. So that she has lived with four leper husbands, and yet remains healthy.

The children are well cared for in the Kapiolani Home at Honolulu if they show no signs of disease, and those in Molokai certainly do not lead an unhappy life.

They sing very nicely. One man had a full sweet baritone, and there was a tiny child who made a great effect with a bawling metallic voice. A refined-looking woman played the harmonium well, with hands that looked as if they must have been disabled. She had been a well-known musician in Honolulu.

I enjoyed the singing of the Latin Christmas hymn "Adeste fideles." But the most touching thing was the leper song (composed by a native poet), a kind of dirge in which they bewailed the misery of their lot. When I visited the boys with Father Damien in the evening they were drawn up in a long narrow lane, which it was rather terrible to inspect by the dim light of oil lamps.

On Sunday evening I showed them the magic-lantern, and Father Damien explained to them the pictures from the life of Christ. It was a moving sight to see the poor death-stricken crowd listening to the story of His healings and then of His sufferings, His crucifixion and His resurrection.

How wonderful is the power of Christ to give joy to sufferers! I shall never forget visiting last March an asylum for lepers at Agra, in India. Their faces were dreadful to look at; they were lame and maimed and mutilated, and they were paupers. But they were singing with husky voices the praises of Jesus Christ, and as I spoke to them of Him they kept repeating the last words of every sentence with the greatest delight, and when I left them the cry rang out again and again, "Victory to Jesus." An American Baptist missionary, Mr. Jones, had found time to visit them about once a fortnight, with the good news, and here was the result manifested.

In the daytime at Molokai one sees the people sitting chatting at their cottage doors, pounding the taro root, to make it into their favourite food poi, or galloping on their little ponies—men and women alike astride—between the two villages. And one always receives the ready greeting and the readier smile.

It would undoubtedly be a great trial to heart and nerve to live even now at Molokai, as eight noble men and women have elected to do for Christ's sake. I found it very distressing, to see *none but lepers*, and it often came with a specially painful shock to find a child of ten with a face that looked as if it might belong to a man of fifty. But I had gone to Molokai expecting to find it scarcely less dreadful than hell itself, and the cheerful people, the lovely landscape, and the comparatively painless life were all surprises. I was much impressed by a good old

blind man in the hospital, who told me that he was thankful for the disease, because it had saved him from an evil godless life.

God's care is surely over all His children, and sooner or later the darkest horrors reveal Divine wisdom and love.

"I learnt by experience," said a friend of mine to me once, "that in falling over precipices, in sinking in swamps, in tumbling into pits, in drowning in seas, I did but find God at the bottom"—

"Thus does Thy hospitable greatness lie
Outside us like a boundless sea ;
We cannot lose ourselves where all is home,
Nor drift away from Thee."

"On my first arrival," says Father Damien, "I found the lepers in general very destitute of warm clothing. If they have suitable clothes to protect themselves from the inclemency of the weather, they usually resist the cold very well, but they suffer greatly if, through neglect or destitution, they have barely enough to cover them. They then begin to feel feverish and to cough badly, swelling in the face and limbs sets in, and if not speedily attended to the disease generally settles on the lungs, and thus hastens them on the road to an early grave.

A person afflicted with leprosy who quietly gives himself up to the ravages of the disease, and does not take exercise of any kind, presents a downcast appearance, and threatens soon to become a total wreck.

I remember well that when I arrived here the poor

people were without any medicines, with the exception of a few physicks and their own native remedies. It was a common sight to see people going around with fearful ulcers, which, for the want of a few rags or a piece of lint and a little salve, were left exposed. Not only were their sores neglected, but anyone getting a fever, or any of the numerous ailments that lepers are heir to, was carried off for want of some simple medicine. . . .

In the fulfilment of my duties as priest, being in daily contact with the distressed people, I have seen and closely observed the bad effect of forcible separation of the married companions. It gives them an oppression of mind which in many instances is more unbearable than the pains and agonies of the disease itself. This uneasiness of the mind is in course of time partly forgotten by those unfortunates only who throw themselves into a reckless and immoral habit of living. Whereas, if married men or women arrive here in company with their lawful mates, they accept at once their fate with resignation, and very soon make themselves at home in their exile. Not only is the contented mind of the leper secured by the company of his wife, but the enjoyment of good nursing and the assistance so much needed. . . .

“Previous to my arrival here it was acknowledged and spoken of in the public papers as well as in private letters that the greatest want at Kalawao was a spiritual leader. It was owing in a great measure to this want that vice as a general rule existed in-

stead of virtue, and degradation of the lowest type went ahead as a leader of the community. When once the disease prostrated them women and children were often cast out. Sometimes they were laid behind a stone wall, and left there to die.

“As there were so many dying people, my priestly duty towards them often gave me the opportunity to visit them at their domiciles, and although my exhortations were especially addressed to the prostrated, they would fall also upon the ears of public sinners, who little by little became conscious of the consequences of their wicked lives, and began to reform, and thus, with the hope in a merciful Saviour, gave up their bad habits.

“Kindness to all, charity to the needy, a sympathising hand to the sufferers and the dying, in conjunction with a solid religious instruction to my listeners, have been my constant means to introduce moral habits among the lepers. I am happy to say that, assisted by the local administration, my labours here, which seemed to be almost in vain at the beginning, have, thanks to a kind Providence, been greatly crowned with success.”

The water supply of Molokai was a pleasant subject with Father Damien. When he first arrived the lepers could only obtain water by carrying it from the gulch on their poor shoulders; they had also to take their clothes to some distance when they required washing, and it was no wonder that they lived in a very dirty state.

He was much exercised about the matter, and one day, to his great joy, he was told that at the end of a valley called Waihanau there was a natural reservoir.

He set out with two white men and some of his boys, and travelled up the valley till he came with delight to a nearly circular basin of most delicious ice-cold water. Its diameter was seventy-two feet by fifty-five, and not far from the bank they found, on sounding, that it was eighteen feet deep. There it lay at the foot of a high cliff, and he was informed by the natives that there had never been a drought in which this basin had dried up. He did not rest till a supply of water-pipes had been sent them, which he and all the able lepers went to work and laid. Henceforth clear sweet water has been available for all who desire to drink, to wash their clothes, or to bathe. Lately the water arrangements have been perfected under Government auspices by Mr. Alexander Sproull, who was engaged in this work while I was at Kalawao, and who was my companion at the guest-house.

Father Damien was not hopeless about the discovery of a cure for leprosy. "But, to my knowledge, it has not yet been found," he said. "Perchance, in the near future, through the untiring perseverance of physicians, a cure may yet be found."

When newcomers arrived at Molokai there were plenty of old residents ready to preach to them the terrible axiom, "Aole kanawai ma keia wahi"—"In

this place there is no law." With the greatest indignation Father Damien heard this doctrine proclaimed in public and private, and with the whole force of his being he set himself to combat it.

Along the face of the cliffs there grows very abundantly a plant which the natives call "ki" (*Dracæna terminalis*), and from the root of which, when cooked and fermented, they make a highly intoxicating liquid. When Father Damien arrived he found that the practice of distilling this horrible drink was carried on largely. The natives who fell under its influence forgot all decency and ran about nude, acting as if they were stark mad. It was illegal to distil spirits, and the brave man, having discovered that certain members of the police were in league with the evil-doers, set to work and went round the settlement with "threats and persuasions," till he had induced the culprits to deliver up the utensils which were employed for that purpose. Some of the most guilty persons were convicted, but they were pardoned on giving a promise that they would never offend again. These reforms were of course very unpopular with evil-doers, and there was fierce opposition to his influence. He learnt what it was to be hated for righteousness' sake by the people for whom he was giving his life, and the tide of angry resistance did not entirely turn till it became apparent that the disease had claimed him also as its own. Then his adversaries were ashamed, and became his friends and servants.

It was after living at the leper settlement for about ten years that he begun to suspect that he was a leper. The doctors assured him that this was not the case. But he once scalded himself in his foot, and to his horror he felt no pain, till he put his hand into the pail and felt how hot the water was. Anæsthesia had begun, and soon other fatal signs appeared. One day he asked Dr. Arning, the great German doctor who was then visiting Molokai, to examine him carefully.

“I cannot bear to tell you,” said Dr. Arning, “but what you say is true.”

“It is no shock to me,” said Damien, “for I have long felt sure of it.”

I may mention here that there are three kinds of leprosy. In one kind the whole body becomes white and of a scaly texture, but the general health is unaffected comparatively. This is the sort repeatedly mentioned in the Bible. In modern times it is somewhat rare, though I have seen cases of it in India.

In the anæsthetic variety the extremities become insensible to pain, and gradually slough away with sores. The whole body becomes weak and crippled, and an easy prey to dysentery or diarrhœa. The third kind of leprosy is named tubercular, and is distinguished by swellings and discolourations. This is the most painful kind to see. Father Damien suffered (as is often the case) both from the anæsthetic and the tubercular forms of the disease.

“Whenever I preach to my people,” he said, “I

do not say 'my brethren,' as you do, but 'we lepers.' People pity me and think me unfortunate, but I think myself the happiest of missionaries."

Henceforth he came under the law of segregation, and journeys to the other parts of the islands were forbidden. But he worked on with the same sturdy, cheerful fortitude, accepting the will of God with gladness, and undaunted by the continual reminders of his coming fate which met him in the poor creatures around him.

"I would not be cured," he said to me, "if the price of my cure was that I must leave the island and give up my work."

A lady (Miss Mary Stuart) wrote to him, "You have given up all earthly things to serve God here and to help others, and I believe you must have *now* joy that nothing can take from you and a great reward hereafter."—"Tell her," he said, with a quiet smile "that it is true. I *do* have that joy now."

"I believe that I am the happiest Missionary in the world" he said on another occasion.

He was very anxious that I should attend his church services, though, as they were in Hawaiian, I could not understand what was said. English was the language used by educated Hawaiians. He pressed me to help in his choir, and was delighted when I sang "Adestes fideles" with the boys, and some of the tunes that the ariston played. He had his own private communion in the church on Sunday morning, followed by a general service, at which there were about eighty lepers present.

He seldom talked of himself except in answer to questions, and he had always about him the simplicity of a great man. He was not sentimental, and I was therefore the more pleased that he gave me a little card of flowers from Jerusalem, and wrote on it, "To Edward Clifford, from his leper friend, J. Damien." He also wrote in my Bible the words, "I was sick, and ye visited me.—J. Damien de Veuster, Kalawao, Molokai, December 20th, 1888." He liked looking at the pictures which were in my Bible, especially at the two praying hands of Albert Dürer and at a picture of Broadlands. I told him all the names of the friends who had given me presents for him, and he asked questions, and was evidently touched and happily surprised that English Protestants should love him.

I gave him on Christmas Day a copy of Faber's hymns which had been sent him by Lady Grosvenor's three children.* He read over the childishly written words on the title-page "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy," and said very sweetly that he should read and value the book.

I wished I could have understood the sermon he preached on Christmas Day. It was long and animated. In the afternoon he was catechising the boys, and he translated for me some of his questions and some of their answers, chiefly bearing on the Nativity and on the nature of God.

* (Now (1904) *The Duke of Westminster, Lady Shaftesbury, and Lady Beauchamp.*)

In speaking to me he used English, which he said was now the language most natural to him.

He told me that there had been beautiful instances of true devotion among the lepers. Roman Catholics were nearly as numerous as Protestants, and both Churches were well filled. He gave me good accounts of the Protestant native minister, who had come to Molokai in charge of his leprous wife. I visited him, but we could only understand each other through an interpreter. The total number of lepers in the settlement was a thousand and thirty.

Christmas Day was, of course, a feast, and in the evening the lepers had an entertainment and acted scenes in their biggest hall. The ariston played its best between whiles. To English people it would probably have seemed a dreary entertainment, but the excitement was great. Belshazzar's feast was a truly wonderful representation, and not much more like Belshazzar's feast than like any other scene. The stage was very dark, and all the lepers seemed to take their turns in walking on and off it. Belshazzar had his face down on the table, buried in his arms, nearly all the time, and it really seemed as if he might be asleep. Nobody did anything particular, and it was difficult to say who was intended for Daniel. The queen-mother was a little boy.

The fathers were on very affectionate, playful terms with the lepers. I found Father Conradi one morning making a list of the boys' names, which I think are worth recording with some others that I got from

Mr. Sproull and Dr. Nicholls. It must be remembered that they are *boys'* names; Jane Peter, Henry Ann, Sit-in-the-cold, The Rat-eater, The Eyes-of-the-fire, A Fall-from-a-horse, Mrs. Tompkins, The Heaven-has-been-talking, Susan, The Window, The wandering Ghost, The first Nose, The tenth Heaven, The Dead-house, The white Bird, The Bird-of-water, The River-of-truth, The Emetic.

The following names were found by Dr. Nicholls at Honolulu:—Mr. Scissors, Mrs. Oyster, The Fool, The Man who washes his Dimples, The tired Lizard, The Atlantic Ocean, The Stomach, The great Kettle, Poor Pussy, The Pigsty.

Father Damien would never come inside the guest-house while I was staying, but sat in the evening on the steps of the verandah and talked on in his cheery, pleasant, simple way. The stars shone over his head, and all the valleys glimmered in golden moon-light, There is often wild weather in Molokai. The cona wind rushes up from the southern coast, and reaches with steady force the heights of the island; then it seems staggered at finding the ground suddenly come to an end, and descends through the gorges to the leper villages in gusts which, though warm, are so violent that one evening our roof was mainly torn off, and the rain came pouring through a dozen fissures. The china-roses by the balcony were ruthlessly withered and torn to pieces, and in a ride from Kalau-papa, I was driven in exactly opposite directions within a distance of two hundred yards, while the rain in

my face felt more like gravel than water. This weather sometimes lasts for days together, and the wind continues, though the skies may be full of starlight or sunshine.

Generally the climate is what would universally be described as lovely; but Mr. Sproull told me that the heat and stillness were sometimes so exhausting that every one got "as limp as a wet collar."

The ground at Molokai is strewn with great black blocks of lava, round which grows a tall delicate grass so closely that one has to be careful of pitfalls as one walks. There are not many wild flowers in the Hawaiian Islands. The lilac major convolvulus, a handsome white poppy, the diverse-coloured lantana, and a bright orange blossom with a milky stem are among the principal. On the hills grow the crimson-blossomed Lehua, and various pretty berries, white, black, purple, yellow, and red—some of them (the ohelo especially) excellent to eat.

Half-way between the two leper towns rises a lowish hill, which is found, on ascending it, to be an extinct volcano with a perfect cup, and at the bottom of the cup a hole 130 feet wide, which is said to be unfathomable. It is nearly full of turbid green water. Half skeleton trees grow on its sides, and some big cactuses. The place looks like the scene of some weird fairy tale.

At Kalaupapa there live and work Father Wendolen and three Franciscan sisters. Mother Marianne, the Superior, is a very gentle sweet woman, with con-

siderable organizing powers, and a taste for art and beauty, which can find little scope in that outcast place.

The Roman Catholic Church in the village was built partly by Father Damien's own hands. He is good at carpentering and building, and is apparently able and ready to work at anything as long as it *is* work. He is scrupulous and businesslike about accounts and money matters, and he was anxious that I should see how carefully he had kept his books, and that I should understand that the presents sent him had been dispensed with impartiality among Protestants and Roman Catholics.

The given time for me to remain at the leper settlement came to an end only too soon, and one day the steamer arrived which was to take me away. It brought two hundred friends of lepers to spend a few hours at Molokai—a treat generously provided by Mr. Samuel Damon of Honolulu. The sea was unfortunately so rough that only the men were allowed to land, but the women were taken close to the shore in boats, so that they could see their friends and converse with them. One girl leaped on shore in defiance of all rules. When the vessel sailed away all the population seemed to have come out to say farewell, and there was much wailing and waving of handkerchiefs.

As our ship weighed anchor the sombre purple cliffs were crowned with white clouds. Down their precipices leaped the cataracts. The little village, with

its three churches and its white cottages, lay at their bases. Father Damien stood with his thousand lepers on the rocks till we slowly passed from their sight. The sun was getting low in the heavens, beams of light were slanting down the mountain sides. And finally I saw the last of Molokai in a golden veil of mist.

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LONDON, *May*, 1889.

And now the news of Father Damien's death has come to us. Friends have said to me, "You must be glad to think that he has passed away to his reward." Yes, I feel that all that God does is best, and that therefore this must be best. But I do not feel glad except from that highest point of view. Looked at with human eyes, it would have seemed to most of us that so useful and happy a life might have been prolonged with great blessing to himself and to the suffering ones among whom he worked.

I think that in the last few weeks he had himself begun to feel the desires for paradise quickening, as the weariness of the flesh grew heavier.

The hopes of better health raised during my last days at Molokai were dashed by a letter written on the 21st of February. It gave a distressing account of his bodily condition. "But, nevertheless, he is as energetic as ever in bettering the condition of the

lepers, and there have been added to our number since you left about a dozen new cases; all are comparatively happy.”

The postscript to this letter is—

“My love and good wishes to good friend Edward. I try to make slowly my way of the Cross, and hope to be soon on the top of my Golgotha.—Yours for ever,

“J. DAMIEN.”

The last letter from him is as follows:—

“KALAWAO, 28th February, 1889.

“MY DEAR EDWARD CLIFFORD—Your sympathising letter of 24th gives me some relief in my rather distressed condition. I try my best to carry without much complaining and in a practical way, for my poor soul’s sanctification, the long foreseen miseries of the disease, which, after all, is a providential agent to detach the heart from all earthly affection, and prompts much the desire of a Christian soul to be united—the sooner the better—with Him Who is her only life.

“During your long travelling road homewards please do not forget the narrow road. We both have to walk carefully, so as to meet together at the home of our common and eternal Father. My kind regards and prayers and good wishes for all sympathising friends. *Bon voyage, mon cher ami, et au revoir au ciel.—Totus tuus,*

“J. DAMIEN.”

Kalanua Feb 28th 1889

My dear Edward Clifford
ur sympathizing letter of 24. Gives
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condition - I try my best. to carry without much
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During your long traveling - road - home
wards - please do not forget that narrow
road - we both have to walk carefully - so
to meet together at the home of our
everman & - eternal father -

My kind regards & prayers & Good wishes
to all sympathizing - friends
Bon Voyage. Mon cher Ami. et au
revoir au ciel - Etes vous. J. Damien

This was probably the last letter he ever wrote, and soon he felt that his end was near. On the 28th March he took to his bed.

“You see my hands,” he said. “All my wounds are healing and the crust is becoming black. Look at my eyes. I have seen so many lepers die that I cannot be mistaken. Death is not far off. I should have liked to see the Bishop again, but *le bon Dieu* is calling me to keep Easter with Himself. God be blessed! How good He is to have preserved me long enough to have two priests by my side at my last moments, and also to have the good Sisters of Charity at the *Léproserie*. This has been my *Nunc Dimittis*. The work of the lepers is assured, and I am no longer necessary, and so will go up yonder. Bury me by the Church, under the palm tree, which was my roof when I first came to live here.”

“And will you, like Elijah, leave me your mantle, my father, in order that I may have your great heart?” said Father Wendolen.

“Why, what would you do with it?” said Father Damien; “it is full of leprosy.”

He rallied for a little while after this, and his watchers even had a little hope that his days might be lengthened. Father Conradi, Father Wendolen, and Brother Joseph were much in his company. Brother James was his constant nurse. The Sisters from Kalaupapa visited him often, and it is good to think that the sweet face and gentle voice of the Mother were near him in his last days. Instead of his straw



mattress on the ground they put him comfortably to bed. Everybody admired his wonderful patience. He who had been so ardent, so strong, and so playful, was now powerless on his couch. "And how poorly off he was; he who had spent so much money to relieve the lepers had so forgotten himself that he had none of the comforts and scarcely the necessaries of life." Sometimes he suffered greatly; sometimes he was partly unconscious.

He said that he was continually aware of two persons being present with him. One was at the head of the bed and one at his feet. But who they were he did not say.

The disease had concentrated itself in his mouth and throat, and had also attacked the lungs.

The end was near, and he was at peace. The last sixteen years spent among the lepers had been full both of difficulties and of blessings. Enemies had lurked near at hand. His motives had been impugned, his character had been falsely assailed. Not much praise had reached him. The tide of affection and sympathy from England had cheered him, but England was so far off that it seemed almost like sympathy and affection from a star. Churches were built, schools and hospitals were in working order, but there was still much to be done. He was only forty-nine, and he was dying.

"Well! God's will be done. He knows best. My work, with all its faults and failures, is in His hands, and before Easter I shall see my Saviour."

Again and again he received the Sacrament.

The breathing grew more laboured, the leprous eyes were nearly blind, the once stalwart frame was fast becoming rigid. And then the sound of the passing bell was heard, and the wail of the lepers pierced the air. The last flickering breath was breathed, and the soul of Joseph Damien de Veuster arose like a lark to God.

All that is mortal of him lies under the palm tree by the little Church, near the place where one by one his flock have been laid.

The strong, active figure and the cheery voice are no longer to be found at Molokai. But his work abides, and brings forth fruit a hundredfold. Who can measure the results of a life spent in obedience to the will of God, and of actions performed from love to Him and to humanity?

“Fear no more the heat of the sun,
Nor the furious winter rages,
Thou thy worldly task hast done,
Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages.”

(NOTE, April, 1904. — My readers will like to know that the work among the lepers in Molokai is carried on most generously by the Hawaiian Government, now amalgamated with the United States. The friends of Father Damien are still living and working there, and I often hear of them through my friend the devoted brother Joseph, who is mentioned above, and who gives his whole life and energy to the lepers. Some day I should like to write more fully

about him. Father Wendolen and the Sisters are still actively and nobly working there. Soon after Father Damien's death we English friends of his sent out a beautiful granite cross, to which was attached a white marble relief with his sculptured profile. Underneath are the words, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.")



NOTE.—I feel that I must not close an account of my dear and honoured friend, Father Damien, without saying what my chief reasons are for standing apart from the Church which he loved and to which he belonged. I need scarcely say that I believe that all who have the Christ life belong to the Church of Christ (whether Roman Catholics, Nonconformists, or belonging to the Church of England). But I have five strong reasons which would prevent my ever feeling even inclined to become a Roman Catholic.

They count of course much more against *joining* a Church than against remaining in it, if born and bred there and unconscious of its faults.

Firstly then it seems to me that the Church of Rome is not primarily faithful to truth, or to the great eternal difference between right and wrong. And this is the chief reason why I stand apart from it. A Roman Catholic's opinion on religious subjects is not formed by the simple conviction of what is right or wrong, or true or untrue, but by the authority of a Church which claims infallibility. The question is closed of whether the Church was or is right or wrong, for there is "no possibility of error." So it means slavery of thought, both for individuals and nations. Slaves may be good and happy, but English people do not generally wish to be slaves. For myself, the more I see of Roman Catholics, and the more I love them, the less I wish to become one of them. It seems almost ungracious to say this, but I dare not leave it unsaid.

Secondly, The Church of Rome, in spite of explanations and protestations, fears the Bible, and discourages its use. I know and thankfully admit that in some places there is an improvement in this respect. But the charge has again and again been proved just.

Thirdly, The priests of the Church of Rome are compulsorily celibate. The rule may be a wise one as far as the attainment of worldly power goes. But it is not possible to believe that out of the tens of thousands of young men who, in their youth vow to live celibate lives a majority preserve their purity through all the conflicts of life. And when they fall the soul gets crooked, and does crooked work. An unmarried clergyman is a good thing, but he must be free to marry if he should by and bye very much wish to marry. Moreover, it is practically decided when a boy is *eight years old* that he shall go to a priest's school and be trained for a celibate life. This is surely iniquitous.

Fourthly, I could not join the Church of Rome because it so little recognises other Christians that a Roman Catholic is actually forbidden even to pray in union with a member of our Church. The spirit is so intolerant that I doubt if there are many Roman Catholics even now who would condemn the barbarous destruction of Protestants in the reign of Queen Mary. Fifty thousand of them were ruthlessly destroyed in the Netherlands by the Duke of Alva at about the same epoch. Roman Catholics are apt to say that Queen Elizabeth destroyed as many people for their

religion as her sister did. But this is absolutely untrue. She never killed *one person* for his religious convictions. She had many faults, but to her honour be it said that in a bigoted age she was nobly tolerant.

Fifthly, the heart's devotion with the great body of Roman Catholics is apparently given to the Virgin Mary and to the Church rather than to Christ. I say this unwillingly, and I know that there are many exceptions to the rule; but, alas! it is true in the main.

These are my five chief reasons for not being a Roman Catholic, in spite of the love and honour in which I hold many who belong to the Roman Church. I believe they will forgive me for my frankness, and will feel that if I write about Father Damien I am bound to speak truly of my own convictions.



QUARTUS, A BROTHER.

“QUARTUS,” said a Corinthian lady to her slave one Sunday morning, “I feel rather exhausted, I am yawning, and that is always a sign that I need something to eat. Get me ready a bowl of soup, and then you can go to the general assembly.”

Quartus, who was cook, at once set about preparing the soup, but by the time he had served it, the hour was so late, that when he arrived at church, he could not find a seat. This was a distress to him, for besides being naturally methodical, he was devout, and valued a quiet place where he could be undistracted in his worship. He was a simple child-like person. The door-keeper, who was a friend of his, came up to him and whispered that there were three places still vacant in front. “Go round and slip in by the back way,” he said.

“I don’t like to sit in the front,” said Quartus, hesitating, “It seems too much.” “Nonsense,” said his friend, “I’ll take you round.”

They went together, and he showed him the empty places and pushed him in. So Quartus sat in a seat of honour with eyes cast down, and with a deprecating air.

A few minutes after the service had begun, there was a little commotion, and three elegant smiling strangers made their way up through the aisle.

One of the elders of the church, who sat on the platform, beckoned them politely to come forward, and then casting his busy eyes around to find seats for them, he discovered Quartus in the front row. He spoke in a low voice to Nicias, Quartus' master, who was sitting near him, "Nicias, isn't your cook a little out of place? He is excellent in the kitchen I know, but we don't need him to be so apparent here, do we?" Nicias smiled, and stepping softly down, said not unkindly, "Try and find a seat somewhere else, there's a good fellow. We want these front places."

Covered with shame, and longing to explain that his place was not of his own choosing, Quartus shrank away further and further down the crowded church seeking vainly for standing room.

About two-thirds of the way down, an old man whom he had never seen before, made room for him behind a pillar, where they both sat almost hidden. Quartus was deeply grateful, but he could only express his feelings by an eloquent look at his benefactor. The old man's face was so beautiful, and his slight smile was so sympathetic that he felt drawn to him with quite a rush of emotion, and his eyes even filled with tears. The stranger's mantle was threadbare and his shoes were worn, but he did not look like a poor man. On the contrary, he had an air of dignity and even of command. When the smile left his face he looked extremely grave, and the deep caverns of his eyes were full of mystery and of fire.

Quartus felt a little afraid of him, but more of love than fear.

Meanwhile the service proceeded, and he soon heard with admiration, his master beginning to speak in an unknown tongue. This phenomenon, though it always filled him with delight and awe, was too common to excite much interest in the congregation generally. The listeners soon got a little weary, and when on Nicias ceasing, two others rose together and considerably lengthened the exercise, there were even a few looks of dismay.

Then some one rose and interpreted what Nicias had said. Quartus thought it was beautiful, and did not dream of complaining that it was very similar to many of such utterances which he had heard before. It was ecstatic, but tritely commonplace. Then one of the three strangers rose, and preached with fine oratorical power. There was a distinct sensation produced, and someone whispered, "What a gift; it is Demas. He speaks like an angel." Several people were weeping.

Then came a hymn, and then a very mystic discourse in an almost inaudible voice from Phlegon, an old citizen of considerable social position and wealth. He was always listened to with a very polite show of attention, for though rather a crank, he was known and respected as a truly good man. And, moreover, he had borne the chief burden of the expense of building the church, and could always be depended on for liberal giving.

Quartus felt grieved that even by straining his attention, he could gather scarcely anything from this discourse. "How I waste my opportunities!" he sighed to himself. "But what a noble old white-headed saint he is. He told us to trust in the Lord. How good that is!"

Then an interesting man named Cleon spoke—a man who had once been cruelly tortured for his faith's sake, by the Pagans, and who had been the means, years before, of converting many persons to Christianity. He was not a great preacher, but Quartus loved to hear him, and envied him greatly for his experience. His spiritual power was somewhat waning.

A sickly looking lady had been brought in on a couch, and listened to everything that was said with almost unnatural eagerness and with distended straining eyes.

After Cleon had spoken, two brethren came forward, and spoke and prayed with her. Then after laying their hands on her, they took her by the hand and lifted her up; whereupon she walked and declared herself cured. There was great rejoicing, and a good deal of noise and excitement. Then after more singing, the blessing was given, and the assembly began to disperse.

Quartus was always too modest to go out with the grand people, and to-day he felt more than usually uncomfortable, and as if all the congregation would mark him as a forward pushing fellow, who had been told to take a lower place.

“And well they might blame me,” he thought, “for indeed, I am nobody. It is not only that I am a slave, but I have no spiritual gifts at all as so many have. Oh! if I could heal the sick, or if I could speak with unknown tongues! Many who are no better scholars than I am, can preach and convert sinners. I am almost useless. I feel I am out of it altogether. How happy Cleon must feel to have so bravely yielded himself up to the torturers. But I feel that such experiences are not for me. To the end, I shall only be Quartus the cook, a fourth-rate man. I am not even holy, like Junius and Alexander; surely everyone is richer than I. And I know that it is entirely my own fault.

When the church was half cleared, he came forward, and stood a little way back in the portico. His companion who had sat quietly by his side, also rose, and remained standing near him.

They could look out through a space between two pillars, and they soon saw that as the congregation streamed out, a well-known, but disgusting object met everyone's eye.

A filthy, old, half-imbecile woman, named Christina, who had been sitting at the bottom of the church, was now standing clamouring in the way. She seemed abandoned to misery and degradation, and to be without a sign of self respect.

Nicias, who had very hospitable instincts, had invited the three strangers to come home to dinner with him, and the four gentlemen were coming down the steps and talking agreeably together.

“I think you are perhaps right,” Nicias was saying. “I have always felt some degree of suspicion about these healings. I am almost sure that the case to-day was mere hysteria, and that to-morrow we shall hear of a relapse. But the people crave for that kind of excitement, and are a great deal more eager to see a miracle than to listen either to preaching or unknown languages. I must admit, however, that both Phlegon and Cleon are rather long-winded in their preaching.”

At this moment, the wretched mad woman thrust herself forward and cried out, “Help me, I am in prison and in chains, I am a miserable wretch.” And then her speech became an indistinguishable gibber.

“I know her,” said Nicias with some disgust; “She is drunk as usual. It is no use helping her.”

“Such cases are too common, alas!” said his companion, and passing on they continued to speak of the morning service.

“Help me! help me! I am sick and wretched, and ill and wicked. I am in prison; I am in chains,” cried Christina again as the rich and good old Phlegon approached, followed by his servant.

“Do not give her money,” whispered a deacon who was accompanying him, and who had seen Phlegon motioning to his servant to give her alms. “It is better to let our association deal with such cases. She is either drunk, or possessed, or both.” Christina either caught the words or guessed them, for she cried out, “And how can I do anything but drink!

I am on fire. Help me. I am in prison. Chained. Help me!"

"Who is she?" said Phlegon, half frightened.

"She was once a member of our church," replied the deacon. "But she fell into sin, and we had to excommunicate her."

"Why does she say she is in prison?" asked Phlegon.

"She is mad, I suppose," said the deacon.

Cleon was close behind. He fixed his sad dark eyes on Christina and said, "If you will turn from your sin and do righteously, the Lord will pardon and receive you, sister. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin."

"Don't preach to me, you chattering fool; I am in prison; help me," said the woman frantically, and she caught hold of his mantle violently and tore it.

For a moment his anger rose, but he prayed that he might have the grace of meekness, and disengaging himself from her clutch, he sighed and passed on.

"Will no one help me out of prison?" moaned Christina, and sank on the ground, with her head between her knees.

Quartus did not doubt that the brethren must be right to refuse her appeal, but he was extremely sorry each time that it failed. His heart had caught fire with pity for her. His hopes rose again when the men who had laid their hands on the sick lady approached. They were almost the last of the congregation, and he ventured to come forward and say;

"Sirs, can you help this poor woman? You have such a gift."

Their reply was, "My good man, I'm afraid we can't do *everything*! You should try and persuade some of these wonderful brethren who speak with tongues and prophecy to look after her; you all seem to think so much of them. What a dreadful old creature she is. Drunk, I suppose. Ah! it is her own sin that has brought her to this state, and it is no use trying to help her till she helps herself."

They passed on, and Quartus turning to his companion who had stood quite motionless said to him, "Sir, I am only a cook, but my master allows me a little house, and if you are a stranger and would be the guest of a slave I should feel grateful."

"Thank you, brother, I will come," said the old man quietly.

Quartus hesitated, "Sir," he said timidly, "Do you mind my asking this poor woman to come with us? I am almost ashamed to ask you, for I know that she is no fit company for you. But I don't like to go home and leave her here without any food."

"Ask her," said the stranger, with rather a peculiar manner, "she is fit company for me."

So Quartus went up to Christina, and touching her gently with his hand, said "I should like to help you." She was mute, and he had to speak again before she raised her head and looked half vacantly at him with her rheumy eyes.

"Come home with us and have some food," he said in a kind voice.

“Who are you?” she said dreamily.

“My name is Quartus,” he replied, and he took her by the hand and raised her up. She was a dreadful object—her face bloated, her clothes ragged and foul.

“Come with us,” said he again, and the three moved together towards his little house.

Christina seemed to have spent her passion, and walked quietly but feebly. She only muttered an answer when she was spoken to.

The stranger questioned Quartus about the service. He asked who the speakers were, and Quartus answered him with enthusiasm. “The first who spoke was my master Nicias, Sir. Don’t you think that he speaks with tongues better than almost any one? I always feel as if he were saying the best things, and that none of the interpreters bring out all the beauty of it. It was Demas who spoke so eloquently afterwards. A very good man I believe, and one of the greatest preachers living. He preaches somewhere nearly every day of his life, and sometimes two or three times, besides being always ready to say a few words. I believe he sometimes even preaches in his sleep. He is a lesson to us all. I think you would enjoy Phlegon’s speaking, Sir? He is so deep—indeed, I am too stupid and ignorant to understand much of what he says. But it is always good. I am glad that you saw the healing of that lady. We often have cures like that in our church and other miracles as well.”

“And do you ever take any part yourself?” asked the stranger.

Quartus' face fell.

"No Sir, I do nothing," he said very sadly, "I am nobody in the church. Sometimes I am afraid that I scarcely have a right to be a member. I have always longed for some little gift, but it has never come. I cannot preach, and I have never converted anybody. I have almost given up hoping that I shall ever speak with unknown tongues, or be able to heal the least sickness. I would give all I have—which indeed is not much—if I could do anything. And such young men get the power now, some of them are almost boys. I am more than forty, and I am no use at all."

"Do you do your work well for Nicias?" said the stranger.

"Yes, I think he is pleased with me," said Quartus. "But of course he does not think much of me as a church member. How can he? Only this morning I overheard one of the elders say to him that they had no need of me in the church. And I know that it was quite true. I should never be missed there if I were to die to-day."

"At least they have left you the opportunity of succouring a soul in prison, and of taking into your house a stranger," said the other.

"Yes, said Quartus, "but that is nothing. That is a pleasure—it needs no spiritual gift."

"Do you think so? I call it the more excellent way," said the stranger.

They now reached Quartus's modest little house.

He had a stew preparing which smelt excellent, and

which was to have served him for dinner and supper. He calculated that it would suffice for his guests, and that very likely he would get something for himself at his master's, after serving the family dinner there an hour later. He waited on his guests with much native grace, and felt very happy though hungry.

Before they had sat down he had said to Christina. "Would you like to bathe sister? There is warm water ready."

And she had answered in a subdued voice "Nay, I'd as lief stay as I am if you are willing." He was not exactly willing, but he did not say so.

He now recognised that there was a certain relationship between himself and his two guests. Christina was evidently affected strongly by the stranger. She looked furtively at him from time to time, half frightened and half attracted.

When the meal was over, Quartus asked to be excused as it was time for him to go and fulfil his duties for Nicias.

"We will stay here till you return if we may do so," said the old man.

Quartus coloured with pleasure. Then he turned to Christina and said, "You will bathe this afternoon, will you not sister? I have made all ready, and by the bath I have put some clothes, which were my wife's. I hope you will use them." For reply Christina only fixed her eyes on him, but she did not refuse his offer, and he felt hopeful of her as he hurried away. It was nearly two hours before he

returned, for the dinner at Nicias' was long and stately.

But when at last he got back he saw a sight which almost stopped the beating of his heart.

Could that woman be the wretched Christina? washed and clothed in white, and with an expression of heavenly joy on her face. She sat at the stranger's feet gazing up at him with tears rolling down her face. She looked transfigured.

When Quartus entered she rose and bowed herself to the ground before him, kissing his feet.

"My chains are broken" she said, "I am out of prison. The evil spirit is cast out of me. Praised be the Lord. He has sent His two servants to deliver me."

"It is true" said the stranger, "the devil is gone out of her, and shall return no more into her. Brother Quartus, God has given you this seal in His service. Be thankful and henceforth be content."

Quartus was bewildered with delight. "But it is *you* Sir, not I, who have done this," he said. "God did it," said the stranger, "and He used us both in the matter, but He used you chiefly. In the Church He has placed not only Apostles and Prophets, but also 'helps.' There are many members in the body, and one member cannot say to another, 'I have no need of thee.' And the hidden members are often the most vital. It is your love that has won the victory." And again the stranger's beautiful smile broke out all over his face. "And Sir, who are you?" said Quartus.

“I am John,” said the old man. “And now the work I came here to do is done. Farewell Christina—Farewell Quartus. We shall all meet again. Peace and joy be with you my children,” and with a beckon of the hand he was gone.

* * * * *

Never had Quartus enjoyed a service so much as on that evening. He was overflowing with gladness. The same speakers who had spoken in the morning spoke again, but all they said seemed to Quartus so beautiful that many times he could not restrain his tears.

Christina sat behind him. She had drawn a veil over her face, and no one recognized her. But at the close of the service she rose and threw back her veil, and her voice tremulous with emotion was heard all over the church.

“I thank God,” she said in a voice of deep feeling.

Every one turned and saw her as she stood with a rapt and beautiful face. Her hands were clasped.

“I thank God, she said again, “I have been delivered from prison and from the hands of my enemy.”

“It is a miracle,” was whispered all through the church, and Nicias said to Demas in a low voice, “I noticed a change come over her while I was speaking. Thank God.”

“Nay,” said Christina, whose ears had been quickened to hear his whisper, “your unknown tongue was to me no more than a tinkling cymbal. It failed.”

“Was it something which I said that helped you?” said Demas kindly.

“Sir, your preaching was to me only like sounding brass,” said Christina without looking at him.

Nicias was a little abashed, but recovering himself said, “Then it was Phlegon’s doing—Phlegon, who, all his life has been so generous to the poor? Or was it Cleon who helped you, he who once gave his body to be burned?”

“They profited me nothing,” said Christina, “They showed no love to me, hungry and thirsty and bound by Satan. Nor did your healers. They may have faith enough to remove mountains, but for me they were nothing. All of you refused to help me, all of you passed me by, except this cook. He laid his hand on me, not for a miracle but for love. He saved me. He fed me. He gave me water to wash with, and clothes to wear. He brought me to one who cast out of me the evil spirit. He alone of you has the charity which never fails. I was naked and he clothed me, I was hungry and he fed me, I was in prison and he delivered me. The Lord bless him.”

There was an awestruck silence while Christina was speaking. She seemed unconscious of herself, as if she were not speaking her own words.

Suddenly, with a start and a deep blush she recovered herself, and hastily covering her face with her veil she sank down on her seat. Her pain and her work were accomplished. She was dead.

FELIX AND BYAL.

“REJOICE.”

THIS was the pre-eminent command which the four children received from their father, and in it were sheltered nearly all his other commands.

Unhappily, it was generally disobeyed. But whenever it was kept, there followed splendid results. The reason of its being made so imperative, was that it was largely a fashion in that country to be unhappy. People claimed misery as a possession and a right. Even if they possessed all manner of good and lovely things, they still chose to suppose that they were miserable, and stared with incredulous smiles at the few who declared themselves happy. In fact they regarded them as insincere, or almost monstrous.

Misery was, as I have said, the fashion, and was felt to be the right and correct thing. If no sufficient cause for it could be adduced, then a hidden reason had to be imagined and treasured, so that the conventional sighs and groans might be justified. But there were generally vexations and evils of some sort going about, and it was not hard to detain one and magnify it for personal use.

It was not, however, considered necessary to abstain from pleasure. On the contrary, people habitually followed it with great industry and success. They considered that they might enjoy themselves as much as they chose, provided that they kept groaning. Luxury, work, comfort, recreation, idleness, friendship, honours, children, food, raiment, health, the beauty of nature, and general prosperity, might all be sedulously possessed, provided that the *sesame* of "I am wretched" was duly pronounced. It was this custom of the country which the father above-mentioned desired to have broken.

Felix and Gladys, the two youngest of his four children, early decided that they were happy, and persisted in the avowal of it. They were, therefore, considered by their elders as very extraordinary and almost objectionable children. Happiness seemed to come naturally to them, just as grumbling seemed to come naturally to their elder brother and sister, who became gloomier every year, as they dwelt on the miseries of their lives, and also of other people's lives, for it often happened in that country that people were so obviously prosperous that they were obliged to take up the supposed sorrows of others as their own special affliction. And as they were seldom very active in relieving these afflictions, except on an exceedingly small scale, they naturally lasted them out, and gave them an excuse for being so intensely miserable that it did not seem unlikely that their woes would finally unsettle their intellects.

But Felix and Gladys held sturdily to their birth-right of happiness. When they were happy (which was generally the case), they did not scruple to admit it. They thought their food delicious, they liked their lessons, they liked their play, they liked being kind to other people, and they liked other people being kind to them, and they naturally spent a good deal of time in these two last exercises.

Byal and Dolores groaned even in the midst of a particularly agreeable picnic, and complained bitterly that as they were there they could not be helping the needy, as they wished to do.

Felix and Gladys did not go to the picnic because they particularly wanted to attend to some crippled children who had a country excursion on the same day. With them they had an extra good time, for the day was lovely, and there were flowers to gather, buns to distribute, and songs to sing. When they got back they were dreadfully hungry, but they felt so jolly that they laughed all through supper. Byal and Dolores had both eaten a little too freely of *paté de fois gras*, and were consequently not in good spirits when they reached home, and they said what a weariness life was, and they quite scored a point in wretchedness because they had each met a beggar, and Byal had given his beggar 6d., and was sure he had done wrong and encouraged vagrancy. Dolores had, for conscientious reasons, refused alms to her beggar, and blamed Byal for his munificence. But she still felt that it was dreadful that people should

be hungry, and that she should be unable, for philanthropic reasons, to relieve them.

After they were all grown up, Byal wedded a delightful wife, and lived prosperously with her for half a century, but all through it he tormented himself with the possibility of his wife dying, and so he never admitted that he was the least happy. They lived on till they were old and tottering people. And as one of them naturally died before the other, there was ample excuse for the survivor to be even more exceptionally wretched than before.

Dolores remained a spinster, and some people envied her, for she was uncommonly well off, and could have married suitably a dozen times, if she had chosen. One would have expected that she would be fairly happy, but as life advanced she revelled in two sad theories. First, that she had been crossed in love, and secondly that she had made an irretrievable mistake in not marrying, and that now it was too late to remedy it.

Felix and Gladys both married at the normal age, and had a splendid time, notwithstanding that they had to bear the usual amount of troubles. Felix had no children, but he used to say that he was glad of it, for it left him free to work for his generation, which he liked doing better than anything else. And he declared that other people's children suited him a great deal better than his own might have done.

Gladys had lots of children, and rejoiced in them, and they all turned out averagely (though not brilli-

antly) well. After a while, Felix became an extremely happy and contented widower, and Gladys, while still middle-aged, became a cheery, sympathetic widow. And they so much cherished the memory of husband and wife, that they neither of them ever married again, but lived together and shared their joys and sorrows.

The four brothers and sisters had the usual amount of sickness, trouble, and loss, which they accepted according to their dispositions.

Byal looked crosser and gloomier as time went on, though he was by no means a bad fellow—indeed, he might be justly called a good and useful man.

Dolores kept an album in which were collected hundreds of beautiful memorial cards, with urns and willows. She found that even the entry there of a slight acquaintance's demise, was useful as an excuse for sighs. I never saw her out of mourning. Still, she was really kind, and rather hospitable to bereaved people, though they did not much like staying with her for long, because she expected them to be in such overwhelming grief that they could scarcely live up to it, and felt guilty if they ate and drank, and behaved like ordinary people.

She had some excuse for discontent all the year round. When it was spring she either said "What wretched weather, how cheery the fires, and the long evenings of winter were," or else "How fast this lovely season is fading!"

When it was mid-summer, she observed that the

days would soon be drawing in, and said how sweet the time of spring's promise had been, and how much better she loved primroses than roses.

When it was autumn she said, "Everything is dying! Winter is coming fast; would that we could have kept the glow of summer!"

When it was winter she tried to shiver under her furs, and said, "This cold kills me! And these leafless trees fill me with dismay. Oh for the glorious autumn back again. No, I *won't* go to the Riviera."

As for Felix and Gladys, they liked almost every single day of the year, and gave thanks and praise accordingly. The birds of the air, the beasts of the field, and the fishes of the sea (or even on their tables), were all excellent. When misfortune came they believed it was certainly going somehow to turn to good, and that—after all—they had had but a small share of it. When they grew old they suffered something from the infirmities of age, from a measure of blindness, or deafness, or lameness, but in all they found compensations, and reasons for giving thanks. "Even gold must be tried in the furnace, and every sacrifice must be salted with fire. We will accept such adversities and be thankful."

Byal became too stout, and Dolores had a rather red nose—both annoying experiences—but the only way they ever attempted to comfort themselves was by remembering that many other people were still worse off. And this did not comfort them enough to make them really cheerful.

I need scarcely say that Felix and Gladys were both exceedingly popular. Happy people are not generally selfish, and their friends liked their company, though they were no more rich, or beautiful, or clever, than other folks.

On the other hand it cannot be denied that the hospitality extended to Byal and Dolores was of a somewhat laboured and perfunctory description. People said they were glad to see them, but they were gladder still when they were gone.

Of course all four sometimes suffered coldness or injuries from their friends. "These people have certainly treated us badly," said Felix to Gladys. "But they have given us an opportunity for showing a right spirit, and I think we both feel the stronger and more useful for the trial."

"Oh the cruelty of the world," cried Byal and Dolores. "Sharper than a serpent's tooth is ingratitude. I can never recover from this overwhelming disappointment, coming from people whom I had so trusted."

"Life is indeed a vale of tears," they testified, as its close drew near. (But yet they by no means wished to die).

"To us life has been full of joys," said the younger brother and sister, "And we are going soon to lie down and rest. And we know that as goodness and mercy have followed us all the days of our life, so we shall dwell for ever in the house of our Father."

At last they all four died. On Byal's grave the

words are inscribed: "Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upwards."

On the tombstone of Dolores (which is of white marble, and very expensive), there is engraved the single touching word: "Alas!"

On Felix's grave are the words: "He believed in the Lord, and He counted it to him for righteousness."

On Gladys's is just the one word, in letters of gold: "Rejoice."

Which of these lives would we rather live?

Is it strange that God is glad when we are glad, and that He rejoices if we laugh for joy, and thank Him for all He has prepared for us? Does it please God to be reckoned niggardly, or careless, or cruel? Are grumbling, crying children a credit and happiness to their parents? Or is it better to see them happy, and good? Does anyone gain anything by choosing to grumble?

This word "Rejoice" is a kind of talisman. It brings prosperity to soul and body. One could almost believe that since God has been so much abused and misrepresented, and so often charged with our own ignorances and vileness, He is in a way grateful to those who love Him and His sway, and who show and say that they rejoice in it and in Him. At any rate it seems impossible to praise Him sincerely without reaping some corresponding happiness and benefit.

MISS GRAVES.

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THIS is the story of the change which the fact of being loved made to a woman. I record it because it is a parable of Divine Love. Beauty, grace and purpose come into the life when a soul finds that it is loved by God or man.

My friend Francis Merrick was once paying a few days' visit with me to some good-natured friends in the south of England. He is a worthy middle-aged man, and withal pleasant and wealthy.

Living with the family as a kind of general utility person, was a poor relation, whom I will call Miss Graves. She interested me chiefly because one morning, in a conversation with another person, I heard her say, with deep sadness in her voice, "*You know, a time comes when one has given up expecting that anybody will ever love one.*" No comment was made on the remark, and the conversation glanced off.

She was above forty years old, quiet, useful, dowdy, not unattractive, but rather bitter, as one would expect a woman to be who had little hope that anyone would ever take any interest in her. The family were kind, but certainly held her cheap.

How it came to pass I do not know, but either from pity or admiration, or from some other cause, Francis Merrick fell deeply in love with Miss Graves. He was very shy and self-distrustful, and he did not expect that he should be able to win her affection. She never dreamt that he was thinking of her, and behaved to him in the same frosty, indifferent sort of way which she used with other people.

After his visit had lasted a week he was unexpectedly called away on business. The night before he left he told me what his feeling was, and said, "I wish you would help me in this matter, Phillips. You know how shy I am. I would give the world to win her, but I fear I shall never succeed. If you can possibly get an opportunity, do find out if I may give myself any hope."

He left the next morning before breakfast. Miss Graves was just as usual, and evidently did not think or care about his absence. It happened that during the morning I found her alone sewing some embroidery on the drawing-room curtains. I thought that this would be my opportunity, and I sat in the window seat, and said, "Mr. Merrick was very sorry to have to leave us, but he hopes to return next week."

"I am sure my cousins will be glad to have him back," said Miss Graves calmly.

"He is one of my oldest friends," I continued, "and I don't think I know a better man."

"I liked the kind way he talked about his old

coachman," said she. "I wonder if he will be away for a week, if so we could give his room to Mr. Willison, who is coming to stay till next Wednesday."

"Miss Graves," said I, "have you guessed that Mr. Merrick has fallen in love with you?"

"Fallen in love with me! Good gracious, no! You must be out of your mind, Mr. Phillips. Fallen in love with me! What perfect nonsense!"

Miss Graves looked positively angry in her astonishment and repudiation of the idea.

"I assure you, however, that it is true."

"I don't believe a word of it. He never said so. Mr. Phillips, it is very bad taste of you to joke about such a subject, let me tell you."

She had dropped her silk tassels and risen to her feet.

"I assure you that he told me so last night, and it is by his wish that I am now speaking to you."

There was a pause of some moments, and then she said, "Mr. Phillips, forgive my hasty words. I did not mean to be rude, but I am sure that there is some mistake. You do not seriously mean to tell me that Mr. Merrick asked you to tell me that he—that he had—had any feeling of attachment to me?"

"Indeed, that is just what I do mean. He is earnestly desirous to marry you."

"Excuse me, Mr. Phillips, but I really cannot believe it. Surely either he or you is trifling with me, or there is some mistake. Nobody has ever been attached to me in that way. I am poor and plain. It is impossible that your friend should mean it seriously."

“Indeed he does mean it, Miss Graves. He loves you most deeply.”

Miss Graves sat down again as if she were in a dream, and a beautiful change came over her face. It flushed and softened, a slight smile which I had never seen before played about her mouth. and her rather cold, clear eyes had a soft expression. I saw that she believed what I told her, though her words still belied her looks.

She said, in a tremulous tone of extreme delight, “Mr. Phillips, I cannot believe it. I must be dreaming. But you would not, I am sure, deceive me. Such news bewilders me. It changes everything. I never expected to do anything but get more and more like a dry old stick till I die. But will you write to your friend, or ought I to write? May I write? Do you think it would be proper for me to do so? I am so ignorant about—about such things. Good God, what am I saying?” Here she covered her burning face with her hands and burst into tears. “I never expected to be loved by anyone,” she said with extreme agitation. “Excuse me if I go to my room for half-an-hour. And, *thank you.*”

Presently my hostess, Mrs. Stevenson, came in and said: “Where is Miss Graves? I wish she would get on with her work, and not leave the room in such confusion. These curtains must be finished and put up before lunch.”

“What a valuable person she seems,” said I.

“Capital, poor old thing! So dowdy and useful.

I believe old maids are the best people living, always willing to help, and never expecting any pleasure. And often living on such a pittance. I must call her. Miss Graves! Miss Graves! Where are you? Miss Graves!"

"Here I am, Mrs. Stevenson. Coming directly," said a voice from the top of the house.

"Do make haste, there's a good soul. I can't bear to see the drawing-room in such a mess. Leave everything for the curtains this morning. Why, what is the matter? Has anything happened?"

"Oh, no, nothing. Nothing. I'll get on with them at once. Excuse me. I only just—nothing, nothing whatever." And she sat down, and with trembling hands began again at the curtains.

Mrs. Stevenson stared, looked puzzled, and left the room.

I suppose Miss Graves wrote to Merrick that day, at any rate she received a letter by post two days after, at breakfast, which she put unopened into her pocket, leaving the room very shortly afterwards.

The difference in her demeanour was most beautiful, and all wondered what had come to her, except myself, who knew the secret.

She was a different woman, and seemed to move on air; all her hardness and angularity were gone. Her manner was often absent, and she had repeatedly to apologise for a strange forgetfulness. A delicious horizon seemed to fill her mind's vision. On the day of Merrick's return, I noticed how prettily she was

dressed in a soft grey gown, with some ornaments that I had not seen before. When he arrived, I observed her deep flush, and how she bent determinedly over her work. He came in eagerly, like a lover, and I should think Mrs. Stevenson must have guessed something from the shyness of their greeting.

The next day the engagement was announced, and everybody was kind and rather amused.

Miss Graves adored her lover in a very delightful way. She never thought of her own pleasure, but lived to please him. Her dress, her reading, her music (she had a most rarely beautiful contralto voice), and her opinions were all at his command. A quiet, happy power seemed to come into her character. She was intensely happy, and seemed to blossom out in a number of unexpected ways. In six weeks they were married, and a happier couple was never seen.

My story is told. You call it very simple, but it is a great mystery, for "I speak concerning Christ and the Church." We are loved by an unseen Bridegroom, who has loved us and sought us for years. He is generous, watchful, beautiful, heroic. He desires to be united to us in eternal bonds. He is invisible to our mortal eyes, but it is not impossible to love one who is unseen. One of our English Queens loved her Spanish bridegroom most passionately, long before she saw him.

And the presence of our Lover may be felt and proved day by day. The Divine and mysterious gift of loving, and being loved, may be enjoyed by any-

one, and the romance of a life made sacred to Him may be ours.

“My bride,
My wife, my life. O, we will walk this world
Yoked in all exercise of noble end,
And so through those dark gates across the wild
That no man knows. Indeed, I love thee.
Come,
Yield thyself up, my hopes and thine are one.
Accomplish thou my manhood and myself.
Lay thy sweet hands in mine and trust to me.’



MY LITTLE LONDON GARDEN.

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ANY people who have ever so small a garden can learn from it a great many lessons, useful to the spiritual life, if only they have, in some measure, got their eyes open (as our Lord's eyes were open), to read the lessons of trees, and herbs, and flowers.

My garden is only as wide as my house, and about twice as long, but it teaches me a great deal. It is in London, and I find it is of no use to try and grow roses there, any more than I can now grow in my character certain beautiful qualities which I see in other people's characters, and which I should like to possess myself. We all have to learn our limitations as we get older.

But there are many flowers which do admirably in my little garden, if the soil is kept in order, and if they are duly planted and sometimes watered. There is a delightful little flower called Virginia stock, which it is easy to grow wherever I put it. It flowers beautifully, and always reminds me of the happy grace of *cheerfulness*, for it blossoms freely, and makes no complaints as to soil or sun, and is always a delight to look at. I commend it to everybody.

Notice that it is a cruciform flower, and so it wit-

nesses of the cross, though it is thought cheaply of by most people because it grows low and flourishes easily. It has no scent—or scarcely any—and therefore people do not value it as they value the violet and the mignonette. But I like it just as much. (I do not want to speak against violets and mignonette; but it is a fact that their delicious scent is only available for a short time; it soon gets exhausted). Its thousands of blossoms vary in colour—chiefly in shades of lilac, but sometimes they are white.

I planted a mulberry tree when I came into the house, seven years ago, and this year it has had some fruit on it, and will have more still next year, I hope. There has been long waiting for it, but now that it has come it is excellent. So also there are graces in the Christian character which seem to depend on time and experience, and which it is no use to expect at the very beginning of things. There are special sorts of wisdom and kindness which belong to middle life and old age, more than they belong to youth. But while we are young let us do all that we can to prepare the way for their development by-and-by. Strive to have kindness and wisdom, and you are sure eventually to be kind and wise.

Youth has so much to recommend it that I like to remember that some things are at their best when they are old. For instance, a young olive tree is a poor thing, but when it gets old it is one of the loveliest sights in creation, especially when it is seen with pink or red roses growing up into its midst, or

with purple and yellow grapes hanging among its branches.

Of course, there are many enemies to a garden, as there are many enemies to the soul. First of all there are the weeds, which are numerous and persistent, and different to each other in character. But I find that some of them have, at last, almost entirely ceased, after seven years' attention to them. For instance, I used to have hundreds of impudent thistles springing up. I found that it was easy to pull them up while the soil was soft after rain, and while they were young, but if they got old, and the soil was hard, then they broke off and sprung up again.

Anyone can see that thistles are like temper, which needs a great deal of care and watchfulness while our character is forming. A month's neglect of them means giving them a tremendous advantage, but by God's grace each indication of temper can be dealt with summarily, especially if we get our daily watering from the Holy Spirit during the morning hour of prayer, confession and communion. It is worth while to take special pains to pull up such thistles, for what dreadful pain to others and to ourselves a bad prickly temper gives. And how much time it takes up and wastes if the fault is neglected and grows strong and rebellious!

I had also a great number of stinging-nettles, which are, of course, a disgrace to any garden. They, too, can be easily pulled up when they are young, just as *spitefulness* can be dealt with and annihilated in the

power of God's Holy Spirit, if we attend to its first beginnings and treat it with repentance, confession and amendment. I am glad to say that thistles and nettles have practically disappeared from the garden.

The beautiful bindweed has been a great trouble to me, for it gets deep into the soil, and has long branching roots, deep down like the roots of a tree. To eradicate them would need demolition of everything that grows near. What I found was that small plants and roots can be pulled up, and green leaves not allowed above the surface. This discourages it till it begins to die out. Perhaps many of us have some besetting sin of the flesh, or the world, which is harder to eradicate from our hearts than even the bindweed in our gardens. Why cannot the weed grow unaggressively and in its place, like its near relation, the lovely *convolvulus major*? The bindweed itself is a beautiful flower, and it might be allowed a place somewhere under discipline. And just in the same way qualities, which are ready to become servants of the world and the flesh, have often a good side if they are controlled and kept in their place. For God has made our bodies and our minds, as well as our souls and spirits, and all ought to be good and useful in His Kingdom.

If you fight against your besetting sins you will find that they get slowly weaker, and you will by-and-bye get a sweet sort of Indian summer towards the end of your life when they will have almost ceased to worry you.

Quantities of grass used to grow in my garden beds whenever there was a chance. Grass can be pulled up like other weeds, when the soil is soft, but it has such spreading roots that often good things are pulled up with it or disturbed. It is a beautiful thing in its place. Let it teach us that rest and recreation, though good and important, are not to be allowed to grow into laziness. After we have been in Christian work a little while there often comes a real temptation to laziness. We want to lie in bed in the morning, and not to endure hardness as we did at first. Let us be very watchful in this matter and keep carefully to our rule.

Dogs, cats, snails, slugs, are all enemies, but in my garden slugs and snails are very much reduced through hunting them early in the morning. Cats were a special trouble, for they raked up the ground, besides making horrible, fiendish noises at night. I have never been able quite to get rid of them, but I have had rabbit wire put along the wall and in front of my railings, and since that I have only had trouble occasionally, with a very bold adventurous cat. Satan prowls near us and is always a ready enemy if we cease to watch and pray. But make it *difficult* for an enemy to enter, and you have done a great deal to prevent his appearing, except very rarely. And by no means let anything lie about which the enemy could feed on. The worst of the cat trouble is that we harbour them within, and so we must expect to suffer from them sometimes!

How I value the flowers which come out in dark and almost flowerless times! The beautiful Christmas roses (or hellebores) choose the gloomy months, November and December, for showing their exquisite white blossoms, with the yellow centre, and the delicate pink at their backs. They do not seem to mind the hard biting weather, but are always pure, and white, and cheerful, and happy through all the cold and wind and distress of the winter. They are like peace of soul. They remind me of Miss S——t.

I am very fond of the hibiscus flower, and I have five plants of it. Every spring I wonder if it is dead. for all the stems are brown and withered looking, but quite late the small green buds appear, which change to leaves, and in the cool, windy, bleak autumn the beautiful white and pink flowers are in full beauty, when the glory of nearly every other flower has departed. How good it is to have beauty and grace in the latter part of life, when the freshness of spring has departed. The hibiscus reminds me of *hope*, and its long delayed triumph.

I think that my greatest pleasure this year (in flowers) has been a beautiful passion flower, which has grown half over the front of my house, and has had hundreds of beautiful blossoms. The passion flower, of course, means suffering, and takes us back to Calvary, with its crown of thorns, its thirteen petals (suggesting the thirteen Apostles), its five stamens (like the five wounds of our Lord), and its dark Cross in the centre. Many of us have learned

to be as thankful for the suffering which God sends, as we are for His pleasures. Both are needed, and both are treasures if we are to be like Christ.

There is a slanting roof all along the bottom of my garden, which belongs to a neighbour, and the slates have a very tiresome way of coming down in considerable numbers, to the danger both of plants and people. But, after all, no serious damage has come from them. And I do not believe that mischief from outsiders can really hurt, if we take it in the right way, as coming in God's providence and unable to really wound us.

How much training and supporting even the best plants need, lest they break off, or go wrong, or are hurt by wire-worms, and slugs, and snails! Like a good gardener, God watches over us day by day with continual care.

The greatest trouble with my garden is, that it is to a considerable extent poisoned by the evil sulphurous powers of London air, which often prevent plants from bringing forth to perfection, just as there are hellish powers always waiting to do our souls a mischief. But, wonderful to say, there are a few flowers which get sustenance out of even London fogs and smoke, and I do believe there are certain insect blights which the London air actually keeps away, and which only attack plants that are in happier surroundings.

On the whole, my garden does as well as most of my neighbours' gardens.

But that is not saying much, and there is one

garden a good deal better than mine in almost every way. And another has a large, beautiful pear tree, which in its season is covered with snowy blossoms. And next door but one to me there are some sisters who have a lovely jessamine, which shows thousands of fragrant starry blossoms when its time comes.

I find that many of my plants produce only very small blossoms, and come to an end after a year or two. It is because the earth gets impregnated with sooty blacks, and half poisons the flowers. My kind, indulgent friends profess to admire my garden, but I am sure that they know perfectly well how different it is from their nice clean country gardens. Still, I am thankful for my irises, which are as good as possible, and for my vine, which (after being pruned and manured) always bears some bunches of purple grapes. It is something to be glad of that the poor little garden struggles on without being a complete failure. Alas for the beautiful things that wither or refuse to grow in it!

I have some nice plants, given me from beautiful gardens in Staffordshire, Kent, Hertfordshire, and Sutherland, which flourish uncomplainingly. And I believe there are certain qualities which we may all grow if we choose in the garden of our soul, even if we are not highly gifted people—gratitude, kindness, industry, humility, hope, charity, faith and cheerfulness! And there is no garden so poor and worthless that Christ will not visit it, and care for it, and by-and-bye—after much patience—bring it to perfection.

If our heart cries, "Let my Beloved come into His garden," we shall soon hear His voice replying, "I am come into My garden."

And the dark days will pass away when their work is done, and then we shall find that

" Winter rains and ruins are over,
And all the season of snows and sins,
And days dividing Lover and lover,
The light that loses, the night that wins.
And time remembered is grief forgotten,
And frosts are slain, and flowers begotten,
And in green underwood and cover,
Blossom by blossom the spring begins."

That will be heaven indeed !



MR. AND MRS. NICHOLLS.

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MR. and Mrs. Nicholls were known as particularly good people, but they had one unfortunate failing, of which they were perfectly unconscious. As not improbably you and I are also sometimes beset with this failing, it is worth while to describe it. For though I am afraid that with Mr. and Mrs. Nicholls it is so deeply rooted that they have come to regard it as almost a virtue, and that no words would induce them even to wish to get rid of it, yet with others it may not be too late to show a danger signal.

The failing I speak of was this. In every sermon they heard and every book they read, they invariably received them only in so far as they thought the message would be useful to *other people*. It was with them not a question of whether they were themselves *benefited*, but of whether they *approved* of what had been said and written. Consequently, they were never tired of hearing and reading things which had been useful to them many years ago, and which they hoped would help somebody as they had once been helped.

It was a kind instinct, but it may easily be believed that their own spiritual life became very much shrivelled, for, as a matter of fact, they had received

scarcely any fresh food for many years, They had believed that nothing could be so good for them as to listen to statements and illustrations which had long ago done everything for them which they could do. And they only read books to see if they would be useful to somebody else. When they had meetings or Bible readings at their London house, they never allowed anything to be said or any question to be asked which they thought might be unsafe for anyone present. Consequently their meetings were seldom willingly attended more than once by anybody who was not of their way of thinking, and the audience generally consisted of a room full of people who had no personal interest in what they said, and of two or three young people who had been induced to come, and who found the whole thing either repugnant or uninteresting. Any question as to Biblical difficulties was always answered in so stale and conventional a way, that the questioner resolved never to hazard another query. Indeed, there was generally some slight hint of anger if a question was asked which seemed to imply a real difficulty.

It was a very great pity, for Mr. and Mrs. Nicholls were in the way of many sermons, many books, and many articles, which, if they had received them simply, quietly, and for their own benefit, would have made them stronger, better, and more useful people. It would have been good if they had taken such food, first as a message to themselves, and had *then* read it a second time for the benefit of others.

But this they did not do. The moment they began to read or listen, their minds started criticism for the sake of others, and they put out a danger flag, not only for every supposed error, but also for every supposed omission. It was surprising what uninteresting people they gradually became, and how they were avoided by all the young life and vitality that was around them. For

“The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfils Himself in many ways
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.”

Mr. and Mrs. Nicholls were jealous and restless and unhappy about any new thought or fresh idea, which they thought might depreciate the value of what had long ago brought them comfort and peace. So they became dried up, second-rate, useless people, and nobody really wanted to listen to their views, though they were certainly good and earnest. I shall not tell you whether they were High Church, Broad Church, or Evangelical. We will suppose that they belonged to the same party that you belong to, and that they refused to believe that God had any message worth receiving from other kinds of Christians. If they were High Church they refused to believe that the Gospel message, whether preached by Low Church people or Dissenters, was of any avail, and they shut themselves up in stiff views about Churchmanship and the Sacraments.

If they were Broad Church, they looked on High and Low with good-natured contempt, and considered

them almost devoid of intellect, and unjustly attributed to them exaggerated and impossible doctrines.

If they were Evangelical, they refused to believe that reverence and beautiful services were pleasing to God, and were jealous of all preaching of goodness or morals lest the doctrine of substitution should be imperilled.

The real truth is that stagnation and routine are great evils, and that, as the world goes on, God is continually stirring the great Universal Church in order to bring fresh life and strength into it. Let us try to keep the balance between shiftiness and stagnation. We need never fear for truth. Its basis is divinely fixed. Let us get the benefit of the life which comes to us through communication with all the joints and bands in the great Body of Christ.



A TALE FOR A MOTHER.

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MRS. BURGON had succeeded.

For a wonder she had an hour's leisure before dressing for dinner. Her last necessary letter had been written, and she leant back and considered.

Her gaze travelled from the darkening beauty of her boudoir to the loveliness of the sky beyond it— dusky red near the horizon, and above it a sweet change from orange to lemon and green, and from green to purple and azure. Against it, in the near distance were the elms. The restful cawing of the rooks was just perceptible, and the evening star shone.

She had succeeded. That is to say, she had partially succeeded, and complete success was probable. But, nevertheless, her handsome, brave face wore a somewhat anxious, troubled aspect.

If the thought must be told that was passing through her mind, and had passed through it numberless times before, it was this: "But nowadays girls do not marry very young." It was her great consolation.

With ability and determination she had won an

honourable place in society, and in the particular set which, above all others, she desired.

Her father had been a dignitary in the Church, and she had always recoiled—at one time she had very *strongly* recoiled—from the fast bad set where the ten Commandments are not considered binding. She still avoided associating with immoral people when it was possible; but the complications of life obliged her to do so more than she liked.

“Why should I be more particular than the Lord Chamberlain?” she had replied to a friend, who had remonstrated with her on this point, and who maintained that private people of social influence were bound, for the sake of pure manners, to decline to receive persons whose characters were undeniably bad.

Her friend had replied that the Lord Chamberlain could only deal with facts that were legally proved, but that the standard of private people should be different if they wished to help the tone of English society.

Mrs. Burgon had been on the point of answering to this, that her social power amounted to very little, and that he ought to go and preach to the great leaders of society, of whom she did not reckon herself one. But she was an honest woman, and so she abstained from giving what she immediately perceived would be a dishonest answer. She knew that, like everyone else, she had *some* power, and that she had habitually come to use it for worldly success. She reflected, with satisfaction however, that there were

many things which others did, which she was too high principled to do.

The set that she lived in consisted mostly of men and women who had a high moral and philanthropic tone. Nearly all her men friends gave alms handsomely, and took a certain amount of trouble about philanthropic and religious matters. Most of her women friends had certain institutions, or certain parishes, under their special patronage, and gave time, thought, and money to their well-being.

The set was exclusive. Almost everyone was distinguished by good looks, high birth, literary and artistic tastes and powers of conversation. It was a difficult set to get into, and outsiders, who pretended to sneer at it, nevertheless eagerly welcomed an opportunity of becoming acquainted with it.

Unfortunately it was not quite so high-toned as it had once been. Advance in life brings an unwelcome sense of decay with it, and the leaders had felt it advisable, in order to keep their power and position, to somewhat slacken their unwritten rules, and to admit a few brilliant people who could not quite be approved of. New blood is a necessity, and times and manners change.

The set's general religious tone was pathetic agnosticism. Its members had heavenward aspirations, but the misery of the world generally prevented anything like an old-fashioned faith in God and the Bible. There were a few orthodox men and women in it who went to Church and held by Bishops; but the

more interesting and powerful spirits had grave doubts about religious matters, and secretly considered themselves the aristocracy of a coming religion of a very superior description.

Mrs. Burgon, herself, belonged to the orthodox section, and considered that she made a decided sacrifice by standing up for religion. She loved her father's memory ; he had been an extremely unworldly, holy man.

In bringing up her children she gave religion an important place, while she carefully guarded them from any influence which might be fanatical, and blight their prospects.

Her husband was rich, and had let her have her way in most things, and she was a successful woman.

Beauty, wealth, tact, and propriety had won her all the honour she could desire, and her only trouble was that she had three delightful daughters out who were still not engaged to be married. This was certainly annoying, and it was the remembrance of it which caused the anxious look on her face. She was not sure whether she had been wise in rejecting certain suitors who had been very nearly good enough, but not quite. It is difficult and almost impossible for a mother to feel quite certain as to such matters.

Her eldest girl, Dorothea, was now twenty-three, and was all that a mother could desire, except that she was not engaged, and had never seemed particularly anxious to be engaged. Perhaps this peculiarity added to her charm, but it made her mother's work

harder. Sometimes Mrs. Burgon felt slightly irritated with Dorothea on this point, and counted her a little inconsiderate, or even a little selfish. And as she thought it all over for the hundredth time, her beautiful face was clouded.

God sometimes uses what look like very little things to turn the current of our life.

As Mrs. Burgon sat thinking, a distant peal of bells began to ring, rising and falling as it came across the landscape. The sound seemed to belong to some heavenly region beyond the sweet fading sky. It arrested her, and she felt as if it reproached her tenderly, and bore witness of a holier state which she might have entered had she chosen. God's voice was surely in it. And it seemed to her as if her father's blessed spirit were beholding her afar off with sad eyes. The impression grew stronger and stronger, and soon she actually blushed at her fretful, worldly thoughts, and ceased to justify her life, or to rejoice at her attainments. Such thoughts were not new to her, but they had never been so compelling as at this moment.

Old aspirations rushed back upon her. Vividly she remembered how, on an evening just like this, thirty years ago, she had sat in the old Deanery garden and had longed after Divine things, and had solemnly consecrated her life to God. How sadly had her soul retrograded since that day.

As she thought of it her eyes filled, and what she had striven for and won seemed as hollow as hollow could be.

“What have I gained in my middle age after all?” she thought bitterly. “Do I really want my children to grow up like me? *Who am I* to train their almost unsoiled souls, when mine is so stained with worldliness? Rather should they teach me, for they are better than I am! How false is my attitude towards them of warning and hope? God forgive me! My spring is gone! My summer is going! Earthly things, so earnestly worked for, will soon lose their importance. Already I have ceased to be in love with them, though I still serve them. But heavenly things are far fainter and less real to me than they were thirty years ago.”

So she pondered, and then there came vividly into her memory the great picture of “The worship of the Lamb in heaven,” which she had seen at Ghent a few months before, and it preached anew to her of the ideal of Christian middle age. For Van Eyck has filled his picture with people who have won a hard fight, and who show the scars of it. They are no girls or boys, but stately men and women. They have gained a healthful, wholesome maturity, which has brought them wisdom, experience, kindness, dignity, power, humility, a deep trust in God, and a clear vision of His heavenly kingdom.

She remembered these noble personages and felt that she herself would be like a thin and meaningless ghost in their midst. It has been said above that such thoughts were not new to her, for God’s Spirit had never left her, and there was a green bit in the

garden of her soul in which the Lord could still delight. But now she felt that the Spirit of God was indeed overpowering her. She buried her face in her hands and wept. And then came the whispered prayer, "God be merciful to me a sinner. Cleanse me and I shall be clean. Take me, Lord, and take my children, and all that I have and am. Only forgive me, and use me."

From the bottom of her heart she meant it. There was still enough of the Divine element in her soul to enable her to make a solemn renunciation and a choice.

She silently made it.

And then the door opened, and her eldest daughter Dorothea, and her younger son Hugh, came in together rather hesitatingly and slowly into the room. What strange answer to her prayer was close to her?

She started, and looked at them with half-frightened eyes.

"Dearest mother," said Hugh, "we want to tell you what has been in our minds for a long time, only we are afraid you will be angry. For more than a year Dorothea has wanted to go and live at Uncle Fraser's parish at Hackney, and to work for Christ among the poor. She says she does not want to marry, and she has lost her interest in going out. Will you let her go?"

"And, mother, ever since Christmas I have made up my mind that I shall not be really happy unless I give my life to definite religious work, either at

home, or abroad. Will you say yes? I believe you will. It is not a sudden wish. I am sure my father will consent if you do. Are you surprised, mother? Why do you not speak? Are you glad?"

Mrs. Burgon trembled from head to foot, and her face was quite white, but she answered, "Yes, my children. I am glad. God is good; serve Him, and pray for me. My desires for you have failed, but God gives you better things than ever your mother thought of."



EDWARD AND OLIVER.

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“I WISH people were always unselfish.”

“That is too much to expect Quentin,” said my great-grandmother, laughing gently. “And, besides, I am not sure that it is wrong to be moderately selfish. The world is worked that way, and I believe it is not such a bad way as people sometimes try to make out. Still, when we *do* find a man or woman who is really unselfish, we find a treasure. Every generation has a few of them, and only a few.”

It was April. She sat at her auriol window looking out at the meadows, which stretched wide beyond the garden. They were shining with buttercups and daisies, and the birds were making a joyful tumult of singing. One heard the contralto of the blackbird, the plaintive treble of the redbreast, the hurried chatter of the wren, the triumphant song of the thrush, and the sweet recurring strain of the chaffinch. High overhead hung the skylarks, entranced with ecstasy. The sky was never without their singing, for before one left off another had begun. And of course there was the welcome cuckoo. Every April this delightfulness comes to the world.

It is a wonder that gratitude to God for such delights should not be an oftener practised virtue.

My great-grandmother was silent for a little, and then began to speak again. She liked to talk, though nobody ever called her a great talker.

“Perhaps,” said she, “the world would scarcely move forward without selfishness. It is like the steam which works the engine. People almost *must* struggle against each other for their living. Let us begin by wishing to be unselfish *as often as we can*. It is something even to wish for that. A good many of us seem to be always selfish, even when we are good and religious. * * * I am an old woman, Quentin, and I can count up more than a hundred descendants. Many of them have been good and useful, thank God, and many of them religious. But I can only think of two—Oliver and Anne—who seemed to their grandmother to be always unselfish. It is not a common quality. I think God gave these two more of it by nature than most other people, and as life went on they became almost perfect in unselfishness.

I will tell you about them if you like, and also about Edward and Louisa, their brother and sister. Their parents both died abroad, and the four little ones came to me for their bringing up. They were good children, and they all became valuable men and women, as you shall hear.

They soon settled down very happily with me, and made the home full of gladness.

Every day after their morning walk, they used to come into my room and tell me their adventures, and of course we got to be great friends.

The incident I am going to tell you showed the differences of disposition which kept appearing as time went on.

They had gone out one day for a longer expedition than usual, and had been allowed to take their luncheon with them.

When they came back there was a great rush to my room, and Edward, who was first, began at once."

"O grandmother, we have found such a dear little girl, called Susan, and she was so poor and hungry, and we have given her our lunch. At least we gave her nearly all the sandwiches and all the biscuits and bread, and we only used just the cake and the pudding ourselves."

"Her father had broken his leg in the quarry, said Anne breathlessly, "and they had nothing to eat. And Oliver would give her every single bit of his lunch to take home with her. He wouldn't keep one thing for himself."

"And that was wrong of him grandmama, wasn't it?" said Edward, "for *we* ought not to starve ourselves any more than to let Susan starve. And you would be angry if we gave away everything, wouldn't you? Anne wanted to be just as silly as Oliver, but Louisa and I would not let her give all her lunch away. So she cried."

"But Susan had had no breakfast like us," said Anne mournfully. Do you think she might have one of my frocks, grandmama?"

"It was I who found her, granny," said Louisa. "I found her, and talked to her before the others came up. Do you think she will be a jewel in my crown, grandmama?"

And at the same moment Edward asked. "May

we have some more lunch, grandmother, as we gave our's away? May we have some more citron cake?'

To both of these last questions I answered "No my dear," and Edward then said—"Grandmother, I gave her my sixpence. Was that right? The Bible says that if we even give a cup of cold water we shall have a reward. And sixpence is much better than a glass of water, isn't it? What reward do you think that I shall get?"

"I am sure I do not know, Edward," I replied. "But where is Oliver all this time?"

"Oh, he *would* carry Susan's pail of water home for her, so he is late," said Louisa. "He thought it was too big for her, and that she would spill the water."

This story gives true samples of the four children's way of behaving. They all did good things, but two of them did them mainly for their own sakes, because it was their duty, or for the sake of a reward. The other two did things entirely for the sake of the persons benefited.

Edward's first religious impressions came from his being intensely anxious not to go to hell, and he never rested till he felt sure that he was quite safe. Nor do I blame him. His anxieties lasted more or less for two years, but as soon as they were allayed, he began to give his life very earnestly to the work of saving as many other souls as possible. After he was ordained, I thought he collected cases for confirmation almost as systematically as if they had been blackberries.

But it was a life of hard work, and of good work, and I feel sure that he has had a reward. He attained early in life a great position in the Church, and everyone felt that his Canonry first, and his Bishopric afterwards were no more than he deserved. "But," said his wife to me, "these honours are not what Edward cares most for. What he really values is the knowledge that he has won so many souls to God. These are his real honours, and it is for these that he will win his crown."

He was an exceptionally conscientious and religious man, and he was rightly honoured and praised. But I always felt that he did everything from his own standpoint. I do not mean that he was wrong. But there was a difference between him and Oliver and Anne, who never did things because it was their duty, but only in order that the things might be done. They were habitually oblivious and indifferent about what affected themselves, but keenly interested about the needs of other people. Perhaps heedlessness is a kind of fault, but there was something beautiful about the way they were heedless about their own concerns. They were not cautious. They were not self centred. They seemed to have lost their lives for some One else's sake, and to have found them outside themselves.

Oliver made up his mind early to be a medical missionary. He went to north India, and spent his life there, in a way as much like the four Gospels as I can imagine.

He travelled over large districts, healing diseases,

performing operations for blindness and lameness, and preaching by his life and his words the Divine message he had to give.

Anne was generally said to have bad luck. She was poor, and the last part of her life was spent almost as a companion to her sister Louisa, who gave her a home, and made her, I think, a small allowance. But wherever she lived she was like a thread of gold woven into the web of life. People longed for her, and loved her.

Louisa, as you know, married a man of wealth and position, and soon became a very important philanthropic widow. Undoubtedly she did well for herself, but she always desired that other people should have a good time too, and she habitually gave away of her superfluity. I think she made an unconscious rule never to give away what she might want herself; but her means were ample, and she was justly known as a prominent Lady Bountiful in the neighbourhood of her country seat. A pic-nic in her park was a pretty sight, for after she and her friends had feasted, there was always quite a crowd of poor people to whom she would distribute her broken meats. None went away empty. Perhaps she made rather large claims on people's gratitude. But she really did give away more than most people, and who can say that she was not justified in expecting to receive a very superior crown by-and-bye?

I cannot deny that she was a selfish person, but she was both useful and (in a second rate style), good. And she was naturally very much admired and praised.

Her religion was in some ways peculiar. I think she felt that there was a great virtue in the particular kind of faith that she practised. She firmly believed not only that her numerous sins were forgiven her because she had accepted the doctrine of substitution, but also that after her death she would attain, through her belief, a very good place in heaven, which would not be attained by persons who were not equally clear as to the solid advantages of what she called the "gospel plan."

About this who can tell? God will do better than our poor hearts can imagine. It may be that what some of us desire for ourselves as the best and most glorious rewards may turn out not to be the best experiences for us, or at any rate not for a long time. God knows!

But we come back, Quentin, to where we started from. Let us be as unselfish as we can. Christ never pleased Himself or worked for Himself, but always for men and for God.

Let us not, however, despise any good results that come from being faithful to a sense of duty. It is a fine motive. And the love of reward is a good motive too, and is largely used in the Bible as an incentive.

But the most Divine and beautiful work is done for love of the work itself, and for desire that men, women, and children should be happy and good. Those motives carry heaven's loveliest colour. May God inspire us with them!

PICTURES

AMONG the many good things which most people forget to thank God for, surely pictures rank high.

I, myself, used to underrate their religious value, and I do not believe that one person in a thousand knows how great it is. I can scarcely conceive the loss there would be to religion if there were no pictures. Yet many religious people only goodnaturedly recognise them as rather useful, or at any rate harmless.

I do not want to overstate the case, and I am not forgetting that Quakers and Puritans have made shift to get along without them, and also that art has not had a prominent place in heathen mission fields.

But for my present purpose it will be enough to review their advantage in our own lives in England.

As children we none of us did without pictures, and most of us loved them dearly. When I was a child there were the prints in "Peep of Day" and "Line upon Line," the coloured Sunday picture books, and the large books of steel engravings from the old masters. We loved and honoured them all — Adam and Eve with their animals, David and Goliath, Moses striking the rock, Jonah and the whale, and all the whole series. I am sorry for people whose memories are not stored with Old Testament pictures, and still

more with pictures from the four Gospels. The sweet story of the manger at Bethlehem became ours chiefly through pictures (and Christmas hymns, like "Hark the herald," and "While shepherds watched). The star, the angels, the shepherds, the three kings, the mother and the Holy Babe, there they all were to be loved and honoured, and what a loss there is to people whose souls are not blessed by pictures of the Nativity. I remember Burne Jones saying to me (not long before he died), that as he grew older he cared more and more to paint Nativities.

Then followed the baptism of Christ, with the hovering Dove. And of all symbols is there any one more helpful than the Dove? For years I have thankfully lived with a copy of the peerless Dove (in the National Gallery) by Piero Della Francisca. May it ever be dominant in my house. How true it is that we still recognize the sons of God by the resting on them of the heavenly Dove. May we—each one of us—be thus known.

Then we children turned over our books and came to the marriage feast, to Jairus' daughter, the feeding of the 5000, the blessing little children, the prodigal son, the Pharisee and the Publican, the draught of fishes. And then to the Crucifixion, the Resurrection and the Ascension. God be thanked for them all. Pictures are as valuable as books I think.

When we go abroad we find that the men of old knew this, and adorned their Cathedrals and Churches, inside and outside, with frescoes, mosaics, sculptures,

and pictures able to raise the minds and souls of the people to what was high, and holy, and beautiful.

“Whatsoever things are lovely, think on these things.” For beauty is as truly an attribute of God as goodness. “All great art is praise,” said Ruskin, and he never said a truer word. For all great art calls us to admire and worship God for the beauty and power which have come forth from Him. Art may be degraded and misapplied, but even then all that is beautiful in it comes from God Himself.

Our first debt to pictures is for the knowledge of the facts which they so delightfully bring us, and for the beauty to which they open our eyes. But they have also their mission of sternness and threatening, witnessed by works like Orcagna's frescoes at Pisa, Michael Angelo's Last Judgment in the Sistine Chapel, and such great and terrible sculptures as those on the front of the Cathedral at Orvieto, and at many other places. I myself received, when I was scarcely past childhood, deep and lasting impressions from John Martin's painting of the Last Judgment. It frightened me almost out of my wits, but with purely salutary results. After long years I have seen the picture again, and I am thankful that I knew it first as a boy, before forty years had invested me with fatal powers of criticism. For now it is impossible to disregard those less noble qualities in it which somewhat discount its really awful power.

What is so delightful about art is that it generally takes possession of us and enriches our hearts and

minds and characters, in so *kind* and *easy* a way. We do not have to learn it with an effort. It is there only as a delight, and if it is sometimes too hard for us, we have but to let it alone till we are older.

Give it a grateful thought when you have realized how much it has done for you, and that it has come straight from God, your Father and Creator.

I thank Him specially for the Praying Hands and the victorious St. George of Albert Durer, for the kneeling knight of Pinturricchio, for the peerless last supper of Leonardo, and for the naive and gentle frescoes of Giotto and of Fra Angelico. For the superb and deep-toned paintings by Tintoretto in S. Rocco, and the mighty and uplifting "Worship of the Lamb" by Van Eyck at Ghent. And how much we owe to the works of such men of our own time as Watts, Holman Hunt, and Tissot.

Who can say that Religion and Art are not closely and vitally united? And besides the direct teaching—historical, poetical, and doctrinal, of such pictures as I have mentioned above, what immeasurable though unconscious benefits we receive from those ideas of nobility, grace, beauty, and goodness, which are impressed on our minds and hearts by pictures.

"It is a good thing to give thanks." And when we have thanked, such possessions become doubly ours.

I want to talk a little more about pictures, and I am, therefore, reprinting a paper (never published) written of Broadlands, in 1889, and called—

A TALK ABOUT ART.

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IT was a summer evening, but rather cold, and we were sitting round a fire in the green room, where hung the Sir Joshua Reynolds pictures. There was a faint perfume of white lilies discernible, for they were in tall vases all through the drawing-rooms.

Dinner was over, and I think some of the guests were a little sleepy, but our hostess, Lady Mount Temple, who was dressed in soft grey velvet, was full of the kind of vivacity which stimulates talk in other people.

Two ladies sat on a distant sofa talking intimately in a low voice. Lady Watchikaula Thyngé, Mrs. Dutton, and Mr. Harris (an artist) were chatting about acquaintances. Miss Thyngé was on a low chair by Lady Mount Temple.

Some of the talk seemed inclined to get desultory. Lady Watchikaula was saying, "I must say I always thought her the rudest woman I ever knew. She enjoyed being rude just as I enjoy music. I met her last year at Milford House, and spoke to her in the ordinary way. Of course she knew me perfectly well, but she stared and said, 'It is very good of you to address me, but I don't know you.' I felt myself getting red, and said, 'I beg your pardon, but we

have met at least a dozen times.' 'Where?' said she. I got quite angry, for nobody ever forgets me and my queer Muscovite name, and I said, 'Well I met you *first* at Marlborough House many years ago, when you were still middle-aged.' And then I turned round and left her. And, do you know, only about ten days afterwards she had an apoplectic fit and *died*. It really was very remarkable."

"Vengeance does not always overtake people so quickly as that," said Mr. Harris. "If it had been a less severe punishment one might have hoped she would have taken warning, and not been rude to you again."

"No. I don't believe that anything except being killed would cure her rudeness. I often wonder how she gets on where she is now. It seems as if it must make her so angry to find herself of no account—socially, you know. I daresay she is quite the dregs of society, wherever she is."

"Well, we all have our faults, mamma," said Miss Thyngé.

"Certainly we have, Selina," said her mother. "But nobody can ever say that rudeness is a fault of mine. Your dear grandmamma always used to say, 'Girls, never be rude, it is setting such a bad example.'"

I had noticed that Miss Thyngé always received her grandmother's maxims in a hostile spirit, and she now said,

"I think one soon gets tired of doing things for the sake of setting an example."

“Mr. Harris,” said Lady Mount Temple, “I wish you would talk to us about pictures. As life goes on we get so rich in memories—not only of friends, but of places, and books, and music, and paintings. You have seen nearly all the greatest art in the world. Tell us what pictures you most care to remember. Do you place the Sistine Madonna first of all?”

“I think, perhaps, it is the most absolutely *beautiful*,” said Mr. Harris. “It has a charm that no other picture has. The lines and the composition are faultless, and the expression must be inspired I think. The colour is dignified, but without the passion or the quality which subdue us in masterpieces by Titian and Tintoretto.

“It is evidently with intention that Raphael has made St. Barbara so gracefully trivial in motive. He does not intend that our emotions should be excited, for the picture does not depict an incident, but a heavenly state. But as an example of an entirely glorious picture, I think I would cite Raphael’s ‘Heliodorus’ in the Stanze at the Vatican.”

“Do describe it to us, so that we can see it as we sit here by the fire.”

“It is large and roomy. In the centre, but withdrawn some way back, so that there is a great bare space in the front of the picture, the Pope kneels at the altar. He is in sapphire-coloured robes, and there is great sanctity about him. His prayers are the key to the discovery and punishment of the sacrilege of Heliodorus, depicted in the foreground on the right.

“Here we see that three destroying angels have suddenly appeared, and have dashed to the ground Heliodorus. The coins are scattering in all directions.

“This group is characteristic of the peculiar perfection of Raphael. That beauty of line in which he excelled every other painter, and which is felt in all his best work long before it is understood, is here pre-eminent. So, too, is his almost unrivalled drawing of the figure. Many painters have drawn correctly and beautifully, but in Raphael there is a supreme delight in sweeping to victory over apparent impossibilities, and leaving for all generations a surpassingly lovely result. The angels are terrible in their vengeance, and in their power to smite and exterminate. One of them rides a great horse; the other two are bounding to their prey, and scarcely touch the ground with their beautiful feet. Heliodorus is already almost expiring under their blows.

“The other part of the picture—that on the left hand side—is occupied with a stately assemblage, comprising Pope Julius the Second surrounded by his guards and other personages. Here there is much beauty of women and children. The principal woman is a more graceful edition of an important figure in the Transfiguration. This group of people is, of course, an anacronism, but it is quite justifiable. They are spectators of the tragedy, but being of another generation, they are interested rather than excited—as by a story that is told.”

“Thank you so much, Mr. Harris. Do tell us about

some more pictures. Do not mind dear Lady Kaula having gone to sleep. She has had such a long drive to-day. Only she will be so sorry to miss what you are saying."

Lady Watchikaula Thyng here awoke and said, "I was not asleep. I can always listen better with my eyes shut. Please go on Mr. Harris. It specially interests me, because, though I have lived in Rome so many years, and though I am perfectly devoted to pictures, yet, do you know, I never once had time to go to the Vatican and see those glorious Raphaels and Michael Angelos?"

Mr. Harris had rather expressive nostrils, and if he replied, it was only by their involuntary motion. But at Lady Mount Temple's command he continued his discourse.

"I very often find myself thinking of Tintoretto's 'Annunciation' at Venice in San Rocco. The frescoes there are too much in the dark, and I am afraid that people often get little from them, except a general impression of blackishness.

"Tintoretto loved to limit himself to tones of umber, white, and azure, and to prove that he could produce as superb colour with them as with crimson and gold.

"In the Annunciation the Virgin seems to be living among the ruined architecture of a past dispensation, and there is a wide and depressing outlook beyond her abode. She herself is scarcely young and beautiful, but these great painters were careful in their best

work to make us think of something other than a pretty face. For instance, except our dear St. Helena in the National Gallery, and the Queen of Sheba at Turin, I can scarcely think of a very beautiful woman's face in any of Paul Veronese's pictures.

The Virgin here, however, has sustained her part in her gloomy surroundings, and now a heaven of light and beauty comes to her. Through the door, like a bird, glides Gabriel, and through the little window just above the door comes a bevy of cherubs. It seems as if none of them could get in fast enough. They have evidently come straight down the very instant that the waiting time was over, and they have all descended on the house, and have not thought of alighting, but with a sudden wheel they rush in through the door and window horizontally. This bright, heavenly vision makes the picture one of the most charming I have ever seen.

"I need scarcely remind you of Tintoretto's best known and most beautiful picture—the 'Bacchus and Ariadne.' He has painted two or three pictures, which are the only ones of their sort, and this is the loveliest of them. Nobody has ever dared even to imitate the disposition of those three transporting figures, or to hope that such poetry of light and shade could be attempted again.

"The girl sits queenlike on the rocks, unconscious of her fairness. Drenched, but beautiful, the boy Bacchus rises from the sea, his head wreathed with vine leaves. Humbly he proffers her the ring. His

face glows. The kisses of the sun have bronzed his golden skin—and in the air floats Venus herself, unclothed, to crown Ariadne.

“The three are for ever one—united by the supreme genius of the greatest poet among painters.”

“What a lovely tableau it would make!” said Lady Watchikaula, but no one else spoke, and Mr. Harris continued.

“You know these pictures as well as I do, Lady Mount Temple, but if you go to Milan do spend some time at the Brera over Tintoretto’s ‘Miracle of St. Mark,’ which has only found its way there in the last few years. It stands alone almost as much as the ‘Bacchus and Ariadne.’

“It is a dark and splendid picture, full of solemn, rich colour—browns and greys and dull pink.

“It presents an immense succession of arches, beneath which one traces the long perspective of tessellated pavement ending in a mysterious exit, where two weird figures are strangely occupied.

“We are in the vaults of some great burying place, and there is something almost ghoulish in the way the coffins are being ransacked. There are no such terror-stricken figures anywhere as those which form the front group on the right. They seem to be actually losing their reason with sheer fright.

“The Doge kneels in the middle, and the apparition of St. Mark stands tall and commanding on the left.

“All the disturbance has arisen from the fact that another body had been substituted for his as a relic.”

I think that Lady Kaula had again dozed, and was beset with the fatal anxiety (so common to us all) to prove that she had not been asleep by making some particularly apropos remark. She now said eagerly, "Mr. Harris, I wonder if you can tell me of any artist who would give my daughter Selina some lessons, and who would not be perfectly ruinous. She gets on all right with her water colours, but she wants just to learn the use of oils. Now, do you think that six or eight lessons would be enough?"

"That depends, Lady Watchikaula, on the style that you wish her to learn. I have a friend who could easily teach her the Tintoretto or Giorgione style in six lessons, but she would want at least twelve if she is to be perfect in the manner of Rembrandt or Velasquez."

"Well, I shall be guided by you, Mr. Harris," said the lady so humbly that I think Mr. Harris was a little ashamed of himself, especially as Miss Thyng was present, and had quite wit enough to understand the points of the dialogue.

She laughed rather uncomfortably, and said, "Mamma, I can't bear Tintoretto or Giorgione, or Rembrandt or Velasquez, and nothing shall induce me to paint like them."

There was a little pause, and then Mrs. Dutton said, "I particularly want to hear Durer's 'Melencolia' talked about. I have it, and I feel its beauty, but I should like to know for certain what it means."

"Mrs. Dutton," said Mr. Harris, "I believe you

know as much about it as any of us. Tell us yourself what it means. Here is a photograph of it in this book to refresh your memory with."

"Well, I am not an expert, you know, and that is why I should prefer to hear you talk about it. But it seems to me that she is a noble person, and has a right to her crown. She has thought, and she has worked too. And she has accomplished a great deal both in science and in manual labour. The instruments of toil about her are witnesses to this. She has wealth, but she holds her bags of money in subjection. I think that book on her lap is a Bible, and she has wings. There is a church bell behind her, and there is an hour glass of which the sand runs continuously and normally as it should, for why should we mind getting old when the proper time has come for us to be old? There is a ladder, you see, and there is 'Love' sitting on a grindstone.

"The light of the sun is imperfect, almost as if there were a partial eclipse—a parable, I suppose, of the eclipse of faith, which some of us seem to be groaning under now. But there is a rainbow. I don't see why she should be so dreadfully sad. But you see there is a devil. A little wicked devil, who brings melancholy, born of ignorance and distrust, and half spoils everything. That is all I can make of it, and I dare say I am quite wrong."

There was considerable applause, and Mr. Harris, to make amends for his late rudeness, said, "Melencolia has a chatelaine of keys, Lady Watchikaula, but

it is not nearly so pretty as your chatelaine, which is the prettiest I ever saw."

"It is pretty, isn't it? I got it at Munich, and you'll think it was dreadfully extravagant of me to buy it, for it cost a mint of money, but I got it for my poor cousin, Mrs. Langdale, who has so *few* pretty things, and cares *so much* about them."

"How kind of you, Lady Watchikaula. And didn't she like it after all—what a shame!"

"Well, after I got to England, I liked it so much that I thought I would keep it, you know."

There was rather an embarrassed silence, and then she continued, "Dear Mrs. Dutton, how clever you are to be able to say all that. I do so wish I could do it; I'd give anything if you'd lend your beautiful 'Melencolia' to Selina to copy. We would take the greatest care of it. Selina, do you remember how often grandmamma said that she liked to see us as careful of a thing that was lent us as if it were our own?"

Mrs. Dutton did not, I think, much wish to lend her etching, but she said politely, "You must come over and see it, Selina, and then you can judge if you would like to copy it."

Lady Mount Temple then said, "Do talk to us a little about Michael Angelo, Mr. Harris. I think we must all of us be better for the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel and for the Chapel of the Medici in San Lorenzo. And isn't it delightful that the autotypes are so good that anybody who has a few shillings

can live with the greatest company in the world, with prophets and sybils and superhumanly beautiful personages. I always have with me that gigantic weather-beaten Cumæan sybil with the deep lines of wisdom in her grim face and the muscular arms. And even more closely I cherish the Persian sybil. She is more than human, and has learnt secrets from her little book that are far beyond mortal ken. That old small face! That noble draped form with the veiled head and the bent shoulders! We grant you the glory of Raphael's angels, but at least let us crown Michael Angelo for the sake of his old women."

"And for the sake of his young men, too," said Mr. Harris. "Think of the array of youths on that ceiling, every one of them divinely strong and chaste. I suppose we all have for our favourite the one who wears a white bandage round his head. I think it is the noblest picture that the world contains of a young man in repose. What limbs and what hands! What a neck and chest! And what a profile—keen, wise, restrained, heroic! When I look at him I seem to understand what is meant by God creating man in His own image. The beauty of the Lord God is upon him. Strength and honour are his habitation. Who among the mighty can be compared unto him? For ever the dew of youth is upon him.

"But his comrades are worthy comrades. I like him who holds fast one end of the girdle between his feet, and lifts the other above his head. I like

the terrified boy, who stares back at us with distended eyes, and the graceful creature who is so like Mrs. Wyndham. And how fine the lad is with the curly hair and dark, beautiful side face, and the wild fellow who only shows us his great eyes above the line of his straining limbs."

"You care for these things so much, Mr. Harris," said Mrs. Dutton, "that of course we want to hear you talk about Burne Jones, as we know that you are such an enthusiast about him."

"Well," said Mr. Harris, "I don't expect you to think that his pictures are in the category of those that I have been talking about. But they belong to our own time, and touch different nerves. It was about 1863 that I first saw three pictures of his at the Old Water Colour Society's exhibition, and I certainly did not like them. They were odd, and one of them, I thought, was even irreverent and painful. 'Cinderella' and 'Fair Rosamond' (the last was bought for Mr. Ruskin by his father), were pendants at one end of the room, and opposite was 'The Merciful Knight.' How differently I feel about them now !

"Cinderella is in a long straight gown, mossy green, with a large patch, and she leans back against rows of blue willow-pattern plates. Her face is tired, and she has rather pathetic, grey eyes, and pretty waving hair, parted across a low forehead. With one hand she holds up the corner of her white apron, with the other she touches her hair. She looks almost as if

she might be stretching herself—at any rate she is weary after her late hours the night before. On the shelf, in front of the plates, there is a finger glass with a large pink rose in it, given her doubtless by the Prince.

“She has one foot bare, and on the other is the glass slipper, made in joints, so that it will bend in the dance as required. There are nice mugs around, and a lemon and some wine glasses, and there is a pumpkin, with an untransformed rat crawling into it. All this is not of much account you will say, and I really don't know how to describe the charm of these pictures beyond claiming for them that they are the most beautiful colour that can ever be produced. Not Giorgione himself dealt in greater subtilities. Please imagine the green and blue in the Cinderella picture as splendid as you can. But it is not the colour only, for the things that first made me his captive were some little pencil studies of a model's head (Augusta Jones), which were the only work of his that appeared in the next winter exhibition. Sometimes I think his people must have relation to a previous existence of mine, and that that is the reason why they stir me to such a passion of admiration. He got his living at this time chiefly by designs for stained glass, and his water colours have that kind of quality about them. He almost always uses the whole scale of tone, from gleams of the brightest white to blacks, which he knows how to make as gorgeous as the Roman purple. Do you know the

ineffably beautiful windows of his in the Chapel of Jesus College, Cambridge?

“There is a little picture of Fair Rosamond and Queen Eleanor which is overpowering in its force of colour, but it consists almost entirely of this luminous black, with a taste of crimson in the Queen’s robe, the white of poor scared Rosamond’s dress, and hints of subdued green in the inner room, whither she vainly tries to escape. Vainly, for she finds herself caught round her body with the clue, which the Queen grasps as hard as she grasps her dagger. There is a round mirror, composed of several little mirrors, in which Eleanor’s face is reflected again and again and again, so that the place teems with her. The Queen does not look wicked. I think she looks good. She is Fate, I suppose.

“Mr. Ruskin’s picture of Rosamond is quite different. She is a fair, sorrowful lady, clad in white and dull red. She is in her bower of trellis work, grown all over with pink roses, that are the very souls of the sweet flower. She bends forward and fixes to the end of the clue one large milk white rose. Her face—but its no use trying to describe it.”

“Oh, yes, Mr. Harris, please go on —”

“If I could only make you see the quality of his workmanship—the texture of it! No one else has ever approached him in the use of body colour. Sometimes it is scumbled like an inpalpable mist, sometimes it is dragged on thick, sometimes it lies like a fine powder. And the paper itself reveals new

qualities when it is stained with his adorable pigments. Some of his finest effects are got by scraping. But I really must stop."

"Please don't stop, Mr. Harris," said Lady Watchikaula "I begin to think that after all Selina need not learn oils, but just go on with her water colours. Do tell us a great deal more. Only don't tell us about daggers, and please don't praise Queen Eleanor. I always had such a dislike to murders, even when I was quite young. My dear mother used to teach us to *hate* every murder—even the murder of a *child* she detested. But go on, and *please* no murders."

"I am not quite sure whether I can thread between what you call murders, Lady Kaula. They recur so often in all fine art. But I will try.

"I think it was in 1864 that he exhibited five pictures, which showed his full power. Perhaps I ought not to say his full power, for by his wonderful capacity for work, he has since added to his natural gifts a wonderful facility in drawing and composition—so that he has now, comparatively early in life, won the suffrages of even the less intelligent of his contemporaries. In his early career he had only the praise of a small set, and a storm of execration from the public, and from the press, which accused him of incapacity and eccentricity.

"The charge of eccentricity was a natural charge for Philistines to make against him, but it was a bewildering one to the victim, who always painted things as they appeared to him. He once told me

that he began simply with the wish to put figures down on paper, and make them look as if they were doing what the story said they did. Then he wanted to colour them, and he painted them with simple, bright colours.

“To this period belong nearly all the water colours that I am talking about. Then he began to spread his wings, and his genius roved everywhere—especially through Greek and Tuscan art—to perfect itself in all the science of design and form.”

“Oh, I *do* so wish I could do it,” exclaimed Lady Watchikaula. “I used to draw when I was a girl, but I neglected it dreadfully after I married. Go on, Mr. Harris.”

“Well, to return to the five pictures of 1864. The largest was ‘Merlin and Nimue.’* The story is that Merlin, the enchanter, has fallen in love with Nimue, the fairy Lady of the Lake, and ‘he is assotted and doats on her.’ But she ‘cannot abide him because he is a devil’s son,’ and for other reasons. He continually pursues her and importunes her, but she is ‘passing weary of him.’ And it comes to pass that one day he shows her a great enchantment, how by a spell a man might be compelled to go under a certain stone, which would lift itself up, and close down on him for ever. And she reads the spell and annihilates Merlin.

“In the picture Nimue is pale and haughty. Her light eyes slant back at Merlin with sinister glances.

* This picture is now at the South Kensington Museum.

The hair is parted on her forehead, and frames her face with its hay-coloured masses. She wears a strait gown of red, and a great cloak of golden yellow, lined with scarlet.

“In her white hands she holds the book, from which she reads the curse with awful curved lips that scarcely part.

“Above is a whitish sky, flecked with yellowish clouds. Against it is the harsh, deep blue line of rugged hills, and in front of the hills the autumn trees rise round the dark pool or tank which duly reflects the landscape, and shows in the middle distance its ripples and its reeds.

“The spell is working for the gravestone has lifted itself up, and shows a faint, bluish light beneath it. Inside hang two keys, and an adder crawls there. Merlin is drawn forward, and has little power of resistance. One hand presses his beating heart, the other clutches his drapery with a gesture of despair. His dark face is full of mystery. A little dog drags at his wine-coloured robe, and vainly tries to prevent his master’s destruction. But the weary Nimue is inexorable.

“I was greatly impressed by this picture when I was only a student, but when I saw it three or four years ago in the collection of Mr. Leathart, at Gateshead, I found it so beautiful that I almost lost command of myself. The subject and the dramatic treatment of it are fine, but the greatest virtue of the picture lies in its overwhelmingly lovely colour. Have I tired you out?”

“No; at least—”

“Then I will go on. There was another water-colour picture there which I loved and still love even better than ‘Merlin and Nimue.’ It is called ‘Green Summer’ (the artist afterwards repainted it in oils on a much larger scale).

“It is of seven girls sitting in a flowery meadow. They are all dressed in green gowns, except one in black, who is a little attendant, and reads a story to them out of a book. All round them is the green summer, and they themselves are the flower and quintessence of it. Their faces glow in the warmth of it as Giorgione made faces glow. The long grass where they sit has its flowers and its summery globes of dandelion seed. Not far behind them there is still water reflecting the depths of a wood. A flight of birds shows half dark and half light against it. Above the trees is a nearly white sky.

“The picture has the effect of being all green, but it is cunningly diversified by a red sleeve here and there or a wreath of forget-me-nots. One of the damsels has a lamb. They sit in a circle, half dreaming and half listening. It is just summer, summer, summer!

“On the opposite side of the room hung a picture called ‘Astrologia.’ She is in profile; her face is bent down, and her searching grey eyes gaze steadfastly into the crystal globe which she holds close to them with both her hands. It is a red picture, and it haunted me for years, and haunts me still.

“To this period belongs a picture of Queen Morgan le Fay, the wicked sister of King Arthur.

“Surely nothing weirder was ever imagined than this tall swift woman who moves bent on evil through the dark landscape. Her gaunt face is dim, like a ghost’s face; under her left arm she carries a vessel full of vipers; with her right hand she raises to her mouth a poisonous herb. Her dusky hair is wreathed with serpents. The colour of this picture is like Tintoretto’s finest work. Her robe is dull pink, with a cloak of dull azure, and a scarf of golden brown.

“By the way I am quite tired of hearing people complain that Burne Jones paints more or less the same face again and again. Of course he does, and did not Raphael, Perugino, Tintoretto, and Michael Angelo do so also?

“He naturally felt drawn to paint sorceresses. Twice he painted the cruel ‘Sidonia von Bork’ (avoid her history), delighting in laboriously investing her with a gorgeous gown covered with a snake-pattern, which was suggested to him by a picture at Hampton Court. She is in a dire passion and vents it by tearing at her necklace and shooting furious looks at her intended mother-in-law. And once, as we all know, he painted ‘The Wine of Circe.’ No one who has seen this picture can by any possibility ever forget the beautiful woman in her golden robes, moving as stealthily as the black panthers which attend her on her malevolent errand. She crouches as she drops the dark fluid from her philtre into the wine. She

crouches low, lest some Greek catch sight of her from the white sailed ships which lie in the harbour. The line of her face is clear cut and perfect, grand in its cunning. But I shall weary you with my raptures, and I will not describe 'The Merciful Knight,' though I love him, and the bed of marigolds which shine beneath the crucifix, and the glade by which his forgiven enemy departs.

"Nor will I linger over Mr. Coltart's 'Annunciation,' where the tenderest, sweetest, purest, most lamb-like young Virgin kneels by her bedside, and receives with praying hands uplifted the message of the angel. Her little shoes of blue lie beside her, and she has on her night-gown. The scarlet and crimson bed recalls the bed of Carpaccio's 'St. Ursula' at Venice. She is in a ray of sunlight. It is called 'The flower of God.' An almond tree flowers outside."

"I wonder if these water-colours will fade, Mr. Harris?" said Lady Watchikaula, who had outslept her sleepiness by several pleasant little naps, and was now playing at "Pigs in clover," so as not to waste her time while she listened. "I painted a picture of moss-roses when I was at school, and all the red has turned to a disagreeable inky colour. I was dreadfully vexed, for it was considered a great success, and now Selina wont even let it hang in the breakfast room."

"I fear you must have used crimson lake when you painted your moss roses, Lady Watchikaula. That soon begins to change, and so do several other colours.

But if water-colours are painted with proper pigments, and taken care of, I think they retain their freshness and beauty longer than oil paintings. I am surprised to see how soon certain oil pictures become blackish and stale, though, on the other hand, many of them improve with age. We now have a Parliamentary Blue Book about the permanence of water colours. But, Lady Watchikaula, I thought you could'nt listen unless you shut your eye?"

"Oh, playing at Pigs in clover does just as well. I wonder, Mr. Harris, if you would ever spare half-an-hour and just step round to Baker Street and touch up my moss roses with some colour that won't fade? I do so wish you would—if it isn't asking too much, and I shall ask you to accept a copy of the little memoir of my mother, which I compiled, and you will see your own charming book on my table."

Mr. Harris had dabbled in authorship a little, and had produced a novel which had not been very successful, so he was accessible to flattery regarding it. He politely said he would come and touch up the roses with madder carmine, and added, "I think you spoil me, Lady Kaula."

"No indeed," said the lady, "but (thoughtfully) I daresay one *does* get spoilt without knowing it, doesn't one?"

This was so difficult a question to reply to that Mr. Harris ignored it, and only glanced at Lady Mount Temple for permission to continue, for he probably felt that he had talked too much. But like all people

who effect a good deal, Lady Mount Temple was never hurried or in a fidget, but gave an unreluctant and undivided attention to the matter in hand. She was really interested in what he had said, and often helped him by some murmured word of sympathy. And now she asked him to tell them as much as he possibly could.

“Of course I cannot tell you about all his water-colours, or even about all that I have seen,” said he. For, thank God, there are many.

“The picture which perhaps is most perfect in the technique which resembles painting in oils is the ‘Love in Ruins.’ When I saw it at Manchester two years ago, I was for a long time unable to make up my mind whether it was an oil painting or not.

“I know nothing finer than the steadfast out-gazing face of the woman. ‘Love never faileth’ even if ruins are all round it. Her blue drapery is as fine as the blue drapery of the Madonna in Titian’s ‘Assumption’ at Venice. The architecture is extremely beautiful, especially the little pink balcony which repeats the colour of the wild roses, which roses have never as far as I know been duly painted by any one else.

“I think you saw the vision of St. Francis which he sent to Father Damien at Molokai?

“It is painted with umber and with real gold, so that its lights change and change as you look at it from different points. St. Francis kneels in front, and as he gazes, with his rapt but pain-stricken face,

at the winged vision of our Lord, he receives the stigmata in hands and feet.

“I will only describe three more pictures to you, and then I will really and truly end. You have all been so patient.

“Mr. Street has the picture of ‘The Martyrdom of St. Dorothea. She was a Christian, and as she was going to martyrdom one snowy wintry day, her Pagan lover, Theophilus, asked her in mockery to send him some flowers and fruit from the place she was going to.

“After her execution he returned home, and just inside his door an angel met him with apples and roses from Dorothea. He believed and became a Christian martyr himself, and so did her two sisters.

“A great deal of the centre of the picture is occupied with the bare courtyard, which is paved with little rounded pebbles. Against it stands up in front a heathenish statue in bronze of the great god Pan, and this is the first thing that catches the eye. We look next at the profiles of Dorothea’s two fair sisters, who are quite in the foreground, and are dressed, one in red, and the other in delicate purple, spotted with white. They are filling their jars with water from a reservoir, where they have just broken the ice, and they are both looking up at the bearers who are carrying the body of Dorothea to its tomb. They take it past the statue of Venus, whom the martyr had refused to worship. The executioner still stands by the block, and behind it are the gay canopies

where ladies and gentlemen have been viewing the spectacle.

"The trees are leafless against the winter sky, and a light snow has fallen on everything.

"Theophilus is in the left-hand corner of the foreground, and he wears a student's red gown, and has a book under his arm.

"He has gone up his doorstep, and is looking back as the two girls are looking at the sad little procession.

"In a moment he will turn round to go into his house, and will see a lovely little angel in pink straight from heaven, who carries a basket that contains three red apples and three red roses from Dorothea."

"You make us see it all so vividly, Mr. Harris," said Lady Watchikaula. "Some of us have been *poring over* his large oil pictures lately, and so it is easy for us to imagine these that you are telling us about. Do you remember, Selina, that almost the last thing your dear Grandmamma went to see was the Burne Jones Gallery in Bond Street? How she enjoyed 'The Dream of Pilate's Wife,' and especially 'The Vale of Tears!'"

"Are you not thinking of the pictures by Doré, Lady Watchikaula? said Mr. Harris. They are in Bond Street, at the Doré Gallery."

"No, I am quite sure that the pictures *I mean* are by Burne Jones," said the lady in rather a vexed tone. "Quite sure. And they are considered his finest works."

Mr. Harris was silent for half a minute, and then continued. "A man that I know possesses a triptych which Burne Jones painted 27 years ago for Mr. Edward Dalzell, and I do not know any piece of work that is more spontaneous and delightful.

"The upper part of the first picture shows us the Virgin in white standing by a well. She involuntarily holds her hands to her face, for she is trembling and almost scared by the appearance of the angel. It is sunshine and spring time, and the fruit trees and the red anemones are in blossom.

"Steps lead us down from this scene to another, where we see the Virgin again, but no longer slight and girlish. She has grown full of dignity and quiet gravity. She is almost completely draped in blue, and stands very upright on the little bridge which leads to St. Elizabeth's portico. Elizabeth has come out to greet her. Her hands are clasped and her old figure is slightly bent as she listens.

"In the middle picture it is Christmas time. Christ is born and the mysteries of the manger are disclosed to us. Down upon it the Star blazes. And in front of it St. Joseph has lighted a wood fire which burns upwards. The babe lies at rest, and his mother kneels in adoration before him. The cows are not turned out. We can just see their noses in the darkness. At the door of the manger are two kindly women gossiping about the event. The snow is shovelled up outside, and icicles hang from the roof, which is covered with snow. Two angels are decorating it with holly.

“In the left hand corner at the top, the shepherds, half frightened and half delighted, are listening to the song of choirs of angels, who have brought an open heaven with them. The trees and the meadows are frosty.

“In the other corner we see the three kings, who have come across a sapphire sea, with a deep star-lit sky above their heads. We see the white sail of their yacht, which lies safely at anchor. Their robes are rich, and in their hands they bear the crowns which they are going to cast down at the feet of the babe. The last part of the picture shows the flight into Egypt. The stars are studding the sky, and lights gleam through the windows in the walls of Jerusalem. Through its gates come battalions of Herod’s soldiers—horsemen and footmen, with spears and lances. They are seeking the child to destroy him, but they will never find him, for in front we see the Holy Family guided by an angel, who takes them through paths where the soldiers will not come. He and St. Joseph both lead the gentle ass which is ridden by the Virgin. Nothing could be lovelier than her face and the tenderness with which she holds the child so close to her.

“And now I will end by describing to you the ‘Chant d’Amour,’ which belongs to one of the best and most gracious gentlemen in the world—Mr. Martin Brimmer, of Boston, U.S.A.

“Louisa, Lady Ashburton has a copy of it. It was exhibited first in 1866, I think, and the artist has since repainted it in oils on a much larger scale.

“But there is always a charm of its own about the first essay, and for my part I think this water-colour is perhaps the most beautiful picture that has been painted in my time. •

“Underneath it are inscribed the words:—

‘*Helas ! je sais un Chant d’Amour,
Triste ou gai tour a tour.*’

“It contains three figures. A girl kneels at a little organ in an old garden, and sings the song to her knight, who sits beside her on the ground and gazes up at her. Eros, with scarlet robe and azure wings, has descended from heaven, and, blowing the bellows of the organ, supplies breath for the music. His eyes are blindfolded. Small red flames rise from the ground around him, and in front are flowers, such as only Burne Jones can paint. Tulips, yellow, red and white, and striped with purple, and plenty of wall flowers. Behind the lovers are deep green meadows with sheep, and then a sheet of dark water, and then a grey town with houses and churches, and belfries and palaces. The lights are red in the windows, for twilight is beginning.

“The knight has coal black hair and a noble bronzed face; his tunic is the colour of mulberries, and his armour, well worn, shines with subdued splendour. King Arthur is reigning.

“But how shall we speak of the girl? I may tell you that her gown is ivory white, with warm tones about it, and her hands strike the keys firmly and

wisely, and that the breeze plays lovingly with her auburn hair. But, alas, I can never make you see the beauty of her sweet fair face, flushed no more than a white rose is flushed, or of her steady grey eyes and her exquisite parted lips as she sings the 'Chant d'Amour.'"

As it was getting late the little company now rose, and all of them thanked Mr. Harris for his discourse. Then they took their candles and went to bed.



A STORY OF STINGINESS.

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I AM an old lady, long past sixty, and I am willing to confess a fault of mine, because I think it may make somebody else think, and avoid it. If I were to put my name, I could not bring myself to tell you. But my besetting sin is *stinginess*.

I think I have always been anxious to help others in little ways, and I know that I am a child of God. But it has generally been a pain to me to give things away, especially money.

For a long time I thought I was a generous person, or at any rate, that I should be very generous if my means had not been straitened. I often used to tell our Vicar how liberal I should be if I were rich, and how it pained me not to be able to give when there was so much need.

I remember one day he came and called on me, and told me the following story, which I think he said he knew to be true.

A Curate's wife was one day visited in her little lodgings by one of the Baring family. He was a distant connection of hers, and after a short talk he said to her, "You have two pretty vases on your mantel-piece."

"Yes," she said, "They were left me by my old aunt."

"If you do not specially want to keep them," he said, "I will give you £500 for them."

"You must be joking," she replied, "they cannot be worth more than £2 or £3."

"Well, I will give you a cheque for £500, if you like to sell them," said the gentleman.

"Of course I should be very happy, if I did not think I was cheating you," said the lady. "It would make all the difference to us, for, as you know, we are poor."

So he gave her the cheque for £500, and took away the vases.

Three months later he happened to call on Lord R——, a great collector of china, and he said, "I have seen a pair of Rose du Barri vases, which are better than yours."

"That is impossible," said Lord R——.

"It is a fact, however, and you can come and see them at my house, if you will."

When he saw them, the nobleman said, "It is true, they *are* better than mine, and *I must have them.*"

"I shall want £3,000 for them," said the possessor, "and I will not take less."

And the nobleman paid him the money there and then.

Then Mr. Baring called on the Curate's wife. And she immediately said, "I know what you are come for; you are come to ask for that cheque back, and I cannot give it you, for we have already spent £40 of it in furniture."

“Never mind,” said the gentleman, “I will give you a cheque for the balance.” And he paid her £2,000.

I was charmed with the story, and, without thinking, I said, “How delightful! Now that is just what I should have done, only I do think I should have added the three months’ interest.”

When I said this I saw a slight smile on the Vicar’s face which I did not quite like, and after a pause he said, “You have such generous impulses, Miss Trevor. I wonder if you could find an old gown for poor Mary James. She could get work if she had not such shockingly bad clothes.”

“I certainly will look, dear Vicar, and will do it if I can,” I replied cautiously.

And when he was gone I went up to my bedroom and had a long hunt, but everything was too good for giving away. I felt quite sorry, for I should have really liked to help the poor woman, but my second best serge gown was, unfortunately, not half worn out, and I did not think my merino was suitable for such a poor woman. I had one old gown, but I always used that for doing things in the house in the early morning, and if I had given that away, I must have used my serge gown instead.

I rather hesitated about a cloak which I had had for some years, but I felt that I should really need it for rough weather in the coming winter, when my new one would be spoilt if I used it much in the rain.

So I wrote a little note to the Vicar, and in order to save postage I took it myself to the Vicarage. As I came back I slipped on a piece of orange peel, which some careless boy had left on the pavement.

It was a bad fall, and I quite lost consciousness. It turned out that I had broken my leg in two places, and had bruised myself badly. It took me a long time—several months—to get well, and the Spring had come before I was able to be up and about. As I lay in bed, I thought to myself, “Dear me, now I have not used those clothes after all, and I do believe I ought to have given them to Mary James. I wonder if it is too late now, and if she has got a place.”

As soon as I could get up, I went to my chest of drawers and pulled open the large bottom drawer. I was almost stifled, when I moved the things, with dust, and there flew out I should think more than a hundred moths. My heart sank within me as I took out the articles one after another. All of them were *completely spoilt*; not one of them was fit for giving away, even to poor Mary James.

I sat down and cried bitterly, partly with sorrow, and partly with mortification. It was so clear to me that God had punished my sin. I did not feel happy till I had written to the Vicar, and told him how ashamed of myself I felt, and asked him to pray that I might never do it any more, and I begged him if he ever saw the fault in me again, to tell me faithfully of it.

I now began really to fight, and watch, and pray against the sin, but I was astonished to find what a hold it had upon me.

One day I got a letter from a lawyer, telling me that an old relation had left me a fortune of £500 a year. You may guess how I felt, for till this time I had only had £100 a year.

You will scarcely believe it, but one of the first thoughts that came to my mind was—"Now I shall be able to save something. I will not increase my way of living, but I will try and put by. It will really be worth while now to save, for I shall be quite a rich woman, and, with a little economy, I can be very rich indeed."

Then I thought to myself, that I would give my old servant Martha a handsome black silk dress. How pleased she would be, and how surprised. On second thoughts, however, I decided that perhaps it would make her too fond of dress, and that after all, she would be able to wear it very seldom. Also that it would be a waste of money, and that a nice stuff dress would be a great deal more suitable, and much cheaper. So I gave her a stuff dress. But it struck me that she did not thank me for it in a very cheerful way.

It was very odd, but though I had been saying all my life that I should be generous if I were rich, yet I think now it was rather a burden and anxiety to me to feel that I might be generous. When it became known that I had come into this money, all

sorts of people called on me to ask for subscriptions. It really seemed as if they thought I was made of money.

I had always been accustomed to give very small subscriptions, and when the Vicar's wife asked me to subscribe to the schools, and I put down two half-crowns, I thought she would be very much pleased indeed. But instead of that her manner became colder than usual, and she soon got up and went away. "I wonder what she could possibly have expected," I said to myself afterwards. "People are certainly very unreasonable." And then I remembered what a large sum I had had to pay for legacy duty, and what an expense I had been put to for lawyers.

I did not feel happy, and the next morning when I was sitting mending some clothes, I was glad to see the Vicar come in, for his visits always cheered me.

"Dear Miss Trevor," he said to me, "do you remember that after your illness, you asked me to tell you if I thought you were in any danger of not being generous again? You are a dear old friend of mine, whom I truly value, and I do hope I am not risking your friendship, when I ask you to pray specially for guidance as to how much of your income you should set aside for giving away."

"Set aside for giving away," I said in rather a bewildered way.

"Yes," he replied. "The scriptural rule seems to be that we should not give away less than a tenth of

our income, but God has blessed a few people like yourself with a good deal more money than they require. You have no near relations who have a right to expect you to leave your money to them. How happy you would be, if you felt every week, and every month, that you were making the world better and happier, by using the talent that God has given you."

"And how much do you think I ought to give away, Vicar?" I said, rather stiffly, though I confess I was trembling.

"I do not know, dear Miss Trevor, but I believe that our Lord Himself will teach you this by His Spirit. I think I should give away half of my income, if I were you, and I should keep an exact account of all that I gave. You will then feel yourself just a steward of money that has already been given to God, and I believe you will find great happiness in dispensing it. How many there are who will arise and call you blessed. I believe you will do it. God bless you."

He shook hands with me, and the tears stood in his eyes, as well as mine. I knelt down and asked the Lord, Who has given me so much, and Who had suffered so much for me, to guide me in the matter. I will not tell you what I decided to do.

Stinginess is still a fault of mine, but a great deal of sunshine has come into my life. I do not wear such old clothes as I used to wear, for I give them away before they are worn out, and I do not give any more five shilling subscriptions.

WHOSE SHALL HE BE?

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SOME people met together at a tea-meeting in a Mission Hall the other day, and as they talked one to another it so happened that seven different people told the same story in seven different ways.

“I have been wonderfully blessed here,” said the evangelist. “Large numbers of souls have been brought in during the few days I have been preaching here. Last Tuesday there was a most interesting case of a young man—a drunkard—who was completely broken down. I was preaching my address on the ‘Prodigal Son,’ and the words went right home, and he was converted then and there, before he left the hall. His name is Samuel Jones. I should like you to see him and talk to him.”

“I am so thankful,” said a gentleman to his wife, “that I was the means of this hall being built. Humanly speaking, it would never have been done if I had not given the money for it. What a blessing it is to get the Gospel brought home so faithfully and continually! It does cheer me to think that I am the instrument of it all. I have just been hearing of one such delightful case—a young man named Samuel Jones, a drunkard, who was brought in,

actually from a public-house, and was converted there in the hall at the after-meeting. It ought to humble me deeply in the midst of my rejoicings at having been so used."

"My prayers have been answered at last for my poor grandson," said a dear old woman. "How many years have I cried to God for Samuel's soul! And how often have I been discouraged, and have almost been ready to give up praying for him when he went back again and again to that cursed drink. He was a dear lad always, and now I believe he is a true Christian. Thank God that he gave me grace to go on praying, else that boy's soul might have been lost for ever."

"If you want to get at the real roughs you must go and find them out," said one of the workers to a visitor. "You can't expect them to come in and hear the Gospel unless you go down into their dens and take them by the hand and bring them in. But it is a glorious work. I had such a battle with a young fellow outside a public-house the other day, before I could get him to come. He had promised me two or three times before, but had always been laughed out of it by his mates. But at last he turned to another man, who was also a little touched, and said, 'Well, Bill, I'll go if you will;' and Bill said, 'Well, I'll go if Jim will,' and then I got them by the arm and dragged them along, poor fellows, and they came into the hall looking very sheepish. But, thank God, two of the three were, I believe and trust, converted.

One of them—Samuel Jones his name was—I think I can speak confidently of. If people only knew the joy of winning a soul in that way they would work harder.”

“I do feel rather overdone and needing rest,” said the superintendent of the work, “but I cannot bear to go away while we are being blessed so markedly. I little thought when I got this place built and set the work going what hundreds of spiritual children the Lord was going to give me. I call them all mine, you see, and love them just as much as if they were my children after the flesh. Did you notice that fine young fellow sitting in the front bench? His name is Samuel Jones, and he is one of my youngest born. A week ago he was sunk in vice and drunkenness. ‘Blessed is the man that hath his quiver full of them.’”

“I had such a splendid case at the after-meeting last Tuesday,” said a young worker. “I had noticed a poor fellow during the address who was evidently new to this sort of thing. I felt sure the Lord would give me a word for him, and so I got round to the door before the end of the meeting, and just as he was slipping out, I got hold of him, and made him sit down quietly with me in a corner. It was so interesting. He had had Christian parents, but he had fallen away into drink and bad company, and had got utterly sunk. It seemed quite a new light to him that there was hope for him as he was then—that Christ loved him *then* and had died for his sins.

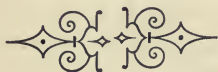
He quite broke down when I told him this, and cried out to God to have mercy on him, and I believe he was really won before he left the hall. His name was Samuel Jones. I couldn't help singing for joy as I went home. How unworthy I am to have such jewels in my crown."

"The great want in a work like this," said a lady, "is that the cases are not followed up. I fear it too often happens that people come in and hear the Gospel, and receive it with joy, and yet have no root in themselves, and so they fall away directly they are exposed to temptation and have nobody to help them. There was a case last week of a young man, named Samuel Jones, who was brought in here, and appeared to be—and perhaps was—truly converted; at any rate, he went away rejoicing. But I found, when I went my visiting rounds, three days after, that he had broken out again that very morning—poor fellow!—and was drinking at that moment. My heart did sink within me, for I had such good hope of him. However, I asked the Lord for strength, and went right after him into the public-house. There he was, sitting in the taproom with two or three others, drinking, and looking very miserable. I went up to the publican and said, 'Will you let me stay a few minutes? I want to speak to Samuel Jones.' He gave a sort of sulky permission, but it was quite enough for me. So I went in and sat down by the poor fellow, and took him by the hand, and poured out my heart to him, and he wept like

a child. And the end of it was that he came away with me, and I got him work at a distance from his old companions, and he is living with some Christian people who will help him on heavenward. What a blessing it was I found him ! Such jewels for one's crown are worth hunting for, are they not ? ”

Reader, you have read my seven stories, and I do not think they need much moral.

I do not think it is a good thing to be claiming souls as jewels and spiritual children. I think it gets us into a mess, and, after all, it will not make any difference in the number of jewels we have in our crowns whether we claim them on earth or not. It is better to rejoice chiefly, that they are jewels in the crown of our Lord. I daresay that fifty people have generally had a hand in each soul's salvation.



EMMA AND OTHERS,

BY C. M. C.

(The following Church Army Sketches—of course absolutely true—are so vivid that I have induced Mrs. Cholmeley to let me print them. Emma and others need no introduction. They are just “poor people,” cared for by God. E. C.).

—————: o :—————

ENTER Emma, on a sunny morning last July, decorated with a brilliant scarlet necktie, very cheerful and full of news, though her greeting was “Yes, it’s me—wears in well-doin’.”

After enjoying a leisurely breakfast, she said, reproachfully: “You’ve never said one word about my millinery.” “Dear me, Emma, do you mean your Coronation hat?” “Yes, I do mean my Coronation hat, that’s it! *Could* I be so unfeelin’ to the King, poor gentleman, as to wear my Coronation ’at when he couldn’t be crowned? No, indeed, I’ve too great a regard for him to do any such thing—*onfeeling* I calls it. So, you see, I took the scarlet off the ’at, and put on this brown ribbin (*neat*, ain’t it?), and the scarlet (it’s *good*, that is—real silk) I wears round my neck (robbin’ Peter to pay Paul, as you may say). When ’e’s crowned, I’ll put it back on the ’at, but *not before*. It’s a good report of the King this mornin’, I see on them big posters—been out he ’as.

Them butlers and coachmen what takes invalid gentlemen out in chairs 'as a bin takin' 'im out, and 'e's goin' in the country soon, same as me. But he ain't goin' fruit-pickin'—poor dear, 'e ain't got the strength to stoop for it, not for *strawberry* pickin', 'e ain't—well, not at present, any'ow. I wish he 'ad; but them doctors 'as bin too many for 'im—I know all about it, through my operation leg. It's the times we lives in does it, and the speriments them doctors try."

A dull September day. Enter Emma, rather shy, and not sure of her reception.

"Well, my dear Mrs. Cholmeley, here's your prodigal lamb returned. I'm goin' to tell you the truth—it's better than a parcel of lies, anyhow—the fact is, I've bin *pinched*. Now, don't look so sorry, and I'll tell you about it. Give me Lewes—though I don't deny I was prejudiced, for I'd heard things against it; but I can tell you it's a deal better than 'Olloway; the matron 'as a 'eart and knows a good worker when she sees one. When I gets out of 'Black Maria' (at Lewes Gaol, you know), I says to the warder: 'It's the poor as keeps *you* so neat and clean; the rich can pay fines, and ain't a bit of good to all of you.' 'Oh!' he says, 'you're a sharp one.' 'Yes,' I says, 'I was always noted for brains.' The officers at Lewes was a good sort; but the gru'l was cru'l—if you put yer spoon in, it 'ud sink down and you'd never find it again. But after the first week, the soup ain't bad—the only fault is there ain't enough

of it. No, I never see the Chaplain. There's a visiting lady—she says: 'I'm sure you have not always been in this position, my poor woman; you have seen better days.' 'Yes,' I says, 'I was a lady by birth, but have sunk through no fault of my own.' (Well, it wasn't *all* my fault, anyhow, though some of it may have been). 'And have you no home, or friends?' 'No,' I says, 'not a friend in the world.' My dear Mrs. Cholmeley, I was thinking all the time of you, and saying to myself, inwardly: 'Thank God, I've got *one* dear friend!' But I wasn't going to tell her so, and have her hurtin' your feelins by writing to tell you she seen me in such a place as that. 'No,' I says to myself, 'I'll tell Mrs. Cholmeley myself, *she* shan't.' So I says over again (seeing her look at me so earnest): 'Not a friend in the wide world.' 'Poor thing,' she says, 'and how do you support yourself?' 'Well,' I says, 'principally by honesty and hard work.' (I'm very honest, you know—you said so yourself when I left Gratton Road: 'honest, and a good washer.') 'And have you been confirmed?' she says. 'Yes,' I says (for I was mixing up baptism with confirmation, but of course I've not been confirmed; but by the time I'd thought of it, the conversation had drifted off, and besides, you see, I'm quite ready and willin' to be confirmed—it's you that ain't willin' to do it, as I've often told you before—and, of course, I can't help that). But, however, when we left, the matron gave me 1s., and they sent us all back where we come from. I nearly got

out at Brighton, for I like Brighton, and thought I might get some work ; but it was nigh on two months since I see you, and I wanted to see you. Now I come to the sad part :—There was a woman in the train says, just as we got out : ‘Come in the pub and have ’arf-a-pint. it’ll do you good.’ ‘No,’ I says, ‘I don’t want to, though I don’t deny I feels a cravin !’”

Emma here broke off suddenly, and gazed at me with delight, clapping her hands ecstatically. Then she resumed :—“I KNEW you’d look just like that—you’ve got it so deeply rooted in you, the ’atred to them ’arf-pints. But you needn’t look like it—you can cheer right up, for I says to the woman : ‘It’s tea and bread-and-butter I has the craving for now,’ I says, and with that I stepped away from ’er and went to Lockhart’s and enjoyed myself.”

EMMA is away hop-picking just now, but a few days before she left she came to see me, and expressed great pleasure at finding me at home.

“I was that bad with the lumbagur last night,” she said, “that as soon as I had got myself up this morning, and ’ad my cup of tea, I says to myself, ‘I must go and see her, even if I don’t get anything at all out of her ; it’ll be a comfort to tell ’er about it, ’cause she’ll look sorry for me.’ There’s a *difference* in ladies ; I dunno what makes it I’m sure, but some of ’em looks at you so’s if they was only a-thinkin’, ‘Well, *what a Objick* to be sure !’ You’d

never think now that it'd make any matter to *me* what they said nor how they looked, but IT DO. I goes 'ome, and sets, and thinks, and talks to myself, as mis'erable as if — Oh! (with a sudden change of tone, and quite a merry twinkle) I feels as if I'd go off my nut, all becos my feelins was 'urt. Silly, ain't it? Now that just reminds me that it seems a pity I shouldn't never have been confirmed. Why shouldn't you confirm me now?"

"My dear Emma," I gasped, my breath quite knocked out of me, "*I* can't confirm you: it takes a Bishop to confirm you. Don't you *know* it does?"

"Oh, well (rather huffily), I may be very ignorant, but as you *baptized* me you know——"

"I *didn't*, Emma (quite indignantly). What are you talking about?"

"Well, you got me done—it's all the same thing. Don't you think you'd better see me through now you've started on the job? It seems a pity to stop half-way. Now, I'll tell you what—when I comes back from the 'op-picking you shall explain to me as much as ever you like, and I'll sing 'ymns to you, and then I'll be confirmed, and so we'll 'kill two birds with one bush.'"

EMMA looked so disconsolate and discouraged last Saturday. I felt sure there was something amiss. She had on a rather smart cape, trimmed round with black beads, but it had none of that quaint, well-set-up air which generally characterises even her pinned-

up-the-front rough jacket, and the skirt which is still waiting for my funeral.

“I told your servant that I’d bin away for a rest,” she said, in a very low whisper, “but I’ve got *bad* news, ’eart breaking news—I’ve been put away for *singing*, and I’ve just come straight from ’Olloway. What do you think of that? Ain’t it awful? The magistrate asked the pleeceman if there was anything else against me, and he said, ‘She’s quite a stranger to me.’ And then the magistrate said, ‘*I’ve* often heard her sing,’ he said, ‘but we must call it begging.’ *Think of that*, my dear Mrs. Cholmeley! Why, I wouldn’t beg not for anything. And the magistrate ’ad ’eard me! And he **MUST** have thought it was beautiful singing, and yet he had the ’eart to put me away. I was only exercising God’s gift what He gave me, and I’m sure He watched over me, or else the ladies wouldn’t shower the half-pennies down from their winders like they do, nor this cape the little girl said ’er ma had kept for me this ever-so-long. I’ve bin thinkin’ it all over. I know I can’t sing again yet, not till I’ve got over the rekileckshun of that *gruel* (ugh!), but you might put me in a Church Army Home. **YES!**” (suddenly brightening into eagerness as I lent a willing ear) “I’D do up their work for ’em. That’s what we’ll do, the very thing.”

“Stop, stop! Emma, *we* can’t settle it up in that hurry. I will ask Miss Prentice, but the Homes may be all full; and then you know you would have to be a *Strict Teetotaller*, and never say one wry word

to one single Nurse or woman in the Home, however aggravating you thought them."

"My dear Mrs. Cholmeley" (voice and air quite brisk and cheerful again), "I'll PROMISE you both of that. Why, I'll tie my tongue in a knot to oblige you, because I wouldn't 'urt your feelins for the world."

And into the Home she went!

"THAT dress is wearing out, Emma; the hopping has been too much for it; it looks grey instead of black."

"Oh, no, ma'am, *it's lovely.*"

"Well, you don't take it into any public houses, I hope."

"OH, NO (extreme emphasis). Do you think I'd take this dress in there—the dress that I'm going to bury you in? No, indeed, my dear Mrs. Cholmeley, I wouldn't do such a thing. Is Mrs. Hilary still alive?"

"Oh, yes, Emma, thank God. Why should she not be?"

"Dear me, now, I thought she must be dead, for I sung 'Beautiful Star in 'eaven so bright' so many times outside her 'ouse, and she's never come out. I sings according to the streets. When the people are at dinner I sing 'Beautiful Star'—that's a lovely song—'Star of the Twilight, Beautiful Star'—so cutting, goes 'ome to the very 'eart. In the grand streets like you live in (Nutford Place!) I sings 'What a Friend we have in Jesus' (you've heard me sing that), and I always finish with 'Abide with me.'"

“Yes; but my dear Emma, do you always remember that it is *our Lord* you are singing of, saying what a Friend He is, and asking Him to abide with you?”

Emma regarded me with a tender look of indulgent affection.

“Ah! yes. You’re so anxious about that always, ain’t you; and about me going to church, and all that? I don’t mind confessing to you that I have got a bit behindhand with my religion; but now I put it to you—mustn’t I earn something for my lodging and a cup of tea? I must earn an honest living, you know. I must work as well as pray. What’s the good of praying if I do nothing? God has given me a beautiful gift, I’ll allow, because you know I have a splendid voice. I sing like a nightingale—don’t I?—and says all the words so clear and plain. It’s *that* fetches the people. In the middling streets I sings ‘The Old Folks at Home.’ That touches ’em up—makes ’em think of the old country ’ome.”

“And what do you sing in the very poor streets?”

“‘Wait till the clouds roll by!’ or else ‘Cheer up, my own true love!’ My songs are all very *nice* songs, you know, and I sing them LOVELY. It takes a good singer to sing that ‘Own true love.’ Yes, some of the poor things sings like a mouse in a trap.”

Emma laughed quite merrily at her own wit, and then said, “I feel better now. That’s the first good laugh I’ve had to-day. It does you good for me to come and see you, don’t it? Well, now, I’ll come

again Sunday and sing you a little hymn, if you'll be at home. And I'll think about the sense of the hymn to oblige you, my dear Mrs. Cholmeley—I will, indeed.”—*Exit Emma.*

“NOW, Emma, this is a very nice skirt, so *don't pawn* it.”

“Ah!” (admiringly) “what a lot you do know to be sure, for a lidy.”

Emma on Religion.

SHE came to-day looking ill with a very bad cold, but with a very smart hat.

I said to her, “why, Emma, where did you get those bows, I never saw such fine ribbon in my life, all the colours of the rainbow.” Her eyes shone immediately, and she looked delighted. She then explained—one of the women 'ad a lot, so she says to me, “Look 'ere, you bein a Court Milliner might like some of these bits to put in your 'at.” So o' course I took the best, and there they are. Yes, I've got a shocking cold, it's through listening to that Matron, I told you 'ow she goes on. They gives us a cup o' tea first, and *you* know I'd run all over London for a cup o' tea, so I goes and a lot more, and then she sets and preaches. *Two hours* she went on, and first I set and wished you was there to talk 'er down. Oh, yes, my dear Mrs. Cholmeley, you DO talk religion sometimes, you can't deny you do. But

then it's short and sweet. But *she* keeps on and on, and besides I know quite as much about religion as she do. Now what are you looking enquiring about? You want me to tell you all about religion? Well, *I will*. You know about the country? I've often told you that when it's fine and the sun shines, I feel like singin' ymns, and I *do* sometimes, and if there's no ladies to throw you out a penny, at all events there's no copper (policeman) to stop you, and at them times I believes what all you say about God is true. Then in London, when I feel religious, I do say to God that I try 'ard to get a honest living, and I work and don't mind my poor leg, and I'm very contented, and—well, what are you looking enquiring about *now*? You say if you was me you should tell God the bad things you'd done, and the 'arf-pints and that, not all them good things. *I wouldn't* then, for I like to put the best face on, and if you don't speak good of yerself, who's a goin' to do it for yer? But, never mind about that now, I'm a goin' to tell you about the Matron. There she sets and talks, and there they sets (all them people), thinkin' where they shall get their 3d. for the night's lodging. *She* says you must trust God—that's true I allow, and God is good, but then *time is time*, and you ought to be doin' somethin with it better'n settin wonderin when she's goin to stop. Look at the waste of it! Why you might be gettin 2d. for scrubbin a door step, or you might even go and set in church, it'd be better than to set there while she's talkin; a deal quieter and not so distractin to the 'ead.

Emma before the Magistrate.

DOES the prisoner wish to say anything to the officer ?

“Yes, your worship, *I do*, he said I was drunk and used language. Now, young man, I wish to say to you that if this is the first lie you ever told, *I hope* it will be the last.”

After the Census in 1901.

“WHAT questions them gentlemen do ask. Why one says to me when he come to the lodgin 'ouse to git our names and ages, ‘Where was you born my good woman?’ I says to 'im—‘Well, really Sir, you must excuse me not bein able to tell you, for I was but a infant at the time.’”

ENTER Emma, looking tidier than usual, bedecked with a red, white, and blue bow (“Must make myself a bit smart,” she says), and a most smiling countenance.

“Well, now, my dear Mrs. Cholmeley, I am delighted to see you. I thought for sure I was never going to see you again. Well, if I'd been sure you was here, I'd have sung to you; it's a wonder, really, you didn't 'ear me sing ‘God save the Queen’ in the street outside. I was just goin' to, but it flashed in my mind, ‘See what a many birthdays I've had, and the Queen never come round to sing God save Emma, nor nothing of the kind, though no doubt she does

it for the rich, but not for the poor, nor for poor Emma, so why should I do it for 'er?"

"But, my dear Emma, what nonsense that is. I am sure the Queen wouldn't sing in the street, outside the house of the greatest lady in the land, a bit more than she would outside your house. She's so very kind and thoughtful to the poor; think of all the chocolate boxes she sent the soldiers, and how she goes to see people in hospitals when they are ill; besides, she is 81—she cannot go round singing now. You mustn't expect impossibilities, must you?"

"No, that's true; and I don't suppose" (confidentially) "that the Queen ever had such a voice as mine, neither. Why, there was a lady come out of 'er house when I was singing 'Beautiful Star,' up 'Ampstead way, only yesterday, and she says: 'Why, my poor woman, how well you sing, and what a fine voice you have.'"

"Yes, ma'am," I says, "no fault to find with my *voice*, but I've got no friends, nor nobody belonging to me." (No more I haven't, 'cause it's uo use mentioning you, for when you ain't in Africa you're in America, and though I'd tramp Van Demon's Land to find you, it ain't in reason to expect that everybody would do that, especially a lady that only wants a reference for honesty and industriousness).

"And do you prefer singing to work?" she says.

"No, ma'am," I says; "my 'eart's in the laundry" (it is, y' know), "and I'd stand at the washtub with anybody, and there ain't many can beat Emma at scrubbin."

“Will you scrub down some steps for me?” she says.

“That I will,” I says, “but I must be properly harnessed, you know.”

“So I went to the housekeeper and got a coarse apron and cleaned 'em down, and when she come to look she said they looked lovely; but I do feel my leg—this one that was bad so long in the infirmary” (here she stuck her left leg stiffly out, much swathed, evidently in bandages). “I says to my operation leg, ‘If you're good, and keeps quiet to-night, I'll give yer an egg and some toast, and a good *large* cup of tea to your breakfast to-morrer;’ that does it good, y' know, pore thing—gives it strength. Why, all the food I can get, that leg wants it all, the doctor told me so at the 'orspital. ‘If you don't want to be a cripple,’ he says, ‘you must give that leg good food.’”

“But no drink, Emma.”

“Well, he didn't say nothing about drink at all; and you've never asked me whether I've been to church.”

“Have you been to-day? It's Ascension Day—the right day to go.”

“Is it Ascension Day, reelly? And I never knew it. How ignorant I am. But there's my lodgin' money to be earned. What's the good of my sittin' in a church all the whole day long, trustin' in Providence to get the lodgin' money for me? I'd better by far run round and sing ‘God save the Queen’ to please the company.”

A disapproving look made her add hurriedly: "And besides, St. Giles' is a Low Church, and I never will go to them Low Churches. I likes 'igh Churches, where the music goes 'igh, right up in the roof, so as I can join in and help them lift the roof off. I can't sing them low 'ymns, 'Art thou weary?' and that. Why that 'ymn seems to ketch 'old of my bad leg and give it a pull downwards, 'stead of 'Crown Him' and them 'igh 'ymns. That's like the pair of wings you used to tell about."

"But, Emma——."

I was interrupted by a quaint deprecatory nod, and an imploring "Don't stop the clock, my dear Mrs. Cholmeley. You have told me before y' know that its doctrine and not 'ymns makes churches 'igh or low, but——."

I interrupted in my turn, "And I won't trouble you with any more explanations, dear. Let us only agree to serve and praise our Lord Who is so good, and Who loves us so much—high and low, rich and poor, one with another."

Emma's expression softened, and she said, very gently, "Does He love me, I wonder? I'm going into the country fruit-picking soon; and then, when it's fine, and the sun shines, and the trees and flowers look all green and pretty colours, then I sometimes think He does. Well" (with renewed vivacity) "I'll read that little book you've just give me, and now I'll go. I would sing 'God save the Queen,' but the people are at prayers in the church opposite, and

I might drown 'em. Good-bye! I don't want to lose you till I find you, so take care of yerself, do. In these Boers' times, it's dreadful; you never know what you may have next, so I'll come again soon, for I know it does you good to see me. Cheers you up like, don't it?"

Off she went, smiling, and limped briskly down the street.

THEY were a most respectable old couple. He was a costermonger and she made the rent of the house by "charing," and letting rooms, but misfortune had overtaken them. I found her alone in the First Floor Back, which was almost bare of furniture.

"You must excuse it, m'm," she said, "for I've sent the rest of my furniture to where that dead person lives, he died yesterday, but he's very honest, and his wife, poor thing, will see to it. You see, m'm, everything's against us. The man downstairs owes us £4 10s. and the other one owes two weeks at 5s. a week, and I've got behind. And my husband is ill and the road's up so's he can't stand in the gutter, or else he could have got a few heads of cel'ry and earned a few ha'pence, and then next door is empty and the Landlord he wants to make one job of the two houses, you see, m'm, and so he sent the Brokerman with an injectment notice. I thought I should have dropped, for I was just coming along the street with the loaf of bread in my hand

when I see the Brokerman going in front of me and he stopped at my door. That was Monday, and next Monday the Brokerman 'll come again and serve us another injectment. and *I am told* (I never had nothing to do with Brokermen nor such-like before, but I am told) that they'll stuff up the chimblies, and take out the winders, and p'rhaps have us off to prison for being on the premises.

“Oh, yes, m'm, we shall have to *go*. But I've lived in this house five-and-forty year. I buried my Mother out of the Front Parlour, and I buried my Father out of the Back Parlour, and I buried my oldest son (he was just 29) out of the Top Floor Back, and my sister was stopping with me and sleeping in the Top Floor Front, and I went to wake her in the morning, and there she lay dead in the bed; so you may guess I clings to the house. My husband 'll have to go the Infirmary, and I s'pose I must go to my niece's, but it don't answer, that mixing up families don't, and I wish I could get ever such a little room to ourselves. It do seem hard.”

I think a little bit of pink did come in after all, for I was able to say with entire conviction that it *did* seem hard; and then to tell her how the Vicar and the ladies she had worked for respected her and thought so much of her and her husband, and that when he came out of the Infirmary they would pay the rent of a room for a while and start him with stock. And then I think she was ready to

be reminded of her Divine Lord Who may be trusted to bring good out of our worst troubles, and of the Home in Paradise, where our living dear ones are, and whence no landlord will ever eject us. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

IT is one of the primary principles of Church Army work, that we do not give away money, it has to be earned, but we interpret "earning" in a wide sense.

Still, I fear even that wide sense does not, strictly speaking, justify me in the sixpences I make over "otherwhile," to an old Sussex friend of mine (you would doubtless call him a tramp) simply on account of the pleasure I take in his conversation. It is, I fear, impossible to give any idea of the rare quality of this conversation, because our old Sussex labourers have such amazingly eloquent gestures and tones that they convey great depths and delicate shades of meaning without using more than two or three of the 200 words allocated to them by Professor Max Muller.

One day my friend had brought his wife to see me, a little, thin, weasel-faced old woman, who duly walks six yards behind her husband, according to the strict etiquette of her class. We had been conversing on various subjects, and I had asked her some questions about Church-going and prayers. He never likes any question addressed to her except through himself. so he hurriedly replied for her :

“Yes mum; yes, she says her perayers, but she didn’t use when I married ’er, but I says to ’er, Amelier Blantynes, I says, you say your perayers, I says, or if yer don’t *I’ll knock yer down.*”

“You shouldn’t scold her so much, Mr. Blantynes, you should be kind to her, she doesn’t look well, and her hair is ever so much greyer than last time.”

“Ow, that ain’t it, mum; she understands me; it ain’t my scolding of ’er turns ’er hair gray. I was a-telling of ’er only last week. ‘Amelier,’ I says, ‘look at your hair,’ I says, ‘that’s all gone grey ’cause yon ’ont do as I tells yer and put on some of this yer Bear’s Grease on to it mornin’s. Bear’s Grease is what you oughter put on, Amelier.’ That what I tells ’er, mum, but, bless yer, she’s that obstinate, is my woife, she *will* keep on wettin’ ’er ’ed with this yer plain cold water. ‘You look at me,’ I says, ‘you don’t see *me* a-doin’ that; look at my ’air, I ain’t all turnin’ grey-’aired afore my time,’ I says. ‘Let that water alone,’ I says, ‘and use Bear’s Grease.’ But, there, you mought justswell talk to that ’ere post as talk to my woife; she’s the ’oodeneadedest ’ooman ever I see.”

There was a workman attending to the gas in the hall, whose gravity was completely upset by my old friend’s oration, illustrated as it was by the sphynxlike calm of the oodeneaded wife, standing inside on the mat, while her husband fulminated on the doorstep. His hand shook so that the gas lamp rang again. Old Blantynes looked at him gravely

and enquiringly, but made no remark; he did not consider it manners to enter into conversation with a man who was "tendin' to his bisness what e'd got to do." This brought him back to the thought of his own business.

"Whoy, she 'aven't got any sense at all, 'aven't my woife; see 'ow she goes on a-workin' for this 'ere Johnnie Whatsisname, sixpence a day 'e says 'e gives 'er—*sixpence a day* (in a voice of concentrated scorn) for doin' all that scrubbin'! I don't see none of them sixpences, I don't, ow, *no*. Eightpence a night I has to pay for our room—eightpence every night. I must airn that a sellin' a few ornges, or water-creeses, or theseyer laaces.

"'Ain't you got the money for the lodgin', 'Arry,' she says.

"'Money for the lodgin',' I says, 'where's all them sixpences,' I says (he then by an excellent grimace shows that there is no reply). Oaw, no! not a bit of it, them sixpences has all gone to 'er tay. 'I don't begritch you yer tay, Amelier,' I says, 'but you makes it too strong, you shovels it in too permiscus. It ain't good for yer,' I says, 'all that strong tay ain't, you look at it in the dish when it's stud a bit, and on the top there's all sorts o' colours come over like on the top of a pond that ain't been stirred; that's what makes yer inside ser weak, Amelier,' I says. Ow (with an indignant shrug) what's the use o' talkin', she's a 'ooman as ain't got no sense, so you sees, mum (coaxingly) what I wants is just a

shilling' or two to buy a stock of them whatisits, ornges I manes, I gits 'em at Mrs. Jones, yer know, up 'Ammersmith Broadway.

"Then I'd git the money to go down in the country, Sussex way, Arndel and Chichester (that's my native, yer know, mum, up Chichester ways is), and I might git down F'indon ways and see Mr. Whatisit—'Ampton, that's 'im, see if he'd got a bit of 'oein' 'e could gimme, 'e's been a gentlemen to me, so's poor Mr. Higgs, he's dead now, but I know'd 'im, and 'is father before 'im" (and so off into many and mazelike reminiscences not to be reproduced here).

"PLASE, ma'am I want to go to St. Leonards again," said four year old Freddie just now, "'cause then I shall see my sister Amy too, and I want my sister Amy."

Freddie's mother is a young widow working hard in service, and the Church Army Fresh Air Home was the only place we could find last summer where she could have her two little children together with her for one blissful fortnight's break in the long year of separation.

"Tell me what you did there, Freddie," I said, and the blue eyes looked fearlessly up, and the little square figure in its sailor suit, with the small hands thrust deep down in the pockets, stood gravely at my side as the child searched among his happy memories of eight months ago. "I didn't catched the little

crab, it ran too fast, but the other Fred caught one,—but I put shells in my pail, and stones;—and I dugged holes in the sand with my spade! And I slept in a cradle side of my mother's bed 'cause Amy slept in with mother,—and I had a nice cake on Sunday; one day I couldn't walk so far as the others, so I swunged in the garden, and I fell off and cut my head right open, it *was* a dang'rous swing, but Nurse bathed it and made it quite well again. I want to go again, and my sister Amy wants to come too;—next time I'm going to catched that little crab and some little fishes; I'm going to let them die first so as they shouldn't mind, and then take them out of the water with my spade and hold them in my hand. My sister Amy wants to go to Sunlennards too, it is a nice place."

Amy is a dear and loving child, and almost broke her mother's heart and her own a year ago by her piteous distress when the parting time came and she had to go to school, poor mite of four as she was then!

* * * *

"It's Jem and Maggie you see, Miss, that's the difficulty, because the doctor he says that after me having the double pewmonia the only chance is to go away. But there, wot's the good of talking because Maggie is that owdacious though she is but four years old and *will* do everything Jem does though he's five. They're fishing in the drain outside now and pretty quiet, but if I was to leave 'em I shouldn't

have a bit of peace through knowing they might be over the road and under them tram 'orses every minute of the day and nobody but their mother could stop 'em. It's through being with their grandmother, Mrs. Jakin, made 'em like it (though she's dead and gone now, poor dear) as was my husband's mother. But Bob, that's my husband, Miss, thinks such a lot of Maggie. He says to me, 'You must take 'em with you,' 'e says. 'What with Jem being such a owdacious young limb a-drorin' his sister along with 'im, why' my husband says to me, 'you must go to the Church Army which they tell me is not afraid of mixing up mothers and their children in one 'ome and arsk 'em from me to name their terms and I will meet 'em if its anyways possible.' Yes, Miss, Bob and me 'ave saved 15/- towards it and 'e will do more, but times is 'ard and in course while we're away 'e must *live*."

* * * *

"Could you possibly take Mrs. Macdonald and her baby, Miss Prentice," said our Dispensary Nurse last week. "Her husband is at the front, and though she gets a little money regularly, she is so anxious over the long clothes baby that I think it would be everything for her to have a real change. She has a conviction on her mind that either he will die or baby will die before his return, she just needs cheerful society and to be taken out of herself and to be reminded of the Heavenly care. She is a good woman, but is getting morbid, and its such a sweet babe, you would love it, I am sure."

* * * *

“Now, Prissy, when you gets to St. Leonards you’ll mind little Willy, and Lucy will mind Ethel, and Jackie must be a good boy and mind you, Prissy, for you see mother must stop and mind father for it’s been a bad accident; perhaps by-and-by the District Lady will get him a Convalescent Letter and mother must try and clean the rooms against you all come back. The District Lady said she should think it was better for mothers not to go into the country with their children (tiresome little bothers, she says), but to get a bit of rest and pleasure; but I don’t know what sort of mothers those was, I’m sure I always find it a pleasure to be with my children, it ain’t much pleasure I gets when they’re away, though there’s no denying but that when there’s illness in the house it’s bad for the children too, so I’m glad you’re going, for I know Nurse will take the best of cares of you; and father he says the little uns wouldn’t never live through another summer here ’thout a breath of fresh air, father ’e says it’s through him and his family being country people so fur back, the children sort of pines and can’t fetch their breath proper ’ere in Lisson Grove, though ’e says that’s an autocratic sounding name and no doubt *was* a Grove eventually.”

* * * *

The women do their very best to save up towards the expense of their holiday. By the end of February some twenty mothers had already begun to pay

in, laying up for a sunshiny instead of a rainy day. Last year when we reckoned up our receipts we found they had just paid their fares and a little over, and their kind and better-off friends had paid for their keep. How much daily self-denial this saving up means.

Since our little Home was opened in June we have taken in 161 women and children who have enjoyed a delightful fortnight of rest and fresh air. Besides this we have also received for varying periods 24 of our own Mission Nurses and Sisters, who have greatly benefited by a stay in the Home. Many grateful letters came from the visitors.

“Dear Nurse,—Just a line to tell you we arrived home quite safe and feeling better—mother said we look much better for our holiday. Father and mother thanks you very much for taking care of us.”

“London seems so smoky after the beautiful air of St. Leonards. I must thank you for your kindness to me and my children, as I did not expect such a happy time—I saw Nurse E., and had such a grand account to give her of my holiday.”

“Dear Nurse,—I shall be looking forward of seeing you again soon, as I was very happy.”

“Dear Nurse,—I feel I must write these few lines to wish you a pleasant time and a nice rest, which I am sure will do you good, you must accept the same in this short note. I cannot wish you warm weather as we had the best of that, but do hope you will have it dry and fine, so that you will enjoy

your holiday, as you made ours such a pleasant one—it is only a duty to wish you the same.”

OUR Mothers' Meeting was over, and one of my old friends waited to speak to me, and this is what she said:—

“Oh, I did have a time of it on Saturday night, ma'am. My eldest son had been on the drink, and I was settin' up for him because he had lost his key. He came home at 2 o'clock, and *when* I opened the door he fetched me such a blow across the head, it sent me staggering against the wall, and when I screamed he said, 'I'll do for you,' and I ran to the doorway, and there—just dropped from Heaven—was two great stout policemen! They *must* have dropped from Heaven, for I had looked out the minute before my son came, and the street was clear. So my son rushed out after me, and one of them caught him by the collar at the back of his neck, and gave him such a shaking! Just then his father came downstairs, and 'You let him come in,' he says to them, and took and shut him in the settin' room.

“I was still lookin' out at the door, and my son wouldn't stop in the settin' room; he comes rushin' out and '*I'll do for her!*' he says again, and the policeman says, 'Will you, my man,' he says, 'then you'd best come along of me,' and with that they both grips his arm, one each side, and walks him off to the Station House, with me walkin' behind all the way,

crying, and when the door shut upon him my heart gave a great thump, and I thought I should have sunk into the pavement, for I kept thinking, 'Me to have taken all the trouble in rearing him, and for it to come to this.' But just then it flashed in my mind what a good thing it was I did set up for him, for if not I should have been in my nightgown, and I should have caught my death of cold, so perhaps it was all for the best."

MRS. FARRINGDON is as remarkable a talker as *Emma*, and I think our readers may be interested in some of her views.

The introductory scene is outside a "Home" (not C.A.), where I had been summoned by a peremptory wire: "*Come at once and fetch your patient away.*" She had discharged herself from the inside of the Home, but was walking about outside much "on the war-path," a tall, stout woman, with scarlet flowers in her bonnet, a scarlet tomato in one hand, and a large stone in the other, ready to hurl at a window by way of giving point to her very loud and obnoxious remarks.

I went up quietly behind and said how fortunate I was to have come across her, as I travelled down on purpose, and we might have missed—&c.

"My dear, she said affectionately, with an instantaneous change of voice and expression, "I'm truly delighted to see you, and as you say, it would have

been most unfortunate had we missed. I'll come back and take care of you up to town, for it isn't fit you should be travelling about alone. But there's one thing to consider, for it's wicked to waste, and I've just given a woman a shilling to buy some whisky. I'll just run and drink it up, it won't take a minute, and then we'll start. Do I hear you say, 'Never mind the whisky?' Now how can a religious lady, like you, say that, when 'Waste not, want not' is in the Bible. Now, could I have kept a Boarding House for fifteen years and made it answer on such principles as never mind wasting a shilling? 'Economy, my dears,' was my poor mother's instructions from the time I was able to run alone. You say you'll give me a better shilling's worth in London? Yes, very likely, but that won't be any economy, that's what I look at."

* * * *

"I can't drink the whisky and catch the train you say. Well, that's very likely too, for ever since I fell with my head on the curb, and that young doctor was so careless that he caught in my jugular vein with the bandages, I've found a difficulty in catching trains."

* * * *

"Do you say you don't keep *your* jugular vein at the back of your head, but we can discuss the subject as we walk along? That's where I blame you dear, you are not economical, and you don't understand logic; what difference does it make to me where

your jugular vein is, when mine was caught in once for all, and it's too late to extricate it.

“And another thing I blame you for, is you're so obstinate, for you see, you've walked me half-way to the station, just while I've been talking, and there's that woman waiting with the whisky, and she will say that I don't know manners and am a wasteful person.

“You say she may as well drink it all herself! But how bad for her. Fancy you with your principles wishing her to do it! Oh, you say you don't wish her to do it? Well, ain't that a self-deception to say so when you won't let me go back and see that she don't?”

* * * *

“My box you are asking about? Oh, that's at the railway station—yes, it's got my beautiful black satin gown in it that you always admire on me, but I've done with all that. Mr. Farrington don't care, so why should I?”

* * * *

“Close to the station now, are we? Very well, then, I shall just go back and drink that whisky. Well, I'll come and see you off first if you make such a point of it.”

* * * *

“Oh, the train is off is it, and me in the carriage? Well, that must have been because I didn't mean to come; we should never have caught it if I'd meant to. See that woman in the end compartment with a

lot of children? Let me ask her if they're all in a Band of Hope as they should be."

Here Mrs. Farrington began giving advice gratis in a loud voice to our fellow travellers by turns, so that I was naturally much relieved when we reached King's Cross. While I went to secure her box, which took some time, she went to the refreshment bar to advise the young lady there to be a total abstainer. Directly she caught sight of the porter, the box and me, she hurried towards us (her bonnet much on one side) and said, "This is a very pleasant meeting. Porter, this is my friend, Mrs. Cholmelly. She is a perfect lady."

"Yes, mum," said the porter, labelling the box, and as the train happily came up at the moment, he shunted her in and we went on to Edgware Road.

Of course the difficulty was to know where to put her for the night, as it was Saturday, and so no C.A. Home was available. I left her in the waiting-room and went to Nutford Place to get the help of a C.A. Nurse. When I returned she was asleep, and wished to remain so. "Let me alone," she said, angrily. "I promised Mrs. Cholmelly, a lady-friend of mine, not to leave this place till she came to fetch me, and I musn't break my promise. Now you say you are Mrs. Cholmelly, but she was alone, and you have a young person with you, and if I go away with you what shall I answer if the right Mrs. C—— comes and tells me I oughtn't to have done it? If you can satisfy me about that I'll come. What do

you say? Say it again—you will leave your card with the attendant, and then if the right Mrs. C— comes and finds me gone she and I will be satisfied? My dear, there is nothing in that argument, for I shall never be satisfied till I go back and have that whisky I paid the woman a shilling for. ‘Drunk it it all herself by this time?’ Oh, what a low opinion you have of your fellow creatures; now I’m quite different, I always hope the best of everybody, I speak as I find them—but till I find them dishonest I would scorn to lay it to their charge.”

* * * *

“Well, you’ve got me upstairs between you, and this is Lisson Grove, you say. A poor sort of a Grove, mean little streets I call them. Oh, here’s ‘The Shaftesbury,’ now let’s hear what the Matron has to say. I don’t think much of her looks, no style about her, what does she say? She won’t let me have a bed. The worse for drink, am I? What a shocking untruth! Where does she expect to go? But that’s just the way, they take the public money, and then when a respectable married woman like me comes for a bed to lie down upon they make any excuse rather than let me have it. It’s a perfect scandal and disgrace. Not talk so loud, do you say? Oh, yes, she’s shut the door, but look at all these men and boys standing round, what do they want? I’ll teach them to interfere. If they was all the forty thieves (and I daresay most of ’em are thieves), they shan’t mix in my family jars.”

Mrs. Farrington was really very angry, and was fumbling after the pin of her shawl, so that she might be free to fight the derisive crowd of men and boys, who had collected at the sound of her loud remarks.

I begged the Church Army Nurse to get her away round the corner, and then I put it to the crowd that it would really be very kind of them to go, as I could not get her away while they stayed. With the kindness I have always met with from London men and boys, they agreed at once, the crowd dispersed as quickly as it had come together, and we pursued our way undistracted. After several efforts we succeeded in getting her a room, and the last I heard of her that day was a very sleepy voice saying to the Nurse who was undressing and putting her to bed: "Now be careful, because you know Mrs. Cholmelly is a lady, and besides, modesty becomes everybody."

"IF you please, m'm, I want to come into the Church Army Labour Home for a bit, where I was three years ago. I'm sick and tired with living in these low lodging-houses, and I must have a rest from Mr. Danby. I'm completely wore out with his ways, and with keeping him, for he's had no work this ever so long, and there's been such upsets in the next room to us; and Mr. Danby's eldest daughter is home. No, m'm, she don't live with us, but she thinks she

has a right to come in and out as she pleases; and yesterday she brought a woman in, and gave her tea in my room. She brought her own tea and cakes, but she used my butter, and my teapot and cups, and she left me to wash up; and the woman is one I have no acquaintance with, nor don't wish to, and she didn't ought to do it."

"I quite agree with you, Mrs. Danby. But can Mr. Danby help it? Does he encourage her?"

"I can't say he encourages her, m'm, but he ought to see she don't do it, instead of saying I am his wife, and she is his daughter, and he don't want no disagreeables—as though we didn't know *that*; it's foolishness to talk so. And another thing; he don't treat me properly, for though we have been married two years, I only accidentally found out last week that he has another daughter, and when I taxed him with it, he said it didn't matter to me, as he supposes she will be something like ten years old now, with her mother's relations in the country. And I'm sure I told him the first time we ever walked out together about my little Jane that is with Dr. Barnardo, and doing so well; and why should he make mysteries of his daughter any more than I did of mine?"

"Why, indeed! I don't wonder you felt hurt, but still perhaps he meant no harm. He is not unkind to you often, is he?"

"Well, he *says* things that's very hurtful to my feelings. If I do happen to have a little drink he misscalls me everything he can lay his tongue to.

Poor Mr. Blenkinsop was quite different to that ; he always kep' hisself quiet, and never hurt my feelings if it was ever so. And then Mr. Blenkinsop used to go to sea—he was a sailor, you know, m'm—but Mr. Danby, he's there all the time, and I don't seem never to get the place to myself. No, I don't want to leave him, m'm, I'll promise you that I'll go back to him right enough."

Then suddenly bursting into a tempest of sobs, "I'm getting to be such a wicked woman, and I do want to be good, I do want to be good. I did think I'd given myself to Jesus, and I've gone all back—right back into the Devil's ways."

Then as I soothed her, and she grew quieter, she said, softly, "I do love Church Army ways, and the hymns and all, and I want to hear about the Lord Jesus again. I thinks about it often and often, nights. I could be good if I went to the Home again, but there is dreadful wicked places in London ; I can't be good there. Mr. Danby was in a Labour Home too before we was married. He liked it well enough, but he don't hanker after it like I do."

"What an excellent plan it would be if he could go to one of the Men's Homes while you go to the Women's Home, and then both start fresh."

"Yes, m'm, but I don't know as he would. But, oh, *do* make him let me go."

"Well, then, you go and ask him to come and see me to-night. We must talk over what can be done."

The loyal little woman went away without having

said a word of complaint about the many days when her husband had lain idly in bed till late in the afternoon, while she slaved at the ironing board; or of the arguments, harder than words, by which he had lately begun to testify his disapproval of her "happening to have a little drink."

Her bright brown eyes were growing dim, and her cheeks which used to be so rosy and pretty looked puffed and swelled from drink and overwork. It was high time something should be done, and one could but hope and pray that the C. A. Home would prove to her all she expected—a House Beautiful, where Piety, Prudence and Charity could feed and rest and clothe her, and set her forth in the right way, with Greatheart as her guide, a joyful pilgrim to the Celestial City. For do we not all of us, whatever our advantages, need often the comfort of being reminded that "new beginnings are the soul of perseverance."

In the evening Mr. Danby arrived, very much tidied up, but rather on the defensive.

"I suppose my wife's been complaining, and saying that I knock her about?"

"No, there you are quite mistaken," I answered, warmly, "She said nothing of the kind; but there seem to have been a few upsets lately of one kind and another."

"What, in the next room to us, you mean, m'm? Yes, well they are a bad lot, and it certainly did upset her a goodish bit. You see, m'm, the man and

his missis got drinking and quarrelling (same as me and my missis might), and there was a row, and *she* rushed into our room screaming, and would I go in directly and cut him down, as he had hung hisself up with a rope to the head of the bed. Well, I really didn't hardly like to interfere, as we were not anyways to say acquainted, only through living next door. But, however, she kep' on a beggin' of me, wouldn't I please go, so I did, and there he was; so I cut him down; so then he said he would go to Edgwer Road Station and throw hisself on the line. So I told him he must please hisself about that. 'I've done my best for you this time,' I says, 'me and my missis being given to the drink at one time I know what it is; but I aren't going to foller you about all over London, so don't you think it,' I says. My wife didn't much like my doing anything for him, and I didn't know but what he might turn on me, as there was a hammer laying handy, but still I'm glad I done it. It's a cowardly trick, that trying to kill yourself."

"I *quite* agree with you, Mr. Danby, but, however, your wife did not mention the incident, she seemed most concerned with some misunderstandings about your daughters."

"Oh, well there's no pleasing of her about *them*, you see, m'm. One of my daughters comes and that ain't right, and the other stops away and that ain't right neither, so what's a man to do?"

I knew that the grievance of his daughter's invit-

ing some one to tea in his wife's room, without her leave, would elude the grasp of the masculine intellect, so I left that point and took up the other. But the existence of his younger daughter appeared to him so entirely a matter of detail that he was at a loss to understand why any sensible woman should put herself out about his not having mentioned it; and although I took some pains to make him see the matter from his wife's standpoint, and he listened with great attention, he merely remarked at the end, with a resigned air, that he "wished he had mentioned it, and no doubt he might have done so if he had ever gave it a thought."

What a revelation that remark seemed of the missing elements of happiness in the lives of some of the very poor—a father who could go on for years without giving "a thought" to the existence of his little daughter!

To those of us who look back on a home where the wise and tender presence of the father gave our early life its savour and its sunshine, there is something almost overwhelmingly sad and terrible in such absolute lack of love. Facts such as these, set us, women of the Church Army, longing to throw embracing arms of dauntless love round those poor girls who have never had a home, never known anything of the strength of a father's tenderness, or the depth of a mother's compassion.

It was clearly useless to talk to Mr. Danby about his child, but we talked long about his wife and him-

self, the miseries and temptations of their present life, and of God's great offer of salvation which we must close with *now*.

At last he said, "Well, if my wife wants to go to the C. A. Home for a bit, and thinks it will help her to give up the drink, I won't make no objections. I don't want to drink, I'm sure, and I'm sick and tired of things as they are. But she must wait till I get some work I'm expecting down Seven Dials way, for of course, while I don't have no work she must go to the laundry, or else how am I to live?"

Alas! the delay while that work down Seven Dials way was waited for led to sorrowful experiences, and to more than one sojourn in Wormwood Scrubbs; but we are looking for a better time now, and believing that our poor friend's longing will be granted, and that in the C. A. Home she will again hear about her Divine Redeemer and will return to Him.

Shall not we, who have bright homes, and "a place to ourselves," say a prayer for her, and help to provide a House Beautiful of Peace, Praise and Prayer, where those, whose life is passed in stifling rooms and flaring public-houses, with drink, dulness, discomfort and despair, may come and revive and rejoice?



THE LADY AND THE VAN.

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MISS ESTCOTT was not given to weeping, but to-day her eyelashes were wet with tears, her mouth trembled, and her hand even clenched a little.

Her mother had just refused what was for the moment the great desire of her heart, and she was so bitterly disappointed that she felt that life was almost intolerable. Collisions between mothers and daughters are not so uncommon as might be supposed, and they often reveal a want of sympathy and mutual understanding which surprises both parties, and is most wounding.

Miss Estcott was eight-and-twenty years old, and was an extremely charming person in a quiet, grave style. Her beauty had already begun to fade, but she had gained rather than lost in attractiveness. She was tall and tragic-looking, with a dull swarthy complexion. Her hair parted low over her forehead. Her eyebrows were straight and dark, and her hazel eyes often lighted up with the fires of enthusiasm. But they soon dropped nervously lest they should betray more emotion than she wished.

About five years before she had had a love affair, and she looked as if she had never really got over

it. Her friends reckoned her to be sad and disappointed, and she certainly belonged to the class of women who, whether willing or unwilling to marry, find it difficult to know how to spend their lives. There are many such. It was admitted by all people, however, that she had a fascination of her own. She was generous and impulsive—easily elated and easily depressed.

For five years religion had been the motive of her life, but for all that she did not quite know what to do with her religion. It did not make her happy, though it comforted and sustained her. She had begun to care for the poor and to visit them, and the problems of their lives had become her burden. She felt that little was effected by her casual, amateur visits, and gradually the desire had taken possession of her to become a regular trained nurse. Her father's place was near a small manufacturing town, and already Miss Estcott gave more time than her mother liked to its dull, monotonous little streets. Her desire to become a nurse was never to be fulfilled, but we shall find that God's way for her was better than her own way.

It was on the point of the nursing that the collision with her mother had just occurred. Lady Estcott was shy, rather indolent and very conventional. When her daughter expressed her wish in the rather jerky, grating voice, which was all she could summon on such an occasion, Lady Estcott had said in a low freezing way :—

“Oh —— your father and I should not think of it for a moment. Pray do not allude to the subject again.”

“Why should I not do something, Mamma?” said Miss Estcott impatiently. “Mary and Evelyn are both out, and I hate going out, as you know. Surely I am old enough to have my wish considered in the matter. Why need I live this aimless life when nurses are so needed and I have nothing else to do?”

“It is very wrong and ungrateful of you to talk like this, Adelaide,” said her mother; “you have everything to make you happy. Why can you not be satisfied with your home duties?”

“I have no home duties,” said Miss Estcott, angrily, and already conscious that she was putting herself in the wrong.

“I should have thought that to please your father and me and to make yourself pleasant were home duties,” said Lady Estcott; and then, after a pause, she added, “Surely your pride ought to make you unwilling to have it said that you are disappointed in love, which certainly will be said if you become a nurse. Why do you not marry Mr. Lippington if you are dissatisfied at home. He has asked you twice?”

“Because I don’t choose to marry him, as I have told you fifty times,” said Miss Estcott.

“If you cannot keep your temper you are certainly not fit to be a nurse, Adelaide,” remarked her mother.

“I never said I was fit,” replied Miss Estcott, bitterly, “but I wish to learn to be fit. If religion means anything, surely it is worth while to take some trouble about it.”

Lady Estcott had not much religion herself, beyond conventionality, and what she had entirely consisted in an occasional half intention to become a Roman Catholic. She liked the dignity and antiquity of the Roman Church, and when her conscience pricked her about anything, she usually proposed to herself a plan of bye-and-bye becoming a Roman Catholic, which course appeared to her an act of religious heroism, because she knew it would annoy her husband and family a good deal. Probably she estimated unduly the amount of distress it would give her to grieve her friends. It will be seen, therefore, that her aspirations had not much in common with her daughter's. She rose to leave the room, and as she went out she said :

“It is no use discussing the matter, Adelaide ; you had better consider it settled.”

Miss Estcott's cheeks were hot, and for once tears trickled down them—tears of mortification, of disappointment, of anger, and self-accusation. She glanced round her pretty sitting-room, and, for the moment, she almost hated the signs of her usual occupations, her pretty water-colours, her piano and her harp. She even looked with distaste at the beautiful bank of flowers arranged on her side table.

“What is the use of this portfolio of sketches, all

third-rate?" she said to herself. "Why need the world have any more of them? Who cares to hear me play? Even flowers lose their significance in this luxurious room. The white hyacinths in old Granny Lovelock's cottage give me more pleasure than these orchids arranged by the gardener."

She passed through the door into her bedroom, which was adjoining. She knelt down by her bedside and actually sobbed. Then the words came, "Oh God! Oh God! Oh God! show me the path of life."

The bitterest part was that she felt that she was to blame. She had lost her temper and been undutiful. She accused herself of selfish motives, even in her desire to consecrate herself to Christ's service.

"I wonder how much I really do care for the poor after all," she said to herself, "perhaps it is mere egotism." Again she prayed desperately that she might be helped and guided. Then she rose. It was intolerable to do nothing, so she put on her hat and cloak, and went out towards the town for a rapid walk.

About half-a-mile beyond her father's park gates there was a common, and she noticed as she reached it a sort of gipsy van; by the side of it some young men were standing round a fire of sticks. They wore braided tunics, and on the van she read, printed in large letters, "CHURCH ARMY MISSION VAN," and underneath were the beautiful words, "Let not your heart be troubled."

A sudden thrill mastered her as she read these words. She felt that they were a message from God, and as she drew near she paused. One of the young men saw her and immediately came forward with some papers, and, touching his cap, said, "Will you please take a *Church Army Gazette* Ma'am?"

"I am afraid I have not any money" said Miss Estcott, and she stopped.

"Never mind, Ma'am, if you will be good enough to accept it," said the young man willy.

Religious papers were not generally very attractive to Miss Estcott, but she took it, and said, "Thank you," and asked, "What is the Church Army, and what are you doing here?"

"This is our Mission Van, Mam," replied the young man. "We are visiting towns and villages about here to do open-air preaching on market days and at other times, especially Sundays; and to sell Bibles and Prayer Books and Church Army literature."

"And have you been to Mr. Alford, the Vicar," asked Miss Estcott.

"Yes, Ma'am. He said he had no objection, and we have sold a good lot, and the people seem glad to see us."

"How many of you are here?"

"Three, Ma'am. There is a Captain with two of us under him. We two are not good enough yet to be Captains, so this is a sort of training to give us experience."

"Indeed, and what was your work before you began to do this?"

"I was a collier, Ma'am. Jones, who is cooking our dinner, was a confectioner's assistant; our Captain was an electrician and used to earn two pounds ten a week."

"Is this the sort of thing that the Church Army always does?"

"No, Ma'am, our Captains often go to some Vicar and stay there a year or two, preaching and visiting, and sometimes they get a Labour Home started for tramps and people who are out of work."

"Well, this town is very poor, and there is a good deal of drunkenness. Is Mr. Salford going to engage one of your men? I know he finds it very difficult to get the people to church."

"He says he cannot afford it Ma'am; so I am afraid he will not."

"Oh. And how much would it cost?"

"A married man's salary would not be less than about 27/- a week Ma'am, and he ought to make about 10/- of that from collections at the meetings and from Gazette singing."

Miss Estcott pondered. She knew Mr. Salford very well, as she often had to speak to him about poor people whom she visited. He was an earnest, hard-working man from Oxford. He had been brought up in the evangelical school, and had never lost his love of it. But the scientific literature of the day had given him some sympathy with the broader school, and he was not indifferent to the growth in reverence and beauty which High Churchmen have

fought for. He believed that beauty of architecture, and of music and colour, were all powers for God, which ought to be used in His service. He might be called, therefore, an evangelical, influenced by both the High and Broad Schools; and he certainly believed that the Body of Christ makes the best increase when all its joints and bands minister vitality to it, and when all recognise that they have need of all. But his work had been very difficult, and to a certain extent disappointing. The shop-keepers and the wealthier people came regularly to church, but he felt that with them it was largely a matter of respectability; and the working classes were conspicuous by their absence, though he had tried hard to win them. He would have sacrificed all his culture if he could instead have gained the power of making the poor one with him.

He had made a great effort to get the Church into good and beautiful order, and sometimes he feared he had spent too much money on it. How easily our work would go if we never made such mistakes! Now, having exhausted his givers, he found extreme difficulty in collecting for current needs; and when the Church Army Captain had called on him with one of the Cadets, he had been painfully sorry to find that he could not possibly take the monetary responsibility of engaging an Officer. His acute mind had shown him that a pleasant, vigorous, working-man Evangelist would be just the needed link between himself and his people; and when the Captain left

him he read the papers which had been given him, and especially the testimonials from Vicars where the Church Army had been working. He really longed for such a helper.

“Oh, that God would send me a generous person with a purse. Why am I so harassed for money,” he said to himself. Would it be possible for him to retrench personal expenses? Perhaps a very little. He had a wife and children, and he feared he could not do much. Indeed it seemed almost impossible to do anything.

The Lord Lieutenant of the County was a good man, but he had already helped largely with the church. He felt that he could not ask him again so soon. Besides, he felt sure that Lord Lancaster would dislike the idea of Church Army work, and would suppose that it meant religious excitement and Methodism.

Lady Lancaster might help a little, for she was a kindly and generous person. But smart London Society had blunted her finer nature, and she lived for entertainment, and was always busy about some useless pleasure. She could seldom afford to contribute more than a guinea to a charity, and she generally forgot that she had promised even that much. The Vicar could count on a pleasant hearty interview with her, if he got an interview at all, but probably it would end in the suggestion to get up a Bazaar, a warm promise to collect for the good object, and a few months later, a deeply penitent apology for having

done nothing whatever, because she had been so busy, and had had such headaches. Mr. Salford knew her too well to go to her.

As he thought it all over a knock came at the door. "Please, sir, can you see Miss Estcott?" said the servant, and the young lady entered looking eager and absorbed. In fact with her usual impetuosity she had become most keen about the matter after her talk with the Church Army officer and his men.

"Oh! Mr. Salford, I have been speaking to those Church Army people. I do wish we could have a man and his wife here under you. I would help if you would let me."

"You are most kind, Miss Estcott," said the Vicar, "I should be delighted to have a man, and was just wishing it with all my heart, but I declare I don't know how to raise £10 a year, and it would cost at least £60 to have a man of any experience, even if he cleared something with collections and his selling of papers."

"I have been so wanting to do something," said Miss Estcott. "And my mother won't let me be a nurse. I daresay I should have been a very bad one. But as I may not do *that* I should like to set someone else to work. I care for nothing so much. I have a hundred pounds a year of my own, and I think I could manage with £40. I will willingly give £60 if you will engage a really good man and woman to visit and to do good. Please let me help,

it is all I can do, and I am sure God intends me to do it." Her eyes were bright and soft, and her mouth nearly smiled. "Do let me do it," she said again. "But please you must not tell anyone. I shall feel that God has accepted my little, poor service, and that I am not useless any longer."

Mr. Salford was much moved. He had always thought Miss Estcott cold, and hard, and distant, and he had not liked her. Now he saw how wrong he had been. He held out his hand. "Thank you, thank you, Miss Estcott. I do accept your offer most gratefully," he said.

"But I should like to see to the cottage they are to live in," continued Miss Estcott, who scarcely seemed to notice his reply, "so that when they come they shall feel they are welcomed. Do write and ask when they can come. Oh! how different everything seems now to what it was an hour ago."

Miss Estcott's hopes were not disappointed. The Church Army Van did its work. The young men preached, and visited the neighbouring clergy. They sold quantities of *Church Army Gazettes* and papers, and created a real interest in the neighbourhood. The preachings at the little fairs, and on the village common, were largely attended. A great many people signed the pledge, and there was ground for hoping that there was work done that would last. Certainly the way was prepared for the Captain and his wife, who arrived in about a fortnight's time, and for the Church Army Mission Nurse, who followed a few months later.

The opening of the work made a great sensation in the town. Some over-sensitive people disliked the sound of the cornet in the street, and thought that the services were too informal and homely. But the poor loved them from the very first. There were marked conversions, and at the end of three months the Captain brought to the Vicar a considerable list of men and women who desired to be confirmed. People laughed no longer when they heard that well-known drunkards and ne'er-do-weel's were living respectable and religious lives. And nearly all (but not quite all) ceased to grumble that people in their working clothes came to Church and knelt with them at the Holy Communion.

The police gave unequivocal testimonies to the change. Drunken brawls, and vile language in the streets, were becoming things of the past.

The Vicar was deeply thankful, yet, strange to say, he was not without trial in the matter. It had been a kind of mortification to find that an uneducated man could win the people whom (as everyone knew) he had failed to win, and it was an effort to seem entirely delighted that the Mission Room was full, while his own week-day service was thinly attended. He was tempted to tell the Captain that he must make all his converts attend Church instead of the Mission Hall. But he did not yield to the temptation. He came out of the fire like pure gold. After praying about it he felt that he must not expect everything to come in a hurry, and he bore with the

rough services, the stirring testimonies, and the homely, irregular meetings which followed each evening after the General Confession, the Lord's Prayer, and the Creed. He even got before long to like to come in and sit by the door for a few minutes as the service went on, and gradually the mistrust and shyness between him and the poor of his flock disappeared, and during a time of sad domestic trouble that came to him by-and-by, he was full of wonder and comfort at finding how true and deep was his people's affection for himself.

As to Miss Estcott, she could not often attend the meetings, for in the evenings her parents disliked her being away from home. But she worked hard and very happily during the day, and she made friends of the Church Army Officer and his wife, bearing with them their anxieties, and often helping them in different ways.

Nobody knew, while she lived, that the work was really of her originating, and that she paid for it. Her parents knew that she helped, but neither of them really sympathised with her, though they let her have her way. Her father loved her tenderly and always indulged her, and her mother felt that some amends were due in the matter of her refusal about the nursing. She saw that a new sweetness and bright content had come into her daughter's life, and she felt that this was due to her "good works" and to her having become "serious." Her brother and her younger sisters idolised her, and she had attained to

“The heart at leisure from itself,
To sooth and sympathise,”

which makes the possessor worth her weight in rubies.

And thus Adelaide Estcott, beloved by rich and poor, solved the problem of how to live a blessed, joyful life for Christ's sake. When she died, two years later, people found that an angel had been in their midst without being recognised. And when her body was carried to the little churchyard, there followed after her own family a long array of about two hundred poor people, led by the Church Army Officer and his once derided banner. Inside the Mission Hall there was a little brass plate put near the door—

In Memory of

ADELAIDE ESTCOTT,

WHO ORIGINATED THE WORK OF THE CHURCH ARMY
IN GAISFORD, AND WHO LEFT AN ENDOWMENT
OF £100 A YEAR FOR ITS PERPETUAL
SUPPORT.

The grass grows green over her grave, and when I visited it I found, placed there by rough but loving hands, a great store of wild hyacinths, primroses, daisies and daffodils. High in the air sang the larks.



THE CRISIS OF MIDDLE AGE.

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ARTHUR RIVERS was a busy man, and his wife wondered, therefore, to see him sit doing nothing for a considerable time one morning in the library. She was writing letters. They were both good people, cultivated and well off.

“Kate,” said he, “I went to see the Training Home of the Church Army yesterday, and it has made me ponder. You and I are both getting past our youth, and though we are considered exemplary people, I very much doubt if we are so good as we were fifteen years ago. I am inclined to think that most people lose more than they gain as life goes on.”

Mrs. Rivers laid down her pen; her colour rose, and she looked eagerly at her husband. “What do you think we have lost, Arthur?”

“A good deal. Seeing these young fellows full of the freshness and joy of self-sacrifice and service, made me long to be young again. Do you remember how we were never satisfied—twenty years ago—unless we were helping at Mission services, or visiting hospitals and districts? Almost every day we hoped we had won to God one or two souls. And how glad it made us. There was just the same glad-

ness and triumph about those men and women that I saw at the Training Home yesterday."

"Yes; I remember it all very well, Arthur," said Mrs. Rivers, and she sighed. "Why did we ever leave off?"

"It was easy to leave off, and it was a gradual thing. We were disappointed in a good many people whom we had believed to be converted, and in a good many people whom we had looked up to as far better than ourselves. When we found that conversion was not generally the beginning or end of the Christian life, but only one important chapter of it, preceded by long, patient work, and sometimes followed by disaster, then I think we felt that preachers and little books had deceived us, and we tired of after-meetings and of personal talk with inquirers."

"And do you think that we were wrong, Arthur?"

"Yes, I do. I think our characters have suffered spiritually. We need direct Christian work to keep us bright and happy and strong."

"But no one can say that we are idle, Arthur."

"Certainly not; we have Committees, and we give money, and we set other people to work, and that is all right, but it is not enough. We ought not to have let our hands get slack and our knees feeble because we had foolishly made conversion everything, and had often found it imperfect. We ought to have accepted the laws and facts of God's Kingdom, and to have learnt experience and not discouragement from our disappointments."

"I got so disgusted with our Vicar, Arthur; I think that was what stopped my working. He was so selfish and jealous."

"Yes, my dear Kate; our disgust was natural, but our cessation from work was not justifiable. We always said we were working only for God, and therefore our Vicar's faults ought not to have hindered us."

"Don't you think most people, as they grow older, get cool about that kind of work, Arthur? I think that most of the people who convert souls are rather young."

"Most of the people who claim souls as their converts are young, certainly. But a soul's conversion is as complicated and as little sudden, in one sense, as a child's birth and growth, and as long as we do our part in it we need not mind what the part is. Kindness, holy living, prayer, self-denial, are probably as important factors as straight questions and difficulties cleared. I believe a seeking soul finds God, whether he finds an eager worker to explain perplexities or not. People's work ought to be better as they get older and more experienced."

"Well, what ought we to do, Arthur?"

"I mean, first, to give more money to Christian work. If you are willing, we won't buy that brougham, and we won't give such expensive dinners. Why should we try to do like enormous swells? It is foolish of us. Let us give £100 to the Church Army. Let us also help other Societies that seek to

save the lost. And let us get into touch again with poor, miserable folks. That doesn't seem much to do, but it will be a fresh start. I want to learn of those beginners whom I saw yesterday."

Tears stood in Mrs. Rivers' eyes. She felt little regret at giving up the luxuries her husband had mentioned, and she silently recorded a vow that she would burn a letter which she had just written to her dressmaker about a velvet gown.

Womanlike, she rose to the situation, and encouraged and supported her husband.

A bright peace came to them, and something of the buoyancy of youth, without its crudeness, gave a fresh spring to their life and work.



UNTEMPTED.

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MR. STRUDWICK, the Vicar, sat in his study, deep in thought.

A sore and heavy trouble had come to him. Alfred West, his sexton, Scripture reader, and principal lay helper, had, after ten years' service fallen into sin. Money, morals and temper had all gone wrong, and the Vicar had found it out, and was expecting him to call in ten minutes' time.

He dreaded the interview intensely.

He had trusted West, and had treated him as a friend and brother. Every week they had knelt and prayed together, and the Vicar, who was a simple, godly man, and also a gentleman, had had no reserves from him, but had been in the habit of freely talking over all parish affairs, and even private matters of his own.

And now it had transpired that West had been secretly married for nearly a year, to a girl in a neighbouring parish whom he had led wrong about fourteen months ago. There was a poor baby, and alas, West had stolen and embezzled Church funds to the amount of £35.

The Vicar had felt for some time that he was not

satisfactory. He had been proud and disloyal. And he had also been quarrelsome, which had never before been a fault of his. Mr. Strudwick had spoken to him kindly about his frequent absence from Communion, and West had made excuses, and been more regular since. Now the Vicar earnestly wished that he had never spoken on the subject, for the coming to Communion had added to the sin.

The deception of it all grieved him as much as the fall. He had only known about the matter for two days, and he had put off taking any steps for twenty-four hours. Then he had sent a note to West, telling him to come to the Vicarage the next morning at ten o'clock. It was a short, brief note, and he knew that West would guess that he was discovered. Would he confess his sin, or try to exculpate himself?

The Vicar heard the front bell ring, and then came a knock at his study door. "Come in," he said, and fixed his eyes on the ground, as if he himself had been the guilty party. He felt that he could not meet West's eye.

"Sit down," he said, in a low broken voice, and glanced for an instant at the culprit. West was thirty-eight years old, with a dark, rather pleasant face. He sat down silently. One look at the Vicar's sad, dejected attitude and lowered eyes would have told him that he was found out, if he had not felt sure of it when he received the note.

"West, how could you deceive me?" said the Vicar, in a sad, reproachful voice.

The kindness of the tone smote West, and in a moment his eyes moistened and reddened.

"I am in your hands, sir," he said.

"You are in God's hands, my poor fellow," said Mr. Strudwick, and his voice trembled. "What have you to say to me?" he added after a pause. He seemed even more moved and distressed than the wrong-doer himself.

"I cannot explain it, sir," said West. "I fell all in a moment. I was never tempted before or since. It was entirely my fault, not hers. I tried to tell you, but I dared not. I did what I could. I married my wife."

"And the money?"

Tears of shame were trickling down West's cheeks.

"I took it for her and the child, sir. And that sin was the reason why I lost my temper and spoke evil of you and everybody."

He sobbed.

"If you had but told me! But you kept it concealed, and you only confess it now when it is found out. What can I say? What can I do? I cannot keep you, of course, in your present position. How could you go on preaching and visiting and praying with the people? And how could you come to Communion?"

West was silent. He had nothing to say.

"I cannot be hard on you," said Mr. Strudwick, "we are brothers. I have never been tempted as you have. If I had, perhaps I might have fallen."

The good, humble man spoke with a broken voice, and looked away at the distant landscape. He felt that fellowship with sinners which all the best men feel, and an impulse made him say—

“Years ago I nearly fell into a gross sin. But God made it impossible. At the moment of temptation, a sort of freezing horror came on me, and saved me, so that I fled from the tempter. But I confess that if I had been tempted again later, in the same way, I might have fallen as you fell. God forbid that I should be hard on you.

“As to the money temptation, I have never wanted money so badly as to be tempted to steal it. My innocence is no virtue. But, West, I have never deceived a friend as you have deceived me. How could you do it?”

West was silent, and then replied, “You are a gentleman, sir, and your father taught you better. I was brought up to deceive till I was converted; and my father and mother were both bad.”

The Vicar was silent. “Let us pray,” he said, and they both knelt; and broken, tearful petitions went up from each of them.

West knew that he was forgiven. The Vicar took his hand as they rose, and pressed it.

“You must go from here, West, and I cannot recommend you for religious work without saying what has happened. Get secular work, and I will help you if I can. God bless you.”

THE BEAST'S MARK.

(Reprinted from "Broadlands as it was," 1889).

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I AM now past sixty, and it is nearly fifty years ago that I fell in love as a child with my cousin Oliver. He returned my affection with a brotherly regard, but with no warmer feeling, and time, aided by the strange circumstances which I have unwillingly to relate, gradually changed my feeling for him till there was on each side no more than a quiet trustworthy friendship.

It may seem as if the experience which for so many years he half cherished and half hated would have separated us from each other. But it did not. I suppose that I never wholly understood the matter, though I knew that his finest qualities were impaired, and that he was deprived of much of the grace and power in which he had promised to excel. Much remained, however, and he was always the central figure of my life. I have known greater and nobler men, but I never knew one so intimately or for so many years, nor was I ever bound to anyone else by the same ties of mutual help.

A few weeks before he died, as I was sitting one

day by his bedside, I saw that he was making a great effort to say something to me. At last, with much apparent difficulty, he spoke as follows:—

“Cynthia, I must ask you to do a thing for me which I know will be painful to you. I have tried to write down my secret, but I am too ashamed, and I want you to do it and to publish it. I should have kept it from you, if I could, but as you know it was impossible for me to do so. And now I am glad that you know it. You are aware of all the facts, though I think you are too innocent to know their full significance.

“I charge you to record the whole story for the service of those whom it may concern. I sometimes think that if I had been warned in time by another victim that I should have rid myself of its terrible hold before it had mastered me, and that my life and work would not have been wrecked! Now I can only be one of the witnesses who prophesy clothed in sackcloth. It seems to me that I have myself failed in every way that I have tried hardest to warn others against.”

I was greatly moved as he said this, and it was only with a choking voice that I could reply, “Your life and your work have not been wrecked, Oliver. Your life has done much good and no harm. You have steadily loved truth. You have always been kind and self-denying, and useful. Who can accuse you of having injured them?”

He looked at me gratefully. “I am glad you think

so," he said, and then added passionately, "But for all that I have been withered, and stunted, and cursed, and blighted. And you know it. I did good service whenever I escaped the power of that vampyre-like thing. But generally I did not escape. Thousands of times I have felt nerved and fired for work, and thousands of times it has come upon me and drained me of all my zest and power. I shall enter into life halt and maimed."

"Oliver," I said weeping, "It is asking too much when you ask me to tell this story. I don't half understand it. We have seldom spoken of it. Do not insist on my telling it. Have mercy on me, for you know I cannot refuse you anything that you ask."

"But I *do* ask it of you, Cynthia, with all the earnestness I am capable of. You must do it. I do not require you to make theories about it, but only to tell the bare facts."

"Do you not pity yourself rather than blame yourself, Oliver? Was it your fault that you were beset by this strange thing? You hated and detested it."

"Unhappily I loved it in spite of all my hatred," said he almost in a whisper.

"It was an inheritance, and you were not responsible for it," I urged.

After a short silence he answered, "Yes, it was an inheritance. But I believe I could have resisted it if I would."

"You have resisted it, and I believe you have conquered it, Oliver. You have bruised its head."

“And it has bruised my heel,” he replied sadly. “Heaven knows which is the conqueror.”

There was another silence, and then suddenly he cried out, “God save me,” and I saw the drops on his brow.

I trembled, and my heart beat hard as I dumbly prayed for him.

After a dreadful half a minute he said, “Thank God!” and blushed to the roots of his hair.’

“Cynthia,” he said, “I know heaven and hell, and part of me belongs to each. You will do what I have charged you to do, not only for my sake, but because it is right that you should do it. Tell it truly out, and let it be published. My hope is that this ghastly bit of truth-telling may perhaps atone for some of my sins. To most men, happily, it will only read like a ghost story, but some will know its meaning, and perhaps it may be their deliverance. Forewarned is forearmed. All temptations are in their degrees alike, and I often wonder if most men have not an experience which they could translate into something similar to mine. There is a bait about every sin. Every one is pleasant as well as deadly. Pride, hatred, profligacy, drunkenness, avarice, idleness, ambition. I have lived long enough to know something about them all, and to know that they have all got something akin to my own sin.”

I dared not refuse to give my promise, and it seemed to comfort him. He alluded to it once or twice before he died, and I now sit down, not many weeks later, to do his bidding.

Oliver and I were brought up together as children, and we were always the greatest friends. He was a bright, clever boy, full of life and enjoyment, and always busy about some keen interest or other. Together we invented tales, made our collections of postage stamps, and did our lessons. I lately found a collection of our childish essays, which had been indulgently preserved by our mother, and one of them I will transcribe here.

BLOODY MARY.

Bloody Mary ascended the throne in 1553. She was surnamed Bloody from her Bloodiness. Ignorant people mix her up with Mary Queen of Scots, but there is no foundation for this, as, for instance, she was never beheaded.

In her short and bloody reign, the principle martyrs flourished, of whom she burnt thousands, because they would not believe in the Pope. She was also rather unkind to Queen Elizabeth. When she died the name of Callis was found written on her heart, which was a great disgrace, though her behaviour to the martyrs was even worse. Bloody Mary was a striking instance of Roman Catholicness.

We should all earnestly try not to be like her, though if we had lived in her reign, and been her, we should very likely have been still worse. But I don't believe I ever should, the horrid old thing! We have a picture of her in our history book, which is exactly like aunt Maria.

When Oliver and I were ten years old, we were invited to spend our holidays with our great-grandfather at Afton Grange, a fine old house in the country, which we had visited several times before.

Our two great-aunts lived with him, and always proved themselves kind and indulgent to us. But we had a childish dread of the old man, and this made a visit to the Grange a somewhat mixed pleasure. We did not often see him, and I have sometimes thought that he must have been half demented. Certainly he used to glare at us in a terrifying sort of way, and a dignified and reticent person called Mr. Hatchley was always with him as an attendant.

The great mystery of the place for us, and the thing we longed above all things to explore, was a room on the ground floor, of which the shutters were always kept closed and the door locked. I think we both disliked passing this room after dark. It figured in many of our stories, and we invested it with all sorts of superhuman characteristics.

Our great-aunts were stately, but rather commonplace old ladies, and when once or twice a year they went into the yellow room on the occasion of its being cleaned, I do not believe that they showed any special sentiment about it. But it was noticeable that they never had offered to take Oliver or me into it.

"That chamber is not used," I remember hearing my Aunt Susan say one day when showing some visitors over the house, and she said it in a way which prevented questions, while it stimulated curi-

osity. Oliver and I longed more and more to know its secret.

It happened on the occasion of the visit I am writing about that Oliver had not come with me to Afton Grange, but was to follow a few days later, and I was, therefore, kept more than usual in the company of my great-aunts. My feeling about the room was intensified during this time, because once as I was coming in from a walk, I saw my great-grandfather coming out of it with wild eyes and a guilty look. He seemed frightened when he saw me, and as he shuffled off to his own room he said something which I took to be a kind of apology, and, therefore, very uncalled for to a child.

About an hour after he had one of his bad fits, and later I heard my great-aunts talking together in a low voice, and one of them said, "It was exceedingly wrong of Hatchley to go out without informing me. Of course, poor papa was sure to get into the yellow room if he could. Most unfortunate that the key was in my open desk, but I had no idea that Hatchley was not with him."

It was only two or three days after this that my wish was fulfilled. The room was to undergo its half-yearly cleaning, and my Aunt Winifred, little knowing what a fearful interest it had gradually acquired for me, unlocked the door calmly one morning after breakfast and took me into it. I remember feeling a little sick as we went in, and being very much ashamed of the feeling. I hoped intensely that

she would not see the whiteness of my face and cause me to forego the excitement of the adventure. However, she noticed nothing, but went composedly in and opened the shutters. As the light streamed in I found that the room was large, and rather scantily furnished. The wall paper and the upholstery were yellow. There were some large mirrors, an old piano, a bookcase, and some Chippendale furniture.

But all the interest was at once concentrated and baffled by the presence of a very large picture, which was concealed by a green blind made to draw up and down over it. It was in the middle of the side of the room facing the door, and I instantly felt that here was the key to the mystery of the room.

I said that the picture was concealed by a blind, but this was not strictly the case, for the lower part of it was left uncovered, the blind having been drawn down only to about three feet from the bottom of the canvas. My great-aunt, perceiving this, went quietly up to the picture and drew the blind down till all was completely hidden. What I had seen was the feet of a horse, and, standing up in front of them, a soldierly pair of legs in riding boots with long spurs.

I stood rivetted, but, child-like, I dared not ask a question, though I was almost crying with my longing to know who or what the booted man might be.

My great-aunt trotted about unconcernedly, throwing open the windows, and finally she took me away with her, calling the housemaid to come and begin her cleaning.

"Don't touch the large picture, Mary," she said.

A sudden feeling came into my mind that it was my great-grandfather who had drawn up the blind and had left it partly uncovered, and that it was naughty of him.

Three days after this Oliver arrived, and he brought with him a new possession, a delightful black-and-tan terrier.

Of course I seized the earliest opportunity of telling him what had happened, and I then said, "Let's go into the room, and draw up the blind to the top."

"Oh no, we mustn't, Cynthia."

"Why, we have never been told not to," I said.

"We haven't got the key, and I don't believe we ought to do it," said he. But I saw that the idea fascinated him.

"I know where the key is," said I. "In Aunt Winifred's desk, and she often leaves it open. I don't believe she'd mind." (I knew perfectly well that she *would* mind, however).

We said nothing more then, but the idea settled in our minds, and two days afterwards, when our great-aunts were entertaining some visitors in the drawing room, I hastily went into the morning room and discovered, as I hoped, that Aunt Winifred had been writing, and left her desk open, and that the key of the yellow room was lying there in company with the pens and sealing wax. I quietly took it, and ran out into the garden.

It looked as lovely as Eden on that sunny May

morning. The pink may and the guelder rose, the laburnam and the lilac were all in blossom, and the Solomon's seal grew thick under their shade. The birds were singing as if the world were but just created.

"Oliver," I cried in a low voice. "Oliver."

"Hullo!" said he.

"Oliver, here's the key, let's go in and look at the picture."

"Jolly!" said he.

We went into the house together by the back way. Looking warily round, I turned the key of the door of the yellow room, and we both entered and shut ourselves safely in.

It seemed to me as soon as we were inside the room that I felt an evil influence beyond the mere sense of naughtiness, but I was too excited to regard it. A little light came through the chinks of the shutters. I jumped on a chair, and unbolting the fastening, let in the full day-light.

There before us was the ominous picture, with its dark covering. As we stood before it I had a sensation as if there were strong forces—almost physical forces—pulling me two ways, and I stood transfixed for two or three seconds.

"Draw up the blind," said Oliver.

And, woe of woes, we drew it up and saw. When I think of it there is a verse that always comes into my mind.

“ She left the web, she left the room,
She made three paces through the room,
She saw the water lily bloom,
She saw the helmet and the plume.
She looked down to Camelot.

Out flew the web and floated wide,
The mirror cracked from side to side,
‘The curse has come upon me,’ cried
The lady of Shalott.”

Yet what we saw seemed at first nothing much after all.

Simply a tall soldier standing by his horse.

It was magnificently painted. The uniform was white and dark blue and gold, and all the details were duly expressed, but in subordination to the face, which was nearly full, with the eyes fixed steadily on the spectator. The face could not have been handsomer, but there was surely something brutal about the smile and the gleam of the teeth. The jaw was square, the neck was thick and muscular. The short dark hair was crisp and curly, the brow was low, the eyebrows were heavy. The strong fierce eyes held us perfectly breathless. Beautiful they were, but they were the eyes of a demon.

The man's figure was muscular and graceful. The fingers of the left hand rested on the hip, the right arm lay carelessly across the horse's neck, and the hand held a heavy riding whip.

“Look at the snake,” said Oliver, and following the direction of his eyes I saw that the heel of the boot trod on an adder's head.

Just then Oliver's dog began to howl most dismally in the garden.

"Let us go," I said suddenly.

"No, no," said Oliver, "let us stay." His lips were parted and his cheeks were burning.

We stayed I don't know how long, probably only half a minute. Then we heard a carriage driving up the approach, and we fled in a sort of panic, locking the door behind us. Oliver ran into the garden. I went into the morning room, feeling guiltily sure that my misdeed would have been discovered. But all was as I had left it. I dropped the key into its place, and sat down.

What had I done? Was it so very bad, or was it not? Child though I was, my heart ached. Do not reckon my fault a light one. I would now give all that I have not to have committed it. Innocence had departed.

I stayed crying a long time, but at last I went out into the garden to look for Oliver.

He was lying under a tree, apparently reading a story book, and he did not look up as I approached. When I spoke to him he answered me rather shortly and crossly. And from that hour I became often aware of a kind of reserve between us which had never before existed.

"Oh, Oliver," I said, beginning to cry again, "I wish we hadn't gone into that room."

"It's all right, you donkey," said he. "I am very glad we went in, and I mean to go again."

The day had changed. The sunshine was gone, and all pleasure was gone too. Something immeasurable had happened or was going to happen, I did not know which.

We played about till dinner-time, and I remember we quarrelled. When we came in there was a hush and a stir in the house.

Aunt Winifred came down to meet us. She had red eyes, and she spoke in a whisper. "You must try and be quiet, dears, for your great-grandfather is very ill. Your Aunt Susan and I shall not come down to dinner."

"Is he going to die, Aunt Winifred?" we asked, much awed by her manner.

"We don't know," she replied. "He has had a bad attack, and the doctor is coming."

It was dreadful, and I felt sure that the illness was somehow the fault of our naughtiness.

After dinner we crept upstairs, and listened outside the door of the sick room. We heard a terrible gasping sound, and were glad to steal away again. The rest of the day was long and miserable. It is easy to bear troubles if our hearts are innocent, but conscience makes cowards of us all, and we were both afraid when we went to bed.

The next morning when we were called, the first words that Mary said to us were, "Your great-grandfather is dead."

It was a sad week that followed, and the death in the house seemed to intensify my sense of wrong-

doing in having entered the room. At last I could bear it no longer, and took courage to make my confession to Aunt Winifred.

I think she was a little surprised at my feeling so guilty about it. After a slight pause she said, "You should not have done it, Cynthia. You know that chamber was always kept closed. It was naughty of you, and especially naughty to go to my desk and take the key. I can't think what made you wish to do it."

I cried a little and said. "I don't know, Aunt Winifred," which was quite true. And then I added, "I suppose it was the devil. Please forgive me."

"Well, I forgive you, and don't ever do such a thing again."

She did not evidently take it very seriously, and so I ventured to ask, "Who is the man in the picture, Aunt Winifred?"

"He was an uncle of your great-grandfather, but I don't know anything about him. His name was Sir Carnaby Fane."

"Why is he treading on a snake, Aunt Winifred?"

"I never noticed that he was treading on a snake," said she. "I suppose there must have been some story connected with him and a snake."

A pause.

"Why is a curtain kept over the picture?"

My aunt hesitated a moment, and then said, "You shouldn't ask so many questions, Cynthia. The reason was that your poor great-grandfather used to get

excited when he looked at the picture, and the doctor said it was bad for him. It is too valuable to be destroyed, but I don't think it is a nice good picture. I remember our old clergyman at Shrewsbury used to say it had the mark of the beast on it. If you want to look at pictures, why do you not look at nice ones like Eva and Uncle Tom, or Jephthah's Daughter, or Mrs. Fry in Newgate? Now run away, and tell Mary to get you ready to go out."

My heart was light again, and I told Oliver of my conversation with my aunt.

"I wish I knew about the snake," said he gravely, "It makes me think of where it says in the Bible to the serpent, 'It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.' Are heels wicked? Do you suppose the snake could bite through that man's boot?"

That afternoon I was sitting upstairs doing my worsted work when I heard Oliver's dog beginning to howl in the garden. I ran downstairs, and I saw Oliver coming out of the yellow room alone. I shall never forget the pang it gave me. He got red, and pretended not to see me, and I felt that he was doing the same wrong thing that my great-grandfather had done.

I ran up to him and said, "Oliver, why did you go in again?"

Like a boy he brazened it out as well as he could, but his voice was unnatural as he said, "Why shouldn't I go in?"

"You know it is wicked," I answered.

He laughed scornfully. "Wicked! what is wicked?"

"It's wicked to look at that picture."

"It isn't. Rubbish!"

My tears came again very readily, and I said, "It's all my fault. I took you in first. Oliver, I'll give you my silver pencil case if you'll promise never to go in again."

"What nonsense! As if I wanted your pencil case! You needn't go in if you don't choose. I shall go in if I like because I am a man. But I daresay I shan't like again, so you needn't cry."

I was only half consoled, for I couldn't get a promise out of him, and I afterwards felt sure that he did go in sometimes when we were not together. Occasionally at night if I heard a cock crow or a dog howl, the conviction came to me that he was either there or wishing to be there. I can't account for this strange unchildlike sort of clairvoyance. I thought that Oliver seemed dull and inattentive and unlike himself. It was clear that something had gone wrong.

Not many days after the funeral was over our aunts told us that they had decided to let Afton Grange, and to return to their old house at Shrewsbury. There was to be a sale of the greater part of the furniture, and the place soon began to be dismantled in preparation for their departure.

The yellow room was now as public as any other room, and the picture's blind was drawn up. Whatever reason there had been for concealing it had ceased with my great-grandfather's life. We were

now going in and out many times a day on all sorts of errands, and though I still had a certain dread of the picture, yet it seemed to me to have lost a good deal of its balefulness. Now that the doors were open I no longer had the feeling that it was wrong for me to look at it, and so I often stayed and wondered about it. But strange to say I couldn't bear to see Oliver looking at it, and it was most mysterious that whenever we looked at it together I was sure to hear some animal making a noise. Either a dog whined, or a horse neighed, or a cock crew, or a cat howled. It was very odd. I did not know if Oliver noticed it, but again and again it made me start, and I felt as if the world of kind beasts knew all about it and was vainly warning us and lamenting over us.

It was certainly a most splendid picture. The distance was lurid and stormy, the great war-horse was full of grandeur, the man was superb. He always made me feel as if he could hurt me if he chose, but let me alone because I was only a little girl and it was not worth his while to injure me. The beautiful eyes looked steadily at me, but disdainfully, and I hated beyond words the curled savage lip and the heel that crushed down the serpent. He looked as if he had worse fangs than the reptile he trod on.

Oliver was standing by me one day, and I said, "Doesn't he look as if he despised us?"

"No," said Oliver. "I like him, and I should like to be like him."

"I should hate it," I replied. "What makes you like him?"

“Oh, I don't know. I shan't tell you. I suppose it's because he looks so proud and strong and fierce.”

“I don't like people to be proud and fierce,” said I.

“Well, I do then. Fancy being on that splendid horse and making him tear along.”

It distressed me that Oliver and I should differ about anything, and I could not bear that he should feel this way about the picture. But I reflected that boys and girls could not be exactly alike.

Soon after this Sir Carnaby was packed up and sent off to London to be sold at Christy's, and it seemed like an incubus gone. I never saw the picture again, or wished to see it again, but years afterwards I found with strange sensations an attempt at copying it in pencil, which Oliver must have made at this time. It was, of course, very imperfectly executed, but it was unmistakeable. There was the stately horse, the elegant pose of the figure, and there well emphasized was the heel grinding down the adder's head. As I looked at it, a mouse behind the wainscot shrieked. I burned the sketch in a hurry, and breathed again.

After the sale at Afton Grange our life went on smoothly and happily. Oliver's parents had died when he was a baby, and he had been adopted by my father and mother, who had no child besides myself. My father was a clergyman, and I must mention that we were brought up to read the Bible every day, and to learn a good deal of it by heart, so that it was not strange that Oliver should be reminded by the picture of certain texts.

To describe our childhood and youth would not be very interesting, for it was in the main like other happy childhoods. Oliver was less selfish than most boys, I think, and he was very affectionate, active, and innocent-minded. We were all inclined to indulge him a good deal. At school he was popular, and he specially pleased grown-up people, to whom he generally behaved with very nice manners.

He and I often talked together about what he would like to be when he was grown up. He wanted to be the best man possible, and he hesitated chiefly between becoming a doctor, a soldier, and a clergyman. As years went on he inclined more and more to take orders and he read a good many religious books with that idea, and there were certain poor people in the parish whom he used to visit and try to do good to. The impression of the picture was beginning to fade in my memory, but I think I mentioned it two or three times in our talks, and I believe he received my observations without comment, and with something of that slight reserve to which I have alluded.

When he was about seventeen years old some relations asked him to pay a visit at a distant country house, and he went. On his return he seemed to me a good deal older, and not so light-hearted. Sometimes he was depressed, and even rather peevish. The spirit seemed gone out of him, and he was backward not only in going to see the families in whom he used to take an interest, but even in his studies and recreations.

One day my mother was recommending him a book, and said, "If you are ever a clergyman it will be useful for you to have read it, Oliver."

He took the book listlessly, and looked at it with a kind of distaste.

"All right," he said.

"You have not given up the idea of being a clergyman, have you?" asked my mother, regarding him uneasily.

"No," said Oliver. "At least—yes. I don't believe it will be the best thing. I believe I'd rather be a doctor. A clergyman ought to be so tremendously good."

I knew that my mother was extremely disappointed, but after a moment's silence she merely said, "You seem out of spirits, Oliver: Is anything the matter?"

"No, nothing," said he.

"Do you feel well?"

"Oh, yes."

After he had left the room, she said anxiously to me, "I wonder what is the matter with Oliver. He seems quite different since he came back from Thurlbury Hall."

I had nothing to say on the subject, but two or three days afterwards a light came to me.

My father was talking to him one day at dinner about his recent visit, and said, "By the way, John Thurlbury bought that picture of Sir Carnaby Fane that used to be at Afton Grange. Does he keep it at the Hall or in London, Oliver?"

Oliver glanced quickly at me and hesitated for a moment before he replied, with a kind of embarrassment, "It is at the Hall; in the dining room."

"Why, Oliver, you never told me that," said I.

"You never asked me," said he.

"Why how should I ask you? Don't you remember how we used to hate that picture, and how glad we were when it was gone?"

Oliver made no answer, and my father began to ask him questions about the other family portraits.

Till this visit to Thurlbury Hall our life had been happy beyond our share. Now I felt that we sank down to an average experience. Sometimes, for a week or two, Oliver was as delightful as ever. Then he would one day come down to breakfast wearied and fretful, and seeming drained of all interest in everything. And these fits lasted two or three days. He never did anything exactly wrong, but his sparkle and gaiety were gone.

He never talked now of taking orders, but seemed to have quite decided to study medicine.

I believe I had ceased to think about the picture, but it was somehow latent, and one day it was brought suddenly to my mind again.

Oliver was reading to me out of a new book as I sat working, and he came to these words—

"I had a vision when the night was late,
A youth came riding towards a palace gate,
He rode a horse with wings that would have flown
But that his heavy rider kept him down,
And from the palace came a Child of Sin,
And took him by the curls and led him in."

As he read, a painful self-consciousness came into his voice, and he stopped for five long seconds. I felt that we were both thinking of Sir Carnaby as the Child of Sin.

Clearing his throat, he finished the poem and closed the book. We read no more that day.

What I am next going to relate will not, of course, be received by most readers as an objective fact, and I do not ask them to accept it as such. I do not feel quite sure about it myself.

When Oliver and I were nineteen I had a severe illness, and my convalescence was somewhat prolonged. Our senses are apt to play us tricks at such times, and it may be that I only thought I saw what I am going to describe.

One afternoon I had fallen asleep on the sofa in the library, and had dozed on till it was nearly dark, except for the flickering of the fire. When I awoke I saw that Oliver had come in, and was sitting on one side of the hearth, leaning back in an arm chair. He seemed to be thinking, and had evidently not noticed my presence in the dim light. A book lay in his lap, but he was not reading.

I was just going to speak to him, when I felt a kind of oppression, as if something evil were in the place, and my eyes travelled from Oliver across the tiger-skin rug that lay in front of the grate.

Good heavens! Was Oliver alone, or did my eyes deceive me?

While the roots of my hair stirred I perceived the

firelight glitter on something metallic, and nearly paralysed with fear I saw those terrible spurred feet.

An almost unbearable weight weighed down my eyelids, but I made a great effort, and slowly raised them.

There stood Sir Carnaby Fane, tall and furious, and he and Oliver were regarding each other. Sir Carnaby scowled and made a quick threatening gesture. I could only gasp, but Oliver heard me and sprang up. And the phantom—if phantom it was—vanished.

“What is it?” I had only strength to whisper the words.

Oliver looked scared and wild. “What do you mean?” he said.

I was turning sick, and only answered “Sir Carnaby was standing there.”

“Sir Carnaby standing there,” said he, in a sort of frozen way.

“Yes, you saw him.”

“Before God I swear that I did not,” said he, emphatically. He paused, and then the words came slowly, “But I was thinking of him.”

I was still weak from my illness, and I fainted. When I recovered consciousness, he and my mother were bending over me, but Oliver’s eyes could not meet mine, and all through the evening they were lowered if I looked at him.

Such a thing could not of course pass without an explanation, and when I was going up to bed about nine o’clock, I said “Come into my room, Oliver, do, I want to speak to you.”

"Arn't you too tired?" he said.

"No," I replied. And he came.

"Oliver, tell me everything," I said, as soon as the door was shut.

"You must have been dreaming, Cynthia. It is impossible that you could have seen anything."

"I was not dreaming, Oliver, I saw him as plainly as I see you now. Please tell me all you know about it. I feel as if I should die if you don't. You said you were thinking of him, and I am sure there is more in it than I know. Did you ever see him at any other time?"

"Never," said he steadily.

He remained silent a little, and then said in a faltering voice, "Cynthia, I will tell you. I don't understand it. I wish I did. But if you really saw him you have a right to know. That first time, years ago, when we looked at the picture, some new thing came into me. I was ashamed of it, so it must have been wrong, and yet I was proud of it, for it made me feel more a man. I went again and again, to look at the picture, and always it got more power over me. I used to think about Sir Carnaby, and admire him, because he looked so proud and strong. He became the vehicle of all the worst and most animal part of me. I used to imagine that he was doing all sorts of wild and evil things. And I almost got a wish to do them myself. I often wondered if they were my own thoughts that used to career in my mind, or if some evil spirit was taking its pastime at my soul's expense.

"It was a long time before I felt sure that it was wrong. I never guessed what it would come to."

"Oliver, do you remember the dog howling that day?" said I.

"Yes I do," said he wearily, "and many times since. Especially at night, when I have woken and been the prey of Sir Carnaby's terrible frown or more terrible laugh. His white teeth were like fangs! I can't tell you how sick and miserable and exhausted I have often felt. It spoilt everything. Do you really mean to say that you saw him, Cynthia, actually *saw* him?"

"Yes, but go on."

"Sometimes I thought I had got rid of it all, and then I was as happy as I could be, and everything went well. And then, perhaps, I read a book or saw a picture which reminded me of him, and I got under the spell again. He seemed to be waiting for me. Now that you tell me you saw him I really do believe it is his evil spirit that besets me. I know it is my own sinfulness that gives him power, but there are terrible odds against me. After such repentances I have such falls! 'In the evening he will return, grin like a dog, and go about the city.' How often I have felt his scorn of my repentances, and his cruel smile.

"Oh, how I wish I had never gone to Thurlbury Hall! It all came back ten times stronger when I found myself there. It was such a horrible surprise to find that awful picture gazing straight at me in

the dining-room. I couldn't help looking and looking. I remember even going down one night late with a candle after everyone was gone to bed. He seemed to free all the worst parts of me."

"Did you ever pray to be delivered, Oliver?"

"Yes, and was forgiven a thousand times. That was my greatest help. Without it I should have been in hell by this time. There are things in the Bible which must have been written to describe it all."

"What things, Oliver?"

"Words like 'Lest he tear my soul like a lion, rending it in pieces when there is none to deliver,' That was just how I felt—as if all the good parts of me were getting torn to shreds. And then in Jeremiah, 'Therefore the holy flesh is departed from thee.' It seemed as if all the heavenly part of me were getting eaten away. One Sunday the sermon was about the pure in heart seeing God, and I made up my mind that I would never allow the thought of Sir Carnaby to come in again. But it did. I was never safe from him. Sometimes I was better, sometimes I was worse. I think I am worse now than I was five years ago. What I dread is that when I die I may find myself akin to him."

"Do you hate him enough to wish him gone for ever?"

"I do *now*," said Oliver, "but not always. Often, when I have been happy, I have prayed that I might die sooner than be in the mire again. You girls can

never know how hard our battles are. We have tendencies that you, in your innocence, never dream of."

"Were the thoughts ever more than thoughts, Oliver? Did they ever become sins?"

"No, but the thoughts themselves *were* sins," said he. "I believe they have used up my very life. It was no credit to me that I did not put them into actions. I had everything to keep me back from wicked deeds—education, habits, friendship, work, besides the power of religion. I'll tell you what I'll do, Cynthia. I'll go and see Mr. Austen and ask him what he thinks I ought to do. It was bad enough to have such things in my mind, but if you *saw* Sir Carnaby—how I loathe his name!"

Mr. Austen was an old man for whom we rightly felt a profound veneration. His life had been full of vicissitudes, but now he lived alone, and yet seemed to belong to everybody. He was poor in this world's goods, but like St. Francis, was apparently well content with poverty. He had had many sorrows, which had only the effect of making him extraordinarily sweet and tender. One of his characteristics was a kind of insight which enabled him to justify almost all the men he knew of, or at any rate to bring them out of the fires of execration into a heavenly light of pity and of understanding. Some people reckoned this a fault, but I never knew any one else whose judgment I so looked up to. However blameable I had been, I always felt sure of getting love and sympathy from him as well as

wisdom. I remember his once saying "The difference between Christ and Satan is that Christ justifies all, and Satan accuses all. Christ is for ever justifying man to God and God to man, Satan from the very first has been accusing God to man and man to God."

It was a great relief to me to think that Oliver would be guided by Mr. Austen rather than by any ignorant advice of mine, and I rejoiced at his decision.

"I'll go to-morrow," he said, "and I'll tell you everything that he says. Good-night, Cynthia."

He kissed me very affectionately, and I spent the night not unhappily, though wakefully. It was a great relief to have been told the truth.

When Oliver came back from Mr. Austen the next day he looked clear and happy.

"He has been the greatest help, Cynthia," he said, "He did not seem so very much surprised or shocked, but he said that he wished I had told some one sooner. I told him that you knew almost everything about it, and he said he hoped you would go and see him when you were well enough."

Oliver talked on and told me a great deal. He was full of hope.

In a day or two I went to see Mr. Austen.

"Do you think I can help Oliver?" I said.

"You can help him a great deal, my child," he replied. "And you have already helped him a great deal. You must bear his burden with him, for it is a heavy one, and victory will be difficult. We will

lift up our hands continually for him. 'More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of.' These terrible conflicts have their uses, and cannot yet be wholly dispensed with."

"Do you think that it is possible that I really saw Sir Carnaby, Mr. Austen?"

"I am not prepared to say that it is impossible, Cynthia," he answered. "It may be that some evil influence hung about that picture. You say that your great-grandfather felt it, and you believe that it had power to hurt him. I am sure that there are bad airs about certain books and certain newspapers, and about certain places too. I believe that it is possible, if we wish it, to open doors to all sorts of evils, and there may be poor wretched earthbound souls near us who have neither the will nor the power to rise above the evil desires that held them when they were in the body. Sir Carnaby may be one of these, implacable and unmerciful. Such souls may be able to torment and worry those who give place to the devil, and little by little they may even make their home in a man's heart and possess it. Possession is as real now as ever it was. It is a great mystery, but it is true that as some men live controlled entirely by Christ and filled with the Spirit of God, so others live at the command of evil and unclean spirits.

"I think it is not impossible that our dear boy has suffered in this way. Oh, the wiles of the devil! The wiles of the devil! It is well if, by God's

grace, we are just able to stand in the evil day. Oliver must be saved—as we are all saved—by love, by human and Divine love. Hell itself is only a great madhouse, where none believe in the love of God or man. But Christ commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him.”

“Then you really think it was Sir Carnaby’s ghost, Mr. Austen?”

“I did not say that, Cynthia. What I said was that I could not say it was impossible—God only knows. The creative power of thought is very great, and it may be that what you thought you saw was only the product of Oliver’s mind. ‘Things that are seen are not made of things which do appear.’ Who can say how far human thought may have power actually to create form? ‘Soul is form, and doth the body make.’ Who can say how it was that the Word Himself was made flesh? The sculptor’s thought forms the marble into a statue.

“My dear child, I hardly like to talk to you about these matters. But perhaps it may be your work willingly to go forth as a lamb into the midst of these wolves. We know that there is a Lamb who is able to overcome not only wolves, but lions, too, and all kinds of fierce beasts. And the little child is the one who can safely put its hand on the hole of the cockatrice and prevent its egress.”

“Do you think it was only a coincidence, Mr. Austen, that we nearly always heard animals making a noise when we looked at that picture?”

“It was strange,” said he thoughtfully. “It certainly seems as if the mark of the Beast must have been on it. People think me a mystic because I see in the Bible explanations of so many experiences. I read there that it is over the Beast and over his mark, that in all ages Christ’s servants win the victory. You have read the story of it in the Book of the Revelation. The Beast is evidently our worst animal nature, which we all have to deny in some form and to conquer, if we are ever to stand on the sea of glass. It may be like a lion or a wolf, or like a fox, or a boar, or a serpent. But its power comes from the dragon itself. One of its heads may be wounded to death, yet it revives and is healed. How often have I hoped that the beast in me was for ever destroyed, and how often have I been disappointed!”

“I don’t understand all that, Mr. Austen,” I said.

“And God forbid that you should understand it, my child,” he said kindly. “May you never need to understand it. But you will find it well to read those chapters about the wild beast nature. The world worships it and says, ‘Who is able to make war with him!’ And the world has reason for saying this, for we are told that it was given to the Beast to make war with the saints and to overcome even them. But he does not overcome them finally. ‘Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.’ Do you remember how we are told that those who dwell on the earth make an image of the Beast, and

that the image somehow gets life into it and does mischief? That makes me think of this strange sight of Sir Carnaby that you tell me of.

“The mark of the Beast is easy to see in the faces of many men and women, besides drunkards and profligates. I have seen it often—the mark of the tiger or the fox, or the swine, or of the peacock, the vulture, or the serpent. This we may be sure of, that if we encourage the beast nature it soon gets the upper hand. The power of a dominant bad habit is dreadful. But if it is bravely fought, there comes a sweet calm Indian summer into life before it ends.”

We remained silent for some time and pondered.

“And how can Oliver get the victory, Mr. Austen?”

“Only by the grace of God, Cynthia,” he said solemnly. “But you can help him to get that grace. It will help him to have told us about his trouble, and to know that we are in sympathy with his need. Daily and hourly we will pray for him. The experience that he has had of the forgiving love of God is worth gaining, even at a great price.”

I kissed the dear old man and went home.

Then a happy time began. Oliver's old light-heartedness came back, and all his zest for work and play. I gave him at that time two pictures, which afterwards hung in his room always. One was Durer's St. George and the Dragon, the other was Van Eyck's “Worship of the Lamb.” Thank God there are not only bad pictures but good ones, which carry our thoughts heavenwards.



I shall always remember his life during the next years as the most beautiful thing I ever knew. It was filled with gladness and with enthusiasm for God, and nature and humanity. The sense of deliverance made him not only grateful, but ready for all kinds of service.

Now it truly seemed as if he rode a horse with wings, and as if it was no longer kept down by the heavy rider. To this day I can see the results in different lives of that beautiful time.

It was forty years ago.

I feel that my story dwindles in interest as it progresses, and I will end it here, for I think I have told you all that I need and almost all that I know.

How far the old deep-seated habit of thought afterwards re-asserted itself I can not tell you. Nor can I say whether it ever led Oliver into any act of sin. If it did not, the victory was won after a long brave fight. If it did, then his life was so far maimed and broken. But I do not believe it did.

Once he said to me, "I began my fight almost too late I am afraid, Cynthia. The eyes with which I ought to see God are half dimmed. The 'holy flesh has almost departed' from me. The world, the flesh, and the devil between them will enfeeble a life, even when they do not actually kill it. . . . God has been very good to me; I shall not die, but live." He spoke sadly, but he always took the lowliest view of himself.

Afton Grange came into my father's possession when my great-aunts had died. Oliver ended his

days there in his old bedroom, and I expect to live in the house till I die.

About ten years later Thurlbury Hall changed owners, and the picture of Sir Carnaby Fane was again sold at Christy's. I had inherited my great-aunt's estates, and was able, therefore, to buy it.

As soon as it became my property I had it burnt to ashes.

My tale is told, and as I sit at my desk I look out at the dear old garden. It is early spring, and the afternoon sky is clear. The sun casts long shadows across the lawn, beyond which I can see the quiet churchyard, where are the mossy graves of my father and mother.

There, too, is Oliver's newly-made grave.

In accordance with his wish a headstone will be put up, with the words inscribed, "A bruised reed shall He not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till He send forth judgment to victory."

The mellow note of a blackbird sounds close by me in a lilac bush, which shows its first delicately bronzed leaves. The crocus and the scylla are starring the dark beds with the gold and blue of their little flowers. The orange of the sky is slowly deepening behind the naked trees.

I am very, very sad, and I pray God that if it be His will, my life may not be greatly lengthened. When this story has gone forth, there will not, I think, be much more left for me to do, and I should like to lie down to rest with those I have loved under the green grass in the churchyard.

CYNTHIA FANE.

SAINT PATRICK'S INVOCATION.

— : o : —

I BIND to myself to-day, a strong power, an invocation
of The Trinity.

The power of the Incarnation, and Christ's Baptism.
His Crucifixion, and Burial, with His Resurrection
and Ascension.

I bind to myself to-day, the power of the ranks of
Cherubim.

In the obedience of Angels, in the service of Arch-
angels.

In the hope of Resurrection, in the prayers of
Patriarchs.

In the prediction of Prophets, in the preaching of
Apostles.

In the faith of Confessors, in the purity of Holy
Virgins.

In the acts of righteous men.

I bind to myself to-day, the power of Heaven.

The light of sun, the brightness of moon.

The splendour of fire, the speed of lightning.

The swiftness of wind, the depth of the sea.

The stability of earth, the firmness of rocks.

I bind to myself to-day—

The power of God to guide me.

The might of God to uphold me.

The wisdom of God to teach me.

The eye of God to watch over me.

The ear of God to hear me.

The word of God to speak for me.

The hand of God to protect me.

The way of God to lie before me.

The shield of God to shelter me, the host of God to defend me.

Against every man who meditates injury to me.

Whether far or near, alone, or in a multitude.

Christ protect me to-day against all evil.

Christ be with me, Christ before me.

Christ behind me, Christ within me.

Christ beneath me, Christ above me.

Christ at my right, Christ at my left.

Christ in breadth, Christ in length, Christ in height.

Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me.

Christ in the mouth of every man who speaks to me.

Christ in the eye of every man that sees me.

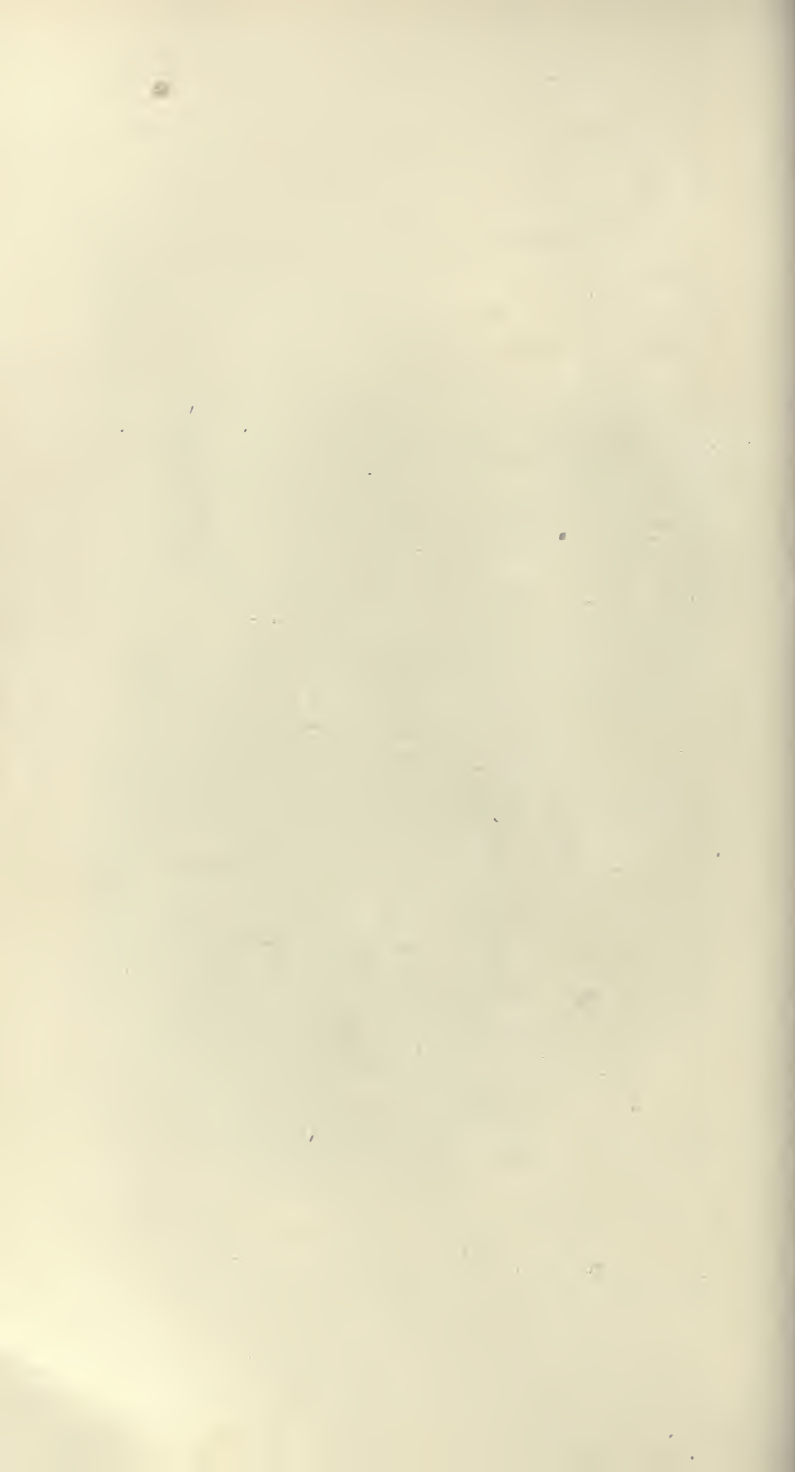
Christ in the ear of every man that hears me.

I bind to myself to-day a strong power, an invocation of The Trinity.

I believe in the Threeness with a confession of the Oneness in the faith of The Trinity.

Salvation is the Lord's. Salvation is Christ's. Let Thy salvation, O Lord, be ever with us.—Amen.





THE ISSUES OF DEATH.

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THE following eight short stories (written long ago) are given as suggestions of possible future experiences. Do not read them as statements on eschatology. On such subjects the Church Army does not theorise, but holds simply to the words of the Bible—all of which we steadfastly believe, even though they may at *first sight* seem to say opposite things. We need nowadays to preach faithfully what the Bible teaches us of Hell and Hades, as well as of Heaven. Such passages as the following have been too much neglected:—

“It is good to enter into life maimed and halt rather than to be cast into the eternal fire.”—*Matt.* xviii. 8.

“Every one shall be salted with fire.”—*Mark* ix. 49.

“Fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”—*Matt.* x. 28.

“Holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.”—*Heb.* xii. 14.

No. 1.—FORGIVEN BUT DISAPPROVED.

A certain king had four sons, whom he destined to rule four provinces in different parts of his dominions.

The princes were placed for training in a college, where their education lasted for several years, during which time their father maintained an intimate knowledge of their lives and characters.

The time at last arrived when they reached an age to enter on their public duties, and they accordingly presented themselves at their father's court.

The king, habited in his royal robes, sat in his council room. At his right hand were four books containing the records of his sons' careers. His head was bowed down as the four princes entered, but he rose as the eldest son came forward, and he kissed him with much affection.

Then he fixed his keen eye on the young man, who had a fine martial appearance, and said :

"Lionel, it cuts me to the heart to tell you that you cannot rule in my kingdom, because you have made yourself utterly unfit to do so. My hope in you is disappointed. You have lived in feasting and in sin. You have lived a life of self-indulgence, and you have lost your birthright."

The prince started and turned pale, but his look fell before the tears which trembled in his father's eyes.

"It is true, sir," he said, "but you know well that I have had great temptations which I could not resist. I implore you not to cast me out. I will turn from my sins. Give me my province and I will prove my sincerity."

"That cannot be, Lionel," said his father sadly.

“I never have any choice in these matters, for my appointments are made in simple righteousness, and I may not make favourites even of my sons. What your character proves you fit for, that, and that alone, I can give you. You shall stay by me, and if you prove yourself fit, you shall, by-and-by, have work, meanwhile you must submit yourself to new conditions.”

“Am I then forgiven, sir?” said the young man, who was almost sobbing in the bitterness of his disappointment.

“Yes, my son, you are freely forgiven, since you desire it, and I love you unchangeably.”

“Then why do I lose my province?”

“Because your character has become incapable of governing it rightly. It is weak and loose. Your strength is eaten away—your rule would be bad. If you indeed repent, you may recover much, and I may yet give you service to do for me; but the kingdom I had meant for you must be given to another.”

The second prince now came forward and received his father's kiss. His face was handsome and eager, but somewhat hard and crafty. He met his father's gaze with confidence, and the thought in his mind was, “My brother's province will surely be given to me as well as my own.”

“Bertram,” said the king, “I cannot make you a ruler. You have been diligent and self-denying, but you have been nearly consumed with ambition, and

hatred and envy. You have served yourself only. You do not love your people, or care for their welfare. You only care to be great yourself. You have continually been jealous of your comrades, and tried to injure them by word and deed. Great kings are not made of that material. I study your reports, and I find the same faults on every page, poisoning all your work; you, too, must be put back for fresh training and discipline."

"It is unfair and unjust," said Prince Bertram, hotly. But all the time he knew well that his father could not be unfair, and could not be unjust. Yet he turned away, and refused to look at the love in his father's face.

Very mournfully the king turned as his third son approached with a bright smile and an air of courtly grace. But after the king had greeted him, he looked once more into the record and sighed deeply.

"Rupert," he said, "your idleness has ruined you, as you well know. No kingdom can be yours. You have neglected your education—you have shirked your work—you have fed mind and body on pleasant, noxious food—you have frittered away all your opportunities, and made yourself into a useless man."

"Oh, my son, my son! why have you thus disappointed the father who loved you so well; and who hoped so much from you?"

The prince burst into tears of shame and sorrow, and flung himself on his father's breast.

"Forgive me, father, he cried, "I will be different, I have been a fool."

The old king wept with his son, but no thought of mere indulgence ever entered his mind. Prince Rupert never received a kingdom.

The youngest son, Prince Ronald, now stood before his father. His frame was active and well drilled, his eye was clear and frank, his mouth was sweet and firm.

"Ronald," said the king, "you alone of my four sons are fit to rule. You have duly used the training that has been given you. Your life has been pure, your heart has been right, your work has been good. Rule in your province."

A DESIRE.

God, Who through Jesus Christ has made me His child, and given me forgiveness of sins, and eternal life, has placed me here to grow into the likeness of my Lord. May I obey Him faithfully, ever choosing the good and denying the evil—steadfast in the fight and joyful in tribulation, that so I may be a vessel fitted for any service to which He may hereafter call me. For day by day I am making my own character and fixing my future.

No. 2.—A MOST DREADFUL SURPRISE.

A religious lady, Mrs. Worsfall, was very much worried with all her good works. She used to complain to her husband that she had so many disappointments in people.

He and her friends used to keep saying, "You do too much. You will kill yourself with overwork. You give away too liberally. People impose on your generosity."

And she really sometimes hoped that their estimate was true. Her self-denial, however, did not go very deep, for her means were large, and it was pleasant to benefit poor people, and to be thanked by them. And it was a change. It quieted her conscience, and was something to think about.

One day she was dissatisfied with a very good Mission woman whom she employed.

"I really cannot afford to keep you any longer, Miss Jonson," she said, "I have so many calls; and I must say that I do not think you have worked as hard as you might have done. I will give you a guinea as a present, but I shall not require your services any longer. I am sure I hope you have done some good, but I seem to find nothing but failures and ingratitude among the poor."

Poor Miss Jonson burst into tears and said, "Oh, ma'am, you are so kind and good. What shall I do, and what will the poor people do? Think of that poor old Mrs. Stone, for instance; she has nothing to live on except the 5/- a week you so kindly allow her through me. Do reconsider the matter."

"It is impossible, I assure you, Miss Jonson," said Mrs. Worsfall. "I have been talking the matter over with Canon Price, and he strongly advises me not to do so much. The work is killing me."

So Miss Jonson had to go off with a heavy heart, and her late employer settled herself for a nap before dinner.

In her sleep a kind of deathly sickness came over her, and she thought that she actually died.

She seemed to wake up in the next world with a dismal chill.

The scantiest and dirtiest of garments covered her, instead of ample silk and costly fur.

The place was a barren wilderness, with grey driving clouds overhead.

She felt an impulse to rise into the air, but a dead weight kept her down.

A lean, wretched-looking ghost with chattering teeth approached her, greeting her with a kind of servile politeness. It was the elegant Canon Price, who had advised her not to be so self-denying.

“We seem to be paired off together here,” he said, and he repeated this speech three times in a benumbed sort of way. Then he added, “And here comes another.”

An extremely offensive and canting tradesman, who had once cheated Mrs. Worsfall about some blankets for the poor, now joined them. His familiarity in claiming their acquaintance as equals was very disagreeable.

“It seems kind o’ singular that we should meet so,” he said cordially. And he evidently recognised the fact that they had reached a place where virtues and not social distinctions were recognised.

It was a most uncomfortable meeting. The tradesman had never thought well of Mrs. Worsfall, or Canon Price, or himself either, so it was no shock to him to find that they were all three classed together.

But the Canon was a very sensitive man, and suffered intensely while he wildly tried to measure the merits of his life and his eloquence, and to compare them with the coarse good nature which was the tradesman's only virtue. Mrs. Worsfall was swelling with anger, but realised that anger was perfectly impotent, and that a power had measured them all which was as accurate as the law of gravitation, and as unassailable.

Suddenly two figures appeared hand-in-hand, and clad in robes of soft and brilliant light. Both persons were of great beauty, and their presence seemed to diffuse warmth and hope.

They drew near to Mrs. Worsfall and fixed their eyes on her with astonishment.

They were Miss Jonson and Mrs. Stone.

It was dreadfully mortifying to see the old pauper and the humble Mission woman suddenly changed, as it were, into two queens, while she, their late benefactor, stood bereft of everything before them.

But they looked so humbly and so wonderingly at her that tears sprang to her eyes, and in a broken voice she said, "Pray, pray, help me. Remember how I helped you."

The two pairs of beautiful eyes beamed lovingly

upon her. Miss Jonson said, "We *do* remember it," and at the same time she took Mrs. W.'s hand. But a movement which she tried to repress showed that the contact was unexpectedly painful to her.

"May we help her?" said Mrs. Stone pleadingly; and Mrs. Worsfall was aware of an angel's grave attention being fastened on her.

After a pause he said. "Yes, you will both help her as much as you can: but it cannot be very much because she is so earth-bound. Scarcely any of her work has abode the fire. Self-indulgence and selfishness have spoiled nearly all. There were a few grains of kindness and pity. But none without holiness shall see the Lord."

A timid knock at the door sounded at this moment, and Mrs. Worsfall awoke.

"I beg your pardon, ma'am, I am truly sorry for my carelessness, but I left my umbrella behind me," said poor Miss Jonson, coming in. She recovered her very shabby piece of property, and was hastily withdrawing.

"Stop, stop, cried Mrs. Worsfall, and she looked with rapture on the plain, mild, sad face, disfigured by smallpox.

"Forgive me, Miss Jonson. I have changed my mind. Do not leave your work. O God, I am a sinner!"

And she wept.

No. 3.—A LIKELY STORY.

My first ten years in business were prosperous. Then my partner, Tom Nevis, died, and I felt his loss severely. We were both young fellows, and of the same mind about most things. Tom was a good fellow, strictly honourable in business, seldom drank to excess, and never led astray a pure woman. He enjoyed life, and was universally liked and respected. He made no profession of religion, indeed, we both disliked and distrusted "sanctified" people. We had both come across hypocrites—by which I mean men who we believed got money advantages out of their religious profession, and acted meanly or dishonourably towards others on certain occasions. No doubt there are sincere religious people in the world, but it suited us to fight shy of them, and to rest satisfied with pleasure, prosperity, and straightforward living.

It made a great blank for me when Tom died of scarlet fever, and my mind turned for the first time with interest to the consideration of the next life. I often said that Tom had as good a chance of heaven as many who made a great profession of religion.

One night I dreamed a dream that seemed so real that I have never felt sure that it *was* a dream.

Tom stood by my bedside and called me by my name, "Jack." I wondered that he should be so like his old self, but his face looked dull and bewildered, and his figure was shadowy, though dressed in his usual clothes.

"Tom, are you in heaven?" I said, in a sort of gasping whisper.

"I don't think I am," he answered slowly, "but there is not much of me left to be anywhere. I feel as if the least thing would blow me out. It was all business and pleasure while I lived, and when I left my body I found there was only a wisp of me left. For there is no pleasure or business to live on here. There is no such thing as cash, or food, or drink, and no pleasure for the body, because there are no bodies. It is all dark and deadly dull. I don't know what to be at. As far as I can make out, what happens when men die is that they get out of their bodies, and if the soul has lived for pleasure and ambition, it has nothing to fall back on when it is away from the body. It is just what I might have expected, if I had thought about it. If I had lived for the kingdom of God, and worked for the good of others instead of my own pleasures and profit, then I should have plenty of life now. But I let religion alone, and now it lets me alone, and I am just a withered soul and nothing mere. I wanted to tell you this, and that is why I am here."

"Is there any hope for you, Tom?"

"I don't know. I scarcely feel anything. But if there is hope I think it is because I feel a kind of ache sometimes when I remember Christ's words, 'So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God. For a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesseth.' I tell you what, Jack, I am reaping *exactly* what I sowed—neither more nor less. And so it is with everyone. I am better off than some. All here find

themselves exactly what they made themselves, remember that. I have nothing else to say, and nothing else to think about."

Then he slowly faded out, and whether I was awake or asleep, I don't know.

No. 4.—ALEXANDER BUTTS.

"A melancholy occurrence took place last Tuesday at Beechton. A wedding party had come down to spend the day at the seaside, and one of them, Mr. Herbert Alspice, went after dinner with two friends to bathe. He was reckoned a good swimmer, and he swam out towards St. Mary's Island. He had nearly reached it, when he was taken by the cramp, and called out that he was drowning. The bride's brother, Mr. Alexander Butts, rescued him, and they both reached the island in safety. But in returning to the main land Mr. Butts was himself swept away by the current, and his body was not recovered for some hours."

The above notice in a local paper created a strong feeling in the neighbourhood. The young man, Alexander Butts, was liked and respected by all who knew him. He was not much of a talker, but he was a good workman, and a good son, and he had often done a good turn to others who were not so well off as himself.

He was a fine, healthy young fellow, and many tears were shed over his body.

Hundreds of people attended his funeral, and a subscription was made for his bereaved mother.

Six years after, she gave to a clergyman the following paper, which she had found in the pocket of the coat he had stripped off before he swam out to save his friend. He appeared to have written it some time before, and to have kept it in his pocket-book ever since :—

“I want to put down on paper a trouble that is in my mind. I don't think I am living my life rightly. I do my work, and I enjoy myself sometimes, and I get on all right with folks. But some day I know I shall die, and I believe that my soul will live after I die, and I don't feel as if my life was any preparation for what comes after I die. Sometimes I have even hoped there is no life after death. But I know there is, and I believe I have only got this world's life in me—pleasure and sin, and trouble and work. These things take up all my time, and they all come to an end when I die. I believe there is a God, and I want to live God's life, so that there shall be something left when my body dies. I know that some men live God's life, and everything they do is done for God and for His Kingdom, and that that is how Christ lived. All He did was good, and it brought forth fruit and lasts for ever. I feel very down-hearted to think that I have lived for myself and for this world. For nothing but God's Kingdom is worth living for. In future, before everything else, I mean to belong to God. And may he now forgive me the past. And may Christ now come into me and be my life.

ALEXANDER BUTTS.”

His mother did not know how long before his death he had written this paper, but she had noticed for some time that he used to get up very early in the morning, and she felt sure he did it for prayer and reading his Bible. And though he said little, all could see that his life was a godly life. On his gravestone there is this inscription :—

In Memory of my Son,
ALEXANDER BUTTS,
Who died on the 8th Aug., 1880.

He prayed to God to save him, and He saved him.
He had begun to spend his life on earth for Christ.

No. 5.—THE MIRROR.

In our characters each sin breeds its measure of death : each good act results in increased divine life. And I have often wondered if after all people may not be pretty nearly left alone to find their after state. I am sure Satan would not choose a place on the right hand of Christ. Sensual, self-indulgent men complain at such a fate as hell being theirs, but would they prefer heaven ? I doubt it. Here they avoid good places, because they find them intolerable, or dull, or tasteless. Rabelais would not enjoy the society of Henry Martyn. The Herods of this world may have something good in them which for a time makes them seek the company of the John the Baptists, but they end by making away with them if they can. Mercy and justice appoint a

hell for such people. Darkness and fire and worms have their place.

Not long ago, on a Sunday morning, I walked home after church with young Brown. He hates going to church, but is obliged to obey the family rule, and he expressed his views about the sermon with his usual frankness. He said:—

“What do I care for spiritual rewards? I do not pretend to take any special interest in religion. I have no desire to sit in ‘heavenly places.’ How could I talk to Apostles and Prophets and Martyrs? We should only bore each other. After I die I should like to have my own set of friends about me, and of course I should want sufficient food and clothing, and a certain amount of pleasure. That is what I should like.”

I asked him what sort of pleasure he expected to enjoy when he was deprived of his body, for the only certain thing about his after-state was that he would have no body.

To this question he made no reply.

Surely it stands true that we shall by-and-bye reap what we sow. We shall all get what we deserve. The Eternal God is fair to everyone. He will do us full justice, He will take all things into account, and we shall receive our reward accordingly.

If we are trying only to get worldly pleasure, men’s praise, or money, we can scarcely expect that we shall be rich in the kingdom of God, where such things count for nothing. Every day the character

is being made unfit for the delights of heaven. If we are sowing sinful pleasure, dishonesty, impurity, unkindness, hatred or selfishness, we shall surely reap death and corruption, for all these things perish with the using.

But sorrow for sin is the seed of comfort.

Hunger for righteousness is the seed of goodness.

Meekness is the seed of power.

To work and suffer for others is the seed of gladness.

Faith is the seed of heavenly possession.

Are we satisfied with our prospect?

The worst punishment of sin would be extinction of spiritual life. All the plans by which good and bad people think to elude the consequences of their sin and to gain undeserved rewards are futile. What looks to human eyes like reward is often only a further progress towards death. This is as inevitable as the law of mathematics, for God is not fair from sentiment, but fair as a pair of scales is fair. If the lead in one scale is a grain heavier than the gold in the other, down it goes.

If we could now see ourselves and our actions so weighed what incredulity and expostulation there would be! What excuses! What pleadings for the merits of a good deed to be taken more fully into account! How many different circumstances should be considered before justice could be done us!

It might be a long time, I think, before the absolute inviolability of God's fairness would be recognized. For poor souls, for their supposed advantage,

hold such queer doctrine about God and themselves. But blessed be God, He is not only the Truth, but He is also Love, and He has Almighty Power. So we may well praise Him and be glad. No doubt there are many kind quiet humble people who will be astonished at the richness of their heavenly treasure.

“I saw two angels standing at the golden gates, whose faces were unchangeably full of love. I heard them sing the 107th Psalm, and I saw how their hearts praised God for the blessed work of bringing low and lifting up. Between them they held a crystal mirror, and each disembodied soul saw its image in it as it came up to the portals. After looking therein, it understood what place it could occupy in the kingdom of heaven, which lay beyond the gates, in sweet and infinite stretches of landscape. The shock was often very great, but the glass was so evidently true that no soul could long be in doubt as to its accuracy. Therefore it was only a question of looking long enough. And meanwhile they were not without comfort, for there was a sense of Divine tenderness and love everywhere.

One man came up confident that a great sphere would be his in the kingdom of heaven, and prepared to contest the point strongly if it were denied him. He had been active and pushing and successful. He had done a great work and had a great name (whether religious, political, or philanthropic I do not know). His character had never been

aspersed. He did not, at first, look at the mirror, for his eyes were fixed on the fair country beyond, and especially on ten glittering cities which lay among some blue hills in the distance.

‘May I be ruler over those ten cities?’ said he. ‘I think I could do it well.’

‘Every one may take any reward and any work that he chooses after he has looked in this mirror,’ said the angel. ‘It shows you your real self and your life, and it gives you any information that you need about either. You have now got the faculty of judging yourself truly.’

The man turned his eyes and saw his reflection in the glass. At first he was motionless and dumb with astonishment. Then he seemed slowly to shrivel before the sight.

‘Had I no more love in me than that?’ he said at last in a whisper. ‘I thought I was full of it! Was it all activity and push that I mistook for it? Is my sympathy so blunted as that? Is my sense of rectitude so dulled? Was I always so, or how did it come about?’

In answer to these questions new revelations of the man’s life were manifested in the glass. He saw how in years gone by he had, in the press of life and work, allowed himself to use words and phrases that were beyond his experience and his belief, and he saw how each time he did so the keen edge of truthfulness was more and more destroyed. Routine had been allowed to blunt his best faculties. He saw how

the hurry and press of his work left him no time for self-examination, or for tenderness and thought about those in his path who should have been lovingly succoured. The image he saw reflected looked strong indeed, but it was a wooden strength. There was a long pause.

‘My life has been wasted!’ he said at last.

‘Not so,’ said the angel, whose eyes were turned kindly on him. ‘Not so; but you will not wish to be ruler over the ten cities, will you?’

‘God forbid!’ said the man; ‘I am fit for nothing in the Kingdom, and will only hide my head there.’

‘Trust yourself then, to your Father and your Saviour,’ said the angel, and already an inner light shone in the man’s face. ‘Those ten cities will be given to the man for whom they are prepared—here he comes!’

‘It is my old clerk!’ said the other in astonishment; ‘the man I rescued from misery. Is *he* to rule over those ten cities?’

‘If you look at his image in the glass you will see how exactly fitted he is to do so,’ said the angel. ‘He has been faithful over a few things; perfectly truthful, consistently kind, always humble, denying himself pleasure for Christ’s sake, Look at his life and you will see that, though it used to look narrow and monotonous, yet it has had results which reach far and wide. It was his unconscious influence which turned your cousin into a great worker for God; it

was through him that you were induced to begin your best piece of work. You got the credit, but it was his thought, and he bore the brunt of it. You were kind to him and helped him, though you thought cheaply of him. He will now gratefully repay your kindness tenfold. But in all things you must submit yourself to him, for he is far in advance of you in all ways, except in fixity of purpose; there you can help him.'

The two men passed through the gates together."

No. 6.—ENTERING MAIMED.

IS IT POSSIBLE?

It was twilight—a twilight that scarcely ever varied, though Mirvel thought that the light in the east was a little stronger than it was when he had first entered Hades.

The wonder and shock had been great when he had first found himself in mist and loneliness instead of ecstasy and triumph.

A terrible fear—almost like despair—had gnawed at his heart. But that had soon been dispelled. Hope and faith now held their places, and the presence of God was known and felt.

The great disappointment was at finding himself so unaltered—so unable still to reach the heavenly standard.

He had formerly lived a busy life, and had boasted of it somewhat unnecessarily. Here there was *leisure*—leisure to think, to regret, to blush.

Many eulogiums had been passed on him by his family, his friends, and his acquaintances. Besides being active and useful, he had been sincerely religious, and more unselfish than most men. It is something to have lived without committing any heinous sin, and it is better still to have fairly earned the reputation of being a good man. Even in Hades he knew that he had much to be thankful for.

He had now got used to his new conditions, and life, though sad, was not unbearable. Repenting at leisure is a wholesome and good thing. What a pity that we so seldom allow ourselves time for it here!

Though generally shut out from companionship, Mirvel was not entirely alone. At times he could converse—as the rich man in the parable did—with spirits who had left their earthly life purer and holier than himself. When their voices came back to him they were sweet and friendly, though somewhat preoccupied, as if new conditions claimed their attention.

Often he called to his wife, and often she answered back through the mist, and he felt a degree of warmth and strength from her personality. On earth she had been his willing slave, and had obeyed his slightest whim. Now she was no longer at his beck and call. Love, pity and kindness were all apparent, but the earthly tie was altered, and he had no power to command her full attention.

He accepted these new conditions with sad resignation. It never occurred to him to question their justice.

A boy of his who had died almost in infancy also spoke back to him. His had been a pure young soul, innocent and almost unspotted by sin. Both mother and son spoke quiet words of patience, hope, and trust in God. Sometimes petitions from the Lord's Prayer came back to him with power and blessing. No reproach was ever uttered. All the reproaches—and they were many—arose from within. The subtle self-pleasing of his former life was now as plain as pebbles at the bottom of a clear pool.

Every forbidden thought was remembered, and lamented over, every deed of kindness that he had left undone, every harsh word, every resentful thought. And there was much wondering gratitude in his heart at God's watchful guarding him from temptations and dangers into which he now saw he would easily have fallen.

What had been grievances were now recognised as wasted opportunities for growth in God's grace. He felt no anger against even malignant enemies, for it had become plain that all their injuries ought to have been received with thankfulness, as the very best and most advantageous things that could happen to him.

Sickness, loss of money, bodily pain, and wounded reputation, ought to have all helped him forward in his journey to the place of heavenly riches.

Would St. Paul have a grudge against Nero who got him his martyr's crown? Or David against Absalom who brought him to the depth of humiliation which his soul needed?

Other voices reached Mirvel besides the happy ones in front. From behind him there often sounded sad grating accents that he recognised only too well. His partner in business had been a man of powerful imperious character, selfish, unprincipled, and unscrupulous. He had been a tyrant and a curse to Mirvel in a hundred ways, and had ruthlessly damaged and wounded him. Now his voice was feeble and dreadful, pleading passionately for help out of darkness and pain. The old contempt which had so often galled Mirvel was gone, and so also was the cheap, transparent flattery which had sometimes been employed. Apparently he knew no one else to whom he could appeal for succour in Hades. His friends, except Mirvel, had been low and bad. He had affected to despise goodness, but his abject misery was now slowly teaching him lessons that he had formerly scorned.

A most malicious woman, who had caused Mirvel much anguish by her false and abominable accusations, also cried out to him for help. •

Mirvel had the will to help them both, for pity instead of bitterness was in his heart. He answered back to them in a half frightened voice, saying the best that he knew how to say, but deprecating his power to help. He had forgiven their trespasses as truly as God had forgiven his, and doubtless what he said was blessed and useful to these poor wretches. But he had not the comfort of knowing it.

How welcome, after their selfish despairing cries,

was the placid voice of his old Nurse, who often talked with him. She was a faithful, dear old woman whom he had pensioned and been kind to. She had formerly been rather a tiresome bore to him, and her death had not caused him much regret. But now it was *she* who comforted and benefited *him* with her simple, firm faith in God, and her tone of affectionate loyalty to himself.

Altogether this new life was strangely unlike what he had expected.

Hope and faith and love were all present. There was a little spring of peace that flowed steadily. He was learning patience and humility, and he was absolutely convinced of both the fairness and the love of God. No doubt of salvation through Jesus Christ ever clouded his mind.

But the gradual work of sanctification in his soul was slow, and for the present his predominant feelings were sorrow, shame, and regret.

He had entered into life maimed, and he knew that it was entirely by his own fault. He was but reaping what he had sown, and his heart ached, even while he thanked God. He willingly accepted the experiences which lay in his upward path. But they were sometimes very painful.

After he had been in Hades for some considerable time, he came one day to a large gloomy-looking mansion. On entering he was astonished to find that it was tenanted by a number of his former acquaintances. They were sitting there apparently idle and

objectless. As he entered they looked fixedly at him, and it was noticeable that the expression of their faces was either cold, angry, or reproachful. When he greeted them, they with one accord repelled him, some of them gently, because they were gentle people; some of them rudely. His cousin, Herbert Briarley, at once rose and approached him, looking steadily at him, and with a most hostile expression. Mirvel's first instinct, strange to say, was almost to cringe, for the united disapproval of all these people was almost more than he could bear. But he rallied.

"Why do you look at me like this? What have you got against me?" he said.

"I do not know by what law of this place you come here," said his cousin, "for you have somehow contrived to get that which you see that all of us are destitute of. If you came to taunt us you can scarcely expect us to be glad to see you. Formerly, we all made you welcome to our houses. If you knew how to benefit *yourself*, you might have told *us*, I think. But we have done with each other now, and I see no object in your being here to exult over your old friends."

"I am not here to exult over you," replied Mirvel humbly, "I am continually suffering the pangs of self-reproach. But what do you blame me for? You had the same opportunity that I had of receiving the divine gift, and of living the divine life. Was it my part to believe that you were godless and lifeless? I always hoped that you had more religion in you than you chose to let appear."

“Then you were wrong, and if you had had the kindness and friendliness to tell us straight what you had and we had not, we should probably have listened and obtained it.”

“Whenever I approached the subject with you, I met with a rebuff, as you very well know,” said Mirvel.

“I think you were very selfish to let a rebuff stop you in such a matter,” said Briarley. “However, we speak the truth here and I thank you for anything you did, or tried to do. It certainly was unavailing. We do not dispute the justice of our being here, but we helped you to many pleasures of society, and we think you might have done a little more for us.”

“Why do you talk like that, Herbert?” said his brother, who stood listening by his side. “Can we not learn that only we ourselves are to blame? It is all fair. How could we expect anything different? Did any of us ever really think that we were laying up treasure in heaven? Certainly not. We did what was pleasant, and what we liked doing. We neglected religion, and we did not really believe in our excuses for neglecting it. We lived for ends that were exclusively earthly. If we did not consider the matter more carefully, it was because we did not care to do so. Nobody is to blame but ourselves. We took our chance for the future, always hoping that, somehow or other, we should pull through. But we have not pulled through. Mirvel may have been wrong, and is suffering for it, for he might have been kinder

and more unselfish. But as for us it is our own fault that we are here."

This straightforward speech, slowly and deliberately spoken, sent new reproaches into Mirvel's heart. Herbert's wife, a poor mean-spirited woman, stood by, and wept plentifully. She regarded Mirvel with aversion and anger, while she peevishly and miserably reproached him. He would have despised her if pity and self-reproach had not made it impossible for him to do so.

He regarded them all three, and stammered, "Is there no hope for you through Christ?" All fixed their eyes eagerly on him, but they were tongue-tied and answered nothing. But out of his sore humiliation and poignant self-reproach, a prayer arose in his heart for the poor dark souls he was leaving behind. He pondered over the words, "a ransom for all to be testified in due time."

No. 7.—THE EVENING PRIMROSE.

In the *Pall Mall Gazette* of the 7th of August, 1896, an ardent lover of flowers described the beauty of a large white evening primrose, which grew in his garden. As the twilight advanced, the flower always opened its shining petals to their widest extent and seemed to stretch itself to its tallest on its slender stem.

There was a reason for its making itself as conspicuous as possible, for its only hope of propagation lay in attracting to it a moth, which, when it came

to seek for honey, fertilized the flower, and thus secured to it the seed which meant life next spring.

In proportion to this laying itself out for the fertilizing moth lay the flower's chance of resurrection. If its blossoms were hidden under leaves and half folded up, it would escape notice in the dimness and darkness of the night. So it did its very best.

Surely this is a figure of the natural and the spiritual life. To all the gift of salvation is offered, but there are *conditions*. And are there not, alas! many who do not fulfil these conditions?

We may well believe that God is not indifferent to all the energy, and cleverness, and steadfastness that is spent on making the world progress on its present dispensational lines. But there is more for us to care for than food, raiment, and pleasure. These things perish with the using.

If the evening primrose is to have a resurrection, it must have a seed that shall remain when its lovely petals have fallen.

And so too with us. We must seek the invisible, if we are to enter into the Kingdom of God.

No. 8.—BAD TASTE.

A very disagreeable thing had happened. A large party was staying at a country house. Some friends from a little distance had come to lunch, and among them was a gentleman who had taken occasion, from something that had been said, to speak in a marked and pointed manner of religion. Everybody got red;

several people felt his remarks to be exceedingly unpleasant and in very bad taste. There was a dead pause after he had spoken; then the hostess did the best she could, trying to speak with reverence of sacred things while she warded off the ill-chosen subject, and the party separated with altogether a very uncomfortable feeling.

Among them was a lady, Mrs. Fane, who, somehow, felt stung by what had happened. She walked up and down the terrace alone, and the following dialogue took place between herself and her conscience :—

“How impertinent it was of Major Day to speak as he did! What bad taste! Can he not learn that there is a time for everything?”

HER CONSCIENCE: “You know you ought to talk the same way more often than you do.”

“I know nothing of the kind. I don’t believe in all this talk. You can’t talk people into religion; a life lived rightly is more effective than sermonizing.”

HER CONSCIENCE: “Is your life more effective than Major Day’s?”

“Perhaps not. Of course, I am not as good as I ought to be, but I am sure I should do no good by talking religion to my friends!”

HER CONSCIENCE: “The reason that you do not talk religion to them is not because you don’t think it will do them any good, but because you know they will like you less if you do it, or that very likely they won’t like you at all.”

“I can't sermonize them.”

HER CONSCIENCE: “You can let them know that Christ is your Saviour, and that He desires to be theirs.”

“They know that already.”

HER CONSCIENCE: “No, they do not; and they will certainly never learn it from anything that your life teaches them. They have only a vague idea that you are rather more religious than they are—that is all. You get your own salvation and a certain amount of comfort from your religion, you give away a small proportion of your means to religious objects, you abstain from gross worldliness, for which you have lost your taste, you praise certain clergymen and other good people—that is all. For the rest, you enjoy yourself as much as you can.”

“Christ did not force religious conversation.”

HER CONSCIENCE: “That is not true; He did so continually. You talk of your life as a power. What effect has it on your husband? Does he see that in you which draws him to Christ? What effect has it on your servants and on your children? Do they believe in your religion? No.”

Mrs. Fane would perhaps have gone on talking with her conscience some time longer, but she was called away at that moment for a promised drive. Everyone was anxious for her company, for she was attractive, good, and pleasant. People said, “Surely hers must be the right sort of religion! It is never offensive to anyone.”

She had, however, been much discomposed by the morning's occurrence, and that night she had a dream.

She dreamed that she was in heaven. The Day of Judgment was passed, and she found herself saved. Yet, somehow, all was not right. Her heart ached. She walked alone in the golden streets. Though she met groups of happy rejoicing people, she could not, somehow, join herself to them. She began to feel dreadfully home-sick. If only she could have seen one face that she knew! Could this place be heaven, and she feel so wretched in it?

She saw an angel near, and went and asked him, "Is this heaven?"

"Yes."

"I feel very wretched: I want to see someone I know. I seem to belong to no one here. I would give anything to see some of my old friends—my husband or my children, or Frances King, or Anthony Cole, or Lady Maine, or any of them."

"You will have to go a very long way to see them," said the angel, looking gravely at her, "but I may take you if you wish."

"I do wish."

"Close your eyes then."

She did as she was bidden, and immediately felt herself being transported through some immense space. The sense of the brightness and glory of heaven died away, and she came to an atmosphere that seemed to wither her and chill her to the very

marrow. At last her feet rested somewhere. A voice that she knew said, "Catherine!" and she opened her eyes and met those of her old friend, Frances King.

"Catherine, may I kiss you? Will you let me put my arms round you? Do not refuse me."

"Refuse you, Frances!" said Catherine, her heart going out to her dear old friend as she opened her arms wide and embraced her. "Why should I refuse you?"

"Because I am shut out; because I am lost! Oh, Catherine, it is my own fault, perhaps, but why didn't you tell me that I might be saved? Indeed, I should not have laughed at you. We were friends so many years, and you loved me, yet you never told me of my danger, and I never realised it. I knew that you were better than I was, but I never thought there was all this difference between us. Did you know it and not tell me all those times that we were together? You were almost my only religious friend. But it is something to see you and kiss you once more. Alas! if I had only had a friend who would have risked something for me!

While these words were still ringing in her ears she heard a man's voice behind cursing her, a man whom she had always regarded as a decidedly mean cad.

"Curse you!" he said. "A thousand curses light on you, bad woman and false Christian. You shamefully deceived me, else I should never have been here."

“It is untrue!” cried Catherine, her indignation getting the better of her horror for a moment. “I never injured you; you have no right to speak to me like that!”

“I have. Do you not remember that day at Hetherley, when Major Day spoke to us at lunch? I was hard hit by what he said. And don’t you remember how I came to you afterwards, as you were the most religious person there, and don’t you remember what you said? You said, ‘Oh, he’s a very good man, but very ill-judging. We can’t all be alike. Everybody can’t be equally religious in these outward things. It’s a pity good people are so disagreeable. It would be much better if they would attract people to religion by their goodness, instead of talking in such bad taste. It is not necessary for people to take such tremendous steps and make such great sacrifices.’ Then you talked ‘goody’ to me a little, but you made me feel that, any way, you didn’t believe in that violent sort of way of looking at religion, and that it would be all right if I went on pretty much as I was. And I took your cursed advice because I liked it, and here I am.”

Catherine shuddered; but the next moment, such fearful agony pierced her soul that she woke up screaming, for two voices in that dismal abode cried out together in her ears, “Mother!”

WHY NOT CONFESS ?

—: 0 :—

WHY should we be so unwilling to confess our faults to one another ?

A good woman almost *never* admits that she has done wrong, and a good man *very seldom* admits it.

Yet surely it would be all gain and no loss to do so.

For instance : “ I am told,” says an angry friend, “ that you have laughed at me and told ridiculous stories of me behind my back.” Why should I not say in reply, if the truth of the accusation convicts me, “ It is all true, alas ! All true. It was hateful of me ; how could I do such a thing ? I have never said *spiteful* things about you, but I admit with shame that I did repeat some ridiculous things about you. But are you so much surprised ? Did you expect me to be a friend without a fault ? ”

After such a confession, could anything happen but forgiveness ?

“ I want to tell you something, Eliza,” said John to his wife. “ I have been very mean about money. I have no excuse, but I beat down, from the force of habit, that poor woman who was selling mats. She was poor, and I am well off. Why did I grudge her a fair profit ? I despise myself, and I shall go

and pay her the difference." How cleansing such a confession would be !

"Marian," said Mrs. Martin to her friend, "I have been a snob this year, and you have been very good. I know that I have neglected and snubbed you, my oldest friend. I did not come to your party or ask you to mine. It was all because I was getting into a new set. I detest myself for it. Will you forgive me ? I mean never to do it again, and I value you a thousand times more than I value these new acquaintances. Henceforth I will try and behave sanely."

A flood of spiritual joy one day took possession of John Marple. One result of it was that he called on a tiresome, poor, good, old second cousin of his, who was continually leading up to receiving help and presents from him. "James," he said, "I have brought you £50 to make you a little more comfortable. Forgive me that I have been so unresponsive. I know that you are better than I am, and if we both died to-day, you would be the rich man and I should be the poor one. Buy some better tobacco, and ask a friend to dinner sometimes, and go to Brighton for a change."

"Vicar," said a Curate, "I believe I ought to leave you, and in disgrace. I have tampered with a wrong affection for someone in the congregation. It was partly her fault, but of course it was worse in me. Nobody else knows of it, but I will tell you all, and *go*, if you say 'go.' I wish I had told you six

weeks ago. I have sinned against you, and her, and the people, and most of all against God, Whose providence alone has kept me from a black fall. Forgive me—even if you punish me.”

“Rawlings,” said the Vicar, “I blame myself. I have kept you at a distance and been unfriendly because I was jealous of you. Your youth and pleasantness, and your popular preaching have made me grind my teeth. Stay with us. We will go together to the lady if you will tell me her name, and we will be perfectly frank about the matter.”

They went, and the confession answered well on both sides, and the evil ended.

A sermon convicted Mrs. Robinson of a fault, and as she left the church she said to her husband, “If I do not confess it now, this moment, I feel I shall never confess it. I have nagged you. You were to blame, but still I ought not to have done it so much. That is as far as I will go.” Here she burst into tears, and then went on : “Robert, I will admit that it was *almost entirely* my fault, but it is very teasing to me when you keep your temper so provokingly.” (Here she sobbed.) “No, I will unsay that. I believe it was *really and truly* my fault. Oh, if you did but know how impossible it is to say what I have said !”

“Selina,” said Charles, “I know I have been a beast about the dinner. I think I am naturally greedy, and too fond of my food. I wish I had not grumbled yesterday at the fried plaice coming so

often, and at the weak coffee and the cold stewed cranberries. I will try and do better. And so I am sure will you."

"Sarah," said her mother-in-law, "in future I will try and not be a nuisance, but will let you manage your house and husband and children in your own way, unless it is in matters in which I feel *sure* I am right. I know I often have interfered when I ought not, and I want now to ask your forgiveness."

"Stainforth," wrote a politician, "I wish to apologise to you and say that I won't do it again. I wilfully damaged you unjustly on the two following points:—I have repeatedly called you a humbug, and I believe I was entirely wrong. I have also called you a fool, and there again I was mistaken."

Thieves, murderers, loose livers, evil speakers, cheats, ill-tempered people, proud people, stingy people, disagreeable people, why not confess your faults and get cleansed and delivered from them ?



UNWELCOME AUTUMN.

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“But let autumn bold
With universal tinge of sober gold
Be all around me, when I make an end.”—*Keats*.

SHORTENING days—the first blossom of the Michaelmas daisy, the first yellowing leaf, the light garments of summer discarded, the first inevitable fire in the sitting-room—who greets willingly these signs that the year is waning?

Who does not say “Summer is yet with us. The days are still long enough. Those two or three yellow leaves are but a freak of nature. The warmer garment and the bright fire only mean that one day is apt to be cooler than another. As to the Michaelmas daisies, tiresome gardeners push forward to summer the flowers that belong to autumn. No, it is surely *not* autumn.

So we say, and our words pass indulgently without contradiction. But for all that, autumn *is* coming, and soon there will be no doubt about it—a little later or a little sooner, what does it matter—either in nature or in our life? Expostulations cannot stop

it. We may as well face our autumn, and welcome it with a smile.

For, indeed, autumn deserves a welcome as truly as spring and summer. It brings us fair gifts. Let us not turn away our faces from it or shut our eyes. Let our life's year run its normal course, even if it means decay and dying for some things that were good and beautiful in their time. God's way is best. "In everything give thanks."

For my part, I think that the melancholy of autumn is as good as the prime of summer. The trees glow with red and russet and gold, and the branches are loaded with fruit. The hills take their grandest purple, and the sunsets are splendid beyond words. What beauty there is in the gathering and circling of the birds for flight! Are not the late roses and the late lilies as fair as the early ones? Some of you will like to read Keats' matchless Ode (the last he wrote) to Autumn.

I.

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
 Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun ;
 Conspiring with him how to load and bless
 With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run ;
 To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,
 And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core :
 To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
 With a sweet kernel ; to set budding more,
 And still more, later flowers for the bees,
 Until they think warm days will never cease.
 For Summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells.

II.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
 Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
 Thee sitting careless on a granary floor
 Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind ;
 Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,
 Drows'd with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
 Spares the next swathe and all its twined flowers.
 And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
 Steady thy laden head across a brook :
 Or by a cyder-press, with patient look,
 Thou watchest the last oozings hours by hours.

III.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
 Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—
 While barred clouds crown the softly dying day,
 And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue.
 Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
 Among the river shallows, borne aloft
 Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies.
 And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn ;
 Hedge-crickets sing ; and now with treble soft
 The red-breast whistles from a garden croft ;
 And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

And as to our own individual autumn (for outward things are all parables), can we not rejoice in it as truly as in our summer? Is there no beauty to be looked for in restful dignity and silvering hair, in well-earned leisure, in gathered power, in mellowed hearts, and in kinder and humbler judgments? What though the spring of youth with its delightful surprises and its quick emotions has gone? It *is* gone,

and it cannot worthily be retained. We all know how sad it is to see the characteristics of youth vainly imitated in the autumn of life.

Who loves "falsely brown hair," or cheeks that are pink and white when they ought to be tenderly chastened? Age has a beauty that sometimes exceeds the beauty of youth. An old olive tree gets exquisite almost in proportion to its antiquity, and indeed all trees are more beautiful when they are old than when they are young—God orders both youth and age.

To everything there is a time, and we can retain nothing longer than its day.

So when autumn is come, and when winter is coming, let us be prepared with our welcome for both of them. Let us not quarrel with the lines in our foreheads, with our slower movements, and our more careful expenditure of vital force. It is true that eyes and ears and voice all give signs of wear and tear and are a little past their prime. Something of energy and creative force is gone, and doubtless there is humiliation in all this. But our souls need it and are better for it.

A certain melancholy comes. But in this world the most beautiful things are touched with sadness, and I have already said that, for my part, I think the tender, wise melancholy of autumn is even a lovelier thing than the hope of spring, and the joy of summer.

“Though much is taken much abides, and tho’
 We are not now that strength which in old days
 Moved earth and heaven, that which we are we are.”

Do you like these following lines ?

“Spring came to me in childhood long ago
 And said, ‘Pick violets, they’re at thy feet’;
 And I fill’d all my pinafore, and oh,
 They smelt most sweet !

“Summer came next, in girlhood long ago,
 And said, ‘Pick roses, they are everywhere’;
 And I made garlands out of them, and oh,
 They were most fair !

“Then Autumn came, in womanhood, you know,
 And said, ‘Garner the apples, it is late’;
 And I fill’d baskets with their load, and oh,
 My store was great !

“Last, Winter comes, for Eld has brought its snow,
 And said, ‘Sit quiet, shelter’d from the storm’;
 And I sit in my easy chair, and oh,
 The hearth, how warm !

Spring creates, summer perfects, autumn governs,
 winter rests. And when Death comes, shall we not
 welcome him as God’s angel, and therefore our angel
 too ? Would we rather that he delayed his coming
 till every faculty was gone ?

Hear the jubilant words of America’s great singer,
 Whitman.

“Come, lovely and soothing Death,
 Undulate round the earth, serenely arriving, arriving,
 In the day, in the night, to all, to each,
 Sooner or later, delicate Death.

“Prais’d be the fathomless universe,
For life and joy, and for objects and knowledge curious,
And for love, sweet love—but praise! praise! praise!
For the sure-enwinding arms of cool-enfolding Death.

“Dark mother, always gliding near with soft feet,
Have none chanted for thee a chant of fullest welcome?
Then I chant it for thee, I glorify thee above all,
I bring thee a song that when thou must indeed come, come
unfalteringly.

“Approach, strong deliveress,
When it is so, when thou hast taken them I joyously sing
the dead,
Lost in the loving floating ocean of thee,
Laved in the flood of thy bliss, O Death.”

And then, after death come resurrection and a new Divine dispensation.

Meanwhile is it nothing to have happily lost so much of intoxication with earthly things, to have won a deeper trust in God, to have a growing consciousness that the heavenly treasure is more real to us? Fever, fret, hopes and fears have become less harassing, as age makes earth look fainter and heaven clearer. Those in the autumn of life are perhaps the greatest benefactors to the world. It ought to be the time of victory, and of gracious and effective ministering to others.

In Van Eyck’s picture of the “Worship of the Lamb”—the great consummation—we do not find the green fields of heaven peopled chiefly by boys and girls, but by companies of mature men and women, who have lived and suffered, and fought and won—men

and women who look able to rule, and able to obey, able also to train others for God's service. They have used their office well, and have purchased to themselves a good degree.

As age advances a delightful unselfish enjoyment of youth comes. We are not young ourselves, but other people are young, and we can enjoy them perhaps better than we ever enjoyed ourselves. Gladness, sympathy and help are all in our power to give almost every day, and we may live again with calm brightness in the young lives around us—giving to them some knowledge of how happily a Christian life may draw towards its farewell to earth.

Let us ponder the following beautiful lines by George Macdonald :—

“And weep not, tho' the beautiful decay
Within thy heart as daily in thine eyes.
Thy heart must have its autumn, its pale skies
Leading, mayhap, to winter's dim dismay.
Yet doubt not; beauty doth not pass away,
Her soul departs not, tho' her body dies,
Waiting the spring's young resurrection day—
Through the kind nurture of the winter cold;
Nor seek thou by vain effort to revive
The summer time when roses were alive.
Do thou thy work—be willing to be old,
Thy sorrow is the husk that doth enfold
A gorgeous June for which thou need'st not strive.”



SIR OWEN AND MR. ORME.

A TALE RE-TOLD.

—: o :—

“HEROD feared John, knowing that he was a just man and holy, and observed him. And when he heard him he did many things and heard him gladly. But John said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother’s wife.....And the king was exceeding sorry, and he sent an executioner and he beheaded him.”

Manton Court stood on a wooded hill in Berkshire. It was the show place of the neighbourhood, and was celebrated for its gallery of pictures, its lake, and its orchid houses.

The owner, Sir Owen Trevor, was a bachelor. He was not unpopular in the county, though it was known that his morals were not as pure as they might have been. In London society he held a good position, but in the country there were to be found various old-fashioned people who would not visit him because it was notorious that his relations with a certain Mrs. Fitzjames were wrong. She was a charming person, and as her husband chose to take no public notice of her conduct, she was received in society by persons who, either because their own characters would not bear inspection, or for some other reason, were not scrupulous about such matters.

There were people in society who even did that wickedest of wicked things, invite the two to meet at their country houses with the full knowledge of the facts. It is wonderful what horrible things the desire to be reckoned fashionable is responsible for.

Dr. Heron, the Vicar of Manton, had known Sir Owen from a boy, and was sincerely attached to him, and valued his many good qualities, — frankness, generosity, and grace of manner being among them. But the intimacy had been shaken by the fact of the scandal, and the Squire was now seldom seen at the Vicarage or at Church. But the Vicar still followed him with prayers and affection. He was now old, and was obliged to engage a Curate to take the brunt of the work off his shoulders. This Curate, Mr. Orme, was a remarkable young man. He was of the evangelical school, but his habits were ascetic and his appearance worn. He had high spirits, and though he was troubled with a painful stutter, his speech was often racy. The poorer people loved him exceedingly, and so also did good old ladies, but the rich, dull, county people voted him a failure. He was felt to be practically unmarriageable, and though he made it a point of duty to attend any social festivities to which he was invited, yet he usually stayed a very short time, and in spite of keeping up a cheerful grin while he remained, it was evident that he took no real pleasure in fripperies. He accepted the boredom of parties as part of his work, and though everybody knew he was dull, he main-

tained an aspect of hilarity, while he was always on the watch for an opportunity of religious or parochial talk.

Sir Owen was not often present at such festivities, but Mr. Orme, a few weeks after his arrival, was introduced to the Squire by the lady of the house at whose garden party he was present. Her attention was immediately called away to a fresh arrival, and the two men were therefore left alone.

“I hope you do not dislike Manton, Mr. Orme. It is rather a dull place,” said Sir Owen courteously.

“Th—thank you,” said Mr. Orme with a gulp, “I d—do like it, but w—will you allow me to say to you as one of your Clergy, that you are both offending God and injuring man deeply by your intimacy with Mrs. Fitzjames. It is a great sin.”

Sir Owen was not only a well-bred man, he was also, in many respects, an excellent man, and he had his temper completely under his control. No one would have discerned from his manner that he had just received a straight hit between the eyes, as it were. He paused, and then said :

“Mr. Orme, I do not allow strangers to discuss such private matters with me. Excuse me, but I think you are forgetting yourself.”

“N—no, indeed,” stammered Mr. Orme, “for some weeks I have wished to speak to you on this point. It is no hasty impulse. I am not forgetting myself, for I am paid to be here for the very p—purpose of telling people of their sins and how to g—get rid of

them. Would you have me speak to the p—poor and not to the r—rich?"

Orme's manner was quite simple, and he looked Sir Owen in the face. There was nothing priggish about him, and he was too earnest to be counted impertinent.

It happened that Sir Owen was *not* angry. He paused, and then said :

"If you want to talk to me we will sit for a few minutes in that seat under the oak."

"T—thank you," said Orme, and when they had sat down he said, "I have said what I had to say. It is a great sin, and God calls you to put an end to it."

"I like your courage, Mr. Orme," said Sir Owen. "On second thoughts I admit that from your point of view you are not wrong to make this attack on me. I will meet you frankly and tell you what I have never told anyone else—that I know I am doing wrong, and that I often think, and have been specially thinking lately, of altering my conduct. Perhaps I shall do so, but you have now done your duty and need say no more. I bear you no ill will."

"Sir, I pray you not to put the matter off," said Orme. "Every day is an offence to God and does infinite harm to innocent men and women, making it easier and more justifiable for them also to do wrong. Break it off for her sake and for your own too, and for God's sake."

"I must go, Mr. Orme," said Sir Owen, rising and

holding out his hand. "Will you come and lunch with me to-morrow?"

"Certainly," said Orme, "but do not wait till to-morrow to break it off."

On the morrow the two men were alone, and Orme spoke long and freely to his host, who listened and was evidently moved. And, though he said nothing, he wrung his visitor's hand at parting, and said :

"Come and see me again. You ask me to do what is almost impossible, Orme, but I will think it over. Come and dine here on Friday, you will meet my brother and his wife."

"Th—thank you," said Orme, "but I th—think I w—will not come, for if you are not alone we should talk commonplace, and that would be bad for my p—purpose."

"Then come on Saturday, I shall be alone."

"I will come," said Orme. "Good-bye."

From this time the two men were friends, but Orme always talked persistently on the one subject whenever he was alone with Sir Owen.

"I know it is painful, and a bore, he said, "but I will not talk about anything else till you have done this thing."

"I think I shall do it, Orme," said Sir Owen.

And he went to town and saw the lady, and told her that there must be an end of their relations. What she said to him nobody knows, but the intimacy did not end. Mrs. Fitzjames was a fascinating, clever, beautiful woman, and she held Sir Owen faster than

he thought. Whether she used anger or pathos is not known, and does not matter. But she kept him on, a more or less unwilling captive.

When Sir Owen returned, Orme saw him again, and it both surprised and pained him to find that nothing had been done. He earnestly returned to the old attack, and again Sir Owen, Herod-like, "heard him gladly," wavered, and almost promised.

"I wish I could break it off. I am tired of it all, and it wears my life out, but I cannot, I cannot. Do not give me up, Orme. Pray for me. I want to do this thing if I possibly can."

"There is one thing a man can always do, Sir Owen," said Orme, "and that is *his duty*."

A year passed in this state of vacillation. And then an awful trial came to Orme. He was innocently incautious in his parochial work, and as a consequence of his visiting an evil woman in the village, calumny was raised against him. No responsible person believed it, and it would have come to nothing if Mrs. Fitzjames had not heard of it. But she did hear of it, and it was an opportunity both for revenge and self-defence which, Herodias-like, she was not disposed to lose.

She appeared on the scene, and indirectly influenced and magnified the scandal, which again became active and virulent. Orme knew now, for the first time in his life, what it was to have a bitter enemy. He called on Sir Owen, but was refused, for Mrs. Fitzjames was staying at the Hall.

“Shall this impudent, meddling young scoundrel dare to come here, Owen?” said she. “Are you a man? After his impertinence will you back him up in his wickedness? I am certain that this story about him is true. I insist in the name of common decency on your writing to the Bishop and getting him dismissed. I say I insist on it.”

“Julia, he is as innocent of it as I am,” said Sir Owen.

“I won’t hear a word,” replied the lady. “He shall leave this place in disgrace if I write to the Bishop myself. Have you no regard for me, I who have given up everything for you? I insist on your writing to the Bishop,”

The end of the story is soon told. Guilty and pestered out of his life, Sir Owen was persuaded to write to the Bishop, and Orme was inhibited and went abroad, dead, like John the Baptist, to his native country henceforth.

The relations between Sir Owen Trevor and Mrs. Fitzjames did not cease. They lived on in sin, but all noticed that he looked wretched and grew thinner and thinner. He sickened and died of shame in twelve months, despised by all who knew or guessed the truth. If Mrs. Fitzjames felt any compunction she certainly never showed it. She flourished, and is living still.



MY BROTHER'S FAREWELL.

A TALE RE-TOLD.

—: o :—

BEFORE he started for Canada my brother John gave a supper to his father's tenants, in the village school-room, and when he bid them farewell he addressed to them the following words:—

“I leave you to-morrow, my friends. As you know, I am going to the estates in Canada which my father has given me. I am full of hope for you, as well as for myself, and I am looking forward to many of you coming out to me in Canada. You cannot all stay where you are, and many of you have already spoken to me of your desire to emigrate. I am going out, as you know, purposely to see how the land lies, and to prepare the place for you. Often we have talked about it, and some of you have given me your names as candidates who wish to join me.

“It is a big country that I am going to, and there will be room for all who are fit to go. Fit, for I want no useless, incompetent people, none who are idle, none who are bad.

“While I am away you must work steadily to fit yourselves for your future posts, learning to be farmers, mechanics, workmen, labourers. Often I

have said this to you. I say it once more, for everything depends on your exertions while I am away.

“Let me hear from you from time to time, and all your letters shall be fully answered.

“To-morrow I depart, but before long I shall return, to take back with me all who have fitted themselves for the new life in Canada.”

And this is very much like what Christ has said and done.



EASTON AND GRANT.

——: 0 :——

Do we like godless old men ?

I sometimes like godless *young* men, if they have good spirits, and are generous and pleasant. But I only like them as long as they are young. Life spoils them. A worldly, irreligious old man is an object of pity or dislike, but seldom of respect or love.

If an old man drinks or swears, there is nothing fine about it. It only disgusts. If he is proud, or fond of money, people give him a wide berth. And his outlook for the next life is a blank—or worse. He has had his fling, and there is nothing for him in the future. Friends who remember his youth and his life's work, may try to make his declining days easy. But his life is sad, and his death is sadder.

We do *not* like godless old people.

How different is the feeling towards a godly old man who has held faithfully to Christ all his life. Even the careless and irreligious respect and admire him, and his death is felt to be only the entrance into a better life.

I have been pondering about two men I know. Each is about thirty years old, unmarried, successful in his calling, and well educated.

Easton is a religious man. Grant is avowedly not religious.

It is a question which is really the best man. Which would you rather be ?

Certainly Grant is the easiest man to like. He talked to me quite freely about himself one day.

“I don’t make any profession of religion, as Easton does. He is a kind of sanctified fellow that I can’t stand—always turning up his eyes.

“If I am anything, I am a Protestant—at least I am not a Roman Catholic. I respect genuine religion. And as far as I have seen, I should say that the best specimens of all Christian religions are pretty much alike in their lives and characters ; so it seems a pity that they disagree so much.

“I am outside it all. What Easton calls religion, doesn’t seem to suit *men*, and I don’t want to be like him, or like most of the religious men I have seen.

“I am not against women being religious. It is natural to them. They ought to be gentle, and soft, and good. But in a man I like grit. Let him look out for his interests and fight his way. Let him be liberal and free with his money. Let him swear and drink in moderation, if he wants to. Let him be no slouch at his business. Let his mind be free and his temper high. Let him enjoy life.”

Grant lives up to his standard, and is liked and loved. He talks well, reads a good deal, and is not the slave of his passions. A pleasanter young fellow

I do not know. Even when he is gloomy he is good company, and his laugh clears the air. Nearly everyone thinks of him with pleasure and affection.

How would religion act on him?

On the contrary, there is a great flatness about the good and religious Easton. When he is cheerful, he has none of Grant's spontaneousness. When he is depressed, he is apt to be uninteresting. He will talk with eagerness about religious work and about doctrines, but his views have not much freshness or originality. He is capable of doing a slightly mean thing, which Grant would abhor the thought of doing.

But you can rely on his sympathy and help in any good work, which Grant would not touch with his little finger. He always wishes to be better and more useful than he is. He prays, he reads his Bible. The conflict is hard and constant with him. He is respected, but not popular.

What does God feel about these two men? Certainly He loves them both, for He loves all whom He has made. He knows the vigour and sincerity and generosity of Grant's character. And He knows the humility, the teachableness, and the self-denial of Easton's. He knows, too, the earthliness, and godlessness of the first, and self-interestedness and want of nobility in the second.

Let us look forward thirty or forty years, and see what each man will be, if his life continue on the same lines.

The charms of youth will have long left them both, and the dark river of death will not be far off. For one it will be bridged by faith, for the other it will look like a dark abyss.

They will be elderly men. Easton will have had a long discipline, and it will have left him the best, the happiest, and the most useful of the two. Men will have learnt that they can trust his Christian rule of life, that where he has erred he has repented and amended. The Divine part of him will be the plainest and the strongest when he is old. He was born unto the Kingdom of God, and has grown up in it. His treasure is in heaven, and he will be nearing it.

As to Grant, I cannot bear to think of the steadily-losing ground that is before him. I fear lest in thirty years all that we love in him may have flowered and withered, and turned out to be only of the earth.

The faults in him, to which we are indulgent now, will then be hateful. His powers will be going. He never hungered after God, or desired the Spiritual Kingdom. He loved life, and enjoyed life. And at last it will be slipping away, leaving him old, sad, bitter and destitute.

Which of these two men would you rather be ?



A SNUBBED ONE.

—: o :—

MR. BEVINGTON always speaks with great thankfulness of the Criston Conference.

He is counted as only a second-class Christian worker, for though he is about fifty years old, he has never done anything more remarkable than work in a London slum, where he has built a little Mission Hall in connection with St. Andrew's Church.

He has a small competence and a cheerful manner, but his cheerfulness is (or was) not always quite thorough. It is apt to look a little like the cheerfulness of the man who has just found a shilling and lost eighteen pence. His Vicar says of him "If the good little man has a fault, it is that he is rather a bore. He is so assiduous in getting up minute occasions in his Hall, and in wanting me to be present, and it generally is impossible for me to go. I quite dread that eager smile of his, and the sound of his creaking shoes."

Mr. Bevington has a wonderful power for getting people to address meetings in his district. I suspect that he is used to snubs, and probably it would be better all round if he did not try so hard to get notable people to take the chair, for the resources of the Hall are very limited. Even when it is crowded it only holds a hundred persons.

Most people have their weaknesses, however, and he is not the only one who exposes himself to mortifications from the desire to be in touch with eminent people. And it must be admitted that though this desire leads through thorny ways, it is not without its rewards. The best thing is for a man to be in touch with his superiors as well as his inferiors and equals. And this rule holds good in religious matters, as well as in the cases of rank, wealth, and talent.

It must be understood at the outset of my story that the verdict of the poor in St. Andrew's parish is that there is nobody like Mr. Bevington. For steady and industrious kindness, systematic visiting, and perseverance in temperance and gospel work, there are not many who can surpass him. And Mrs. Bevington is in all ways a fit helpmeet for him—a tall, gentle woman, ugly to the eye, but beautifully good.

He had long talked of the Criston Conference, and planned to go to Wales for it, and you may be sure that when he got there he went in for it thoroughly, and conscientiously followed the advice of the leaders. There was scarcely any fault that he did not willingly suspect himself of at the bidding of any of the speakers. After Mr. D——'s beautiful address, he owned himself a perfect Jonah for self-willed disobedience, and, again and again, during the times of silent prayer, he confessed that his work was "all self." He perfectly ransacked himself in search of secret sins, and accused himself of envy, dishonesty, unforgiveness, lukewarmness, coldness, and even of

pride, ill-temper, and overbearingness. He considered that he was guilty of them all, and that he was a Zibah, a Micah, a Mephibosheth, an Ananias, an Achan, and a Lot (more).

He felt that the Conference was truly delightful (though it was rather depressing to be convicted of so many evil things). He heartily admired every one of the speakers, and shuddered obediently as each one directed his powerful telescope at the guilty hearts and lives of the audience. "Oh, for a clean heart like Mr. G.—and the others!" he thought. He had always believed that they were wonderfully good, and now he came to believe even more than this: that they were as good as they said they were. It really seemed as if there were no virtues which could not be gained at Criston—or *almost* none. Good temper and purity and consecration were specially to the fore, and in some instances there was even humility.

One thing that depressed him was the fear that the giants of Criston did not quite take to him. He had not expected much, but he had hoped that he might pick up one or two recruits for his beloved Mission Hall, which needed fresh speakers to keep the work going. In this he almost entirely failed. Occasionally he got the ear of someone, and began to recount the needs and the joys of the work, but it was a somewhat abstracted attention which he usually gained, and it generally ended in the listener's abrupt departure.

He knew that the humble little pink reports which he gave away so lavishly were often not even glanced at. He picked up several that had evidently not been opened.

A hearty shake of the hand from Mr. Moody gladdened him for a whole day, and it always gave him a lift to catch a sight of him on the platform, half hidden behind the other speakers, but listening earnestly and happily, and sometimes with moistened eyes.

Another cheery friend who lightened his heart was Mr. Denny, who had more than once given him help in his need (as he has given to scores of others). Thank God for such men, whose human sympathy and friendliness make a warm place wherever they go! He looked long at some of the valiant young men who made such a good show everywhere, and he rejoiced greatly in their beautiful consecration, but from them he did not succeed in getting any friendly glances. They were in their own set, and, as they did not want middle-aged recruits, they behaved somewhat distantly to such outsiders as he.

When he tried to testify, someone generally testified more loudly at the same moment, and extinguished him. And he was unable to tell in the final praise meeting whether the tears which wetted his cheeks on that occasion were of joy or disappointment. He never felt quite sure.

However, he considered that he had obediently received the blessing "without feeling," and he was exceedingly glad to have been at the Criston Convention.

Moreover, the Rev. Alexander Collins, a Missionary from Africa, had promised to come and take the chair at his Anniversary on the 3rd of August, when there was to be a Tea, and a great effort in Midgham Court to "reach the masses." To get an address from such a man was indeed a splendid point to have gained, and he thanked God, and took courage.

As he travelled back to town he felt that it had indeed been a grand time, and he prayed again and again in the train that he and Mrs. Bevington might have increased power to win souls.

The railway carriage was crowded, as it was Bank Holiday, but that was all the better, as it gave him an opportunity of offering his seat to a hot-looking matron with a large, coarse bunch of flowers, who was, in consequence of his kindness, disposed to listen favourably when he spoke to her about spiritual things. Besides the flowers she had with her an unattractive restless little child, of about five years old, who besides being peevish was dirty and altogether trying. Mr. Bevington smiled kindly at the child, who refused rather crossly all his advances except a gingerbread, and he almost regretted having pressed the gingerbread on her as she most ingeniously used it to increase her general unsightliness, by making a dreadful mess of herself with it. But there was no unkind criticism apparent when he asked the mother very pleasantly what the little one's name was, and the mother was evidently gratified, and replied with pardonable pride that it was Venus Amelia. Later

on in the journey poor little Venus made friends with him, and eventually went to sleep on his knee very heavily, this was at least a comfort to the rest of his fellow-travellers, who had found her niggling pettishness almost more than they could endure. Besides Venus and her mother he also talked to two dirty young men, who, alas! proved themselves unsatisfactory cases by saying, when they parted from him, that they would "like to drink his health."

Getting up a Tea is rather an anxious business. It is difficult to know how many bills should be distributed to non-tea drinkers, so as to avoid an empty room on the one hand, or hopeless over-crowding on the other. Mr. Bevington had also to consider whether it would be well to give tickets to such people as poor drunken Ben Stokes, who had so often disturbed his meetings, and how the gossipy, officious hall-keeper, Mrs. Riggins, could best be kept in check. Sour milk had once been a difficulty, and must be carefully guarded against if the weather proved sultry.

However, all went well. The room was crowded even to standing ground, and the atmosphere told of moist sweet cake, and unlimited greyish tea. Many a pocket-handkerchief fanned its portly owner, and often were heard the gently-spoken words, "Will you sit a little closer, please." But more and more anxious did Mr. Bevington become at Mr. Collins's non-appearance. There were no other speakers besides himself, his wife, and a Church Army Cadet, who

was a capital young fellow for helping all round, but scarcely equal to the post of principal speaker on such a great occasion. However, as Mr. Collins had said that he might be a few minutes late, Mr. Bevington would not let himself be seriously alarmed, and when the tea was cleared away and all were in their places, he gave out No. 281 in the Church Army Hymn Book, and Mrs. Bevington began to drum through the tune on the little wheezy, useful, old harmonium.

At this moment a dire sight met his anxious eyes—a boy in uniform bearing a letter whose envelope was of that lurid orange hue, which we all know so well. Almost breathlessly he opened it, and read the following words: “Extremely sorry, but detained at Manchester for Consecration Meeting. Remembering you in prayer.”

A mist came over his eyes, and his head swam. He had all along expected a disappointment, but now that it came it seemed impossible to endure it. He bowed his head with an almost dazed feeling, but as the harmonium ceased, and the people rose to sing the opening hymn, he, too, rose mechanically.

Then came the burst of voices—

“Head of the Church triumphant,
We joyfully adore Thee;
Till Thou appear,
Thy members here,
Shall sing like those in glory.
We lift our hearts and voices,

With blest anticipation,
And cry aloud,
And give to God,
The praise of our Salvation."

With eyes that were misty with tears he looked towards the empty chair which stood behind the little table with the Bible and the tumbler of water. And, lo! it was not empty.

He never told anyone except his wife, but he told her that he saw there a glorious Person clad in shining white raiment, with deep pathetic eyes, and a brow of spotless purity. Was it only a vision? To his surprise, the expression of the face was not sad or reproachful, but joyful. Slowly the heavenly Visitant's gaze passed over the whole audience, not one missed the look of love, even poor drunken Ben and tiresome Mrs. Riggins had their share of it. And all the time the wounded hands were raised in blessing. But the people knew it not.

Last of all He looked at Mr. Bevington, and in the midst of the singing there was surely heard a voice like the sound of many waters, which said to him, "Blessed art thou Michael Bevington, thou hast been faithful over a few things. Be thou partaker of the joy of Thy Lord. Behold I am with thee always."

Then came the last words of the hymn—

"And if Thou count us worthy,
We each with dying Stephen
Shall see Thee stand
At God's right hand
To call us up to Heaven."

With these words the Vision faded from mortal sight, though surely Christ remained in the little hall. The audience only knew that a flood of blessing filled the place that evening, that many souls hungered after Christ, and that some received Him.

Mr. Bevington actually forgot even to allude to Mr. Collins's absence, and nobody asked a question about it. He himself gave the principal address. It was partly about Criston and its teachings, but chiefly about his dearest Master and Saviour.

And I think the man who knows that the Lord stands beside him as Guest and Friend, will never mind being "a snubbed one."





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